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**IMPLEMENTATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL COVENANT
ON ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL RIGHTS**

**Initial reports submitted by States parties
under articles 16 and 17 of the Covenant**

Addendum

GREECE*

[17 September 2002]

* The Information submitted by Greece in accordance with the guidelines concerning the initial part of reports of States parties is contained in the core document (HRI/CORE/1/Add.121).

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Introduction

Greece has the pleasure to submit its initial report to the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. This report covers mainly the period 1996-2001, but in some areas it covers the whole or major part of the 1990s or goes back to the 1980s or even to previous decades; data given also vary from the 1980s to as recent as the current year, e.g. in the treatment of the right to education (school year 2001-2002).

In total, 13 ministries were gathered to contribute towards drawing up this report, each one in its field of competence or more than one in fields of parallel competence. These ministries are mentioned here below, in the order of articles related to them of the Covenant and of the relevant Guidelines included in chapter II of the document HRI/GEN/2/Rev.1 of 9 May 2001:

Ministry of Foreign Affairs: overall coordination of the ministries involved, editing - synthesis of the report, introduction, and articles 1 and 2 (paras. 5, 6);

Ministry of National Economy and Finance: articles 2 (para. 7) and 11 (para. 42);

Ministry of Labour and Social Security: articles 6, 7 and 8, as chef-de-file and with the cooperation of:

(a) Ministry of the Interior, Public Administration and Decentralization/

Secretariat-General for Gender Equality on articles 6 (paras. 8, 9, 10)

and 7 (paras. 15, 17);

(b) Ministry of the Interior, Public Administration and Decentralization on 6

and 8 (para. 24);

(c) Ministry of Public Order on article 8 (para. 24); and

(d) Ministry of National Defence on article 8 (para. 24);

Ministry of Labour and Social Security/Secretariat-General of Social Security:

article 9;

Ministry of Agriculture: articles 6 (paras. 8, 9, 13) and 11 (para. 43);

Ministry of Health and Social Welfare: articles 9 (paras. 27, 28), 10, 11 (para. 43)

and 12;

Ministry of the Environment, Town Planning and Public Works: article 11 (para. 44);

Ministry of National Education and Religious Affairs: articles 13 and 14;

Ministry of Culture: article 15, as chef-de-file and with the cooperation of:

(a) Ministry of Development/Secretariat-General of Research and Technology on

article 15 (paras. 67, 68, 69, 71); and

(b) Ministry of Press and Mass Media on article 15 (para. 66).

In the elaboration of the report, which proved an interesting and fruitful exercise, every effort was made to follow, as far as possible, the indicative, wide-spectrum Guidelines on the form and content of the reports to be submitted by States parties to the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

On the whole, since this is the initial report of Greece to the Committee it was deemed useful - and corresponded to the approach of many among the ministries involved - to expand on a number of important issues even farther than the outline set in the said Guidelines. In certain cases, the same or similar issues are dealt with twice, since they fall under the competence either of more than one ministry, such as in paragraphs 9 (a) and 9 (b) (situations of employment), or of one single ministry, but fit in more than one place, such as in paragraphs 66 (b) (f) and 69 (the Stone Centre). Again, in other cases, for the sake of cohesion and continuity of the presentation, paragraphs and/or subparagraphs were dealt with in a different order from that in the Guidelines, e.g. under the main paragraph 44 on the right to adequate housing.

Wherever questions put in the Guidelines remain unanswered, it is principally due to the fact that they are not pertinent to the Greek

situation. This is especially the case with regard to final paragraphs under each article bearing on the role of international assistance in the realization of the relevant rights. Greece, being a developed country, a member State of the European Union since 1981, does not in principle receive international assistance with a view to implementing the rights under the Covenant but for support in the framework of relevant programmes of the European Union destined to its member States. An exceptional case where Greece receives international assistance may be considered the technical knowledge offered by the World Health Organization as mentioned in paragraph 55.

However, in most cases in which those final paragraphs are answered, information is given on international assistance provided by Greece, bilaterally or in the European Union framework, to third countries, e.g. in paragraph 43 (h) regarding realization of the right to adequate food.

Alternatively, information is given on improvement of infrastructure, equipment or services through financial support from European Union programmes, e.g. in the main paragraphs 41 and 64 regarding respectively the realization of the rights enshrined in articles 10 and 13 of the Covenant.

On substance and as a general remark, it has to be noted that the Greek Constitution, as revised in 2001, is characterized by its reinforced social character. In particular, the revised Constitution has introduced expressly into the Greek legal order the principle of the "social State of law" (art. 25, para. 1), which is placed under the guarantee of the State, together with the rights of persons as individuals and as members of the society.

This fundamental supra-legislative principle has assumed a concrete form in various other constitutional provisions, such as in article 21, paragraph 6 ("protection of disabled persons"), and in article 22, paragraph 3 ("collective labour agreements for civil servants and servants of local administration or of other public organizations"); these provisions render evident the tendency of the new Greek legal order to give emphasis on and substantive content to the protection of social rights in general of all persons residing on Greek territory.

At the same time, the aforesaid constitutional provisions result in the creation of new important obligations of the State, whose bodies have to guarantee the unimpeded and effective exercise of civil and social rights and of the principle of the "social State of law", in accordance with article 25, paragraph 1, of the Constitution.

I. General provisions of the International Covenant on

Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

Article 1

The right to self-determination, as it is defined in article 1 of the Covenant, as well as in all international instruments for the protection of human rights has, as a rule, three aspects:

(a) The right of external self-determination, in other words the right to self-determination of peoples who are under a colonial or racist regime or under foreign occupation or who have perforce been integrated into a certain state. This aspect of self-determination has been recognized and safeguarded by resolutions of the General Assembly of the United Nations, as well as in its declarations 1314 (XII) of 12 December 1948, 1514 (XV) of 14 December 1960 and 2625 of 1970;

(b) The right of internal self-determination involves the free choosing of the social system and the form of government, on the one hand, and the obligation to conduct elections at regular intervals at the state and local level, on the other; and

(c) The right to the free disposition and use of the natural wealth and resources of the peoples.

A. External self-determination

Greece became an independent, self-determined State in 1830. The Greek State gradually grew and came to acquire the territory that it has today within its present-day borders. The last territorial change in respect to the boundaries of the Greek State took place in 1948, through the formal incorporation of the Dodecanese into the national body, whereupon the Greek State took on its present final form, namely the borders that it retains to date. All the territories that constitute the present Greek State consist, in their great majority, of native Greek populations. Never has there been, nor is there today put forward any kind of claim relating to the separation of any segment of the Greek State from it. Consequently, the right to self-determination, under the form and meaning stated above, has never preoccupied, nor does it preoccupy the populations living within the boundaries of the Greek State.

B. Internal self-determination

1. Free choice of the form of government - social and political system - elections held at regular intervals

The basic principles governing the form of Government in Greece are the following: the principle of popular sovereignty; the election of the Head of State by the Parliament; the principle of representative democracy; the parliamentary principle; the principles of the rule of law and of the social state. Of particular importance is article 1, paragraphs 1, 2 and 3, of the Constitution, which establishes the right of the Greek people to define their form of government and recognizes that "all powers are derived from the People and exist for the People and the Nation, and shall be exercised as specified by the Constitution".

The form of Government as a “presidential parliamentary republic” was designated, in a manner binding for the constitutional legislator, by the referendum of 8 December 1974. In this referendum, the people were called upon to choose between Presidential and Crowned Democracy. By a majority of approximately 70 per cent, the Greek people voted in favour of Presidential Democracy. The relevant provision cannot be revised, according to article 110, paragraph 1, of the Constitution. Thus, the existing form of Government of the country has been consolidated on the basis of an express popular mandate and has been solidified by virtue of a pertinent express constitutional provision. Within this framework, the constitutional legislator is free to shape the institutional organization of the form of Government. The people take part in the procedure for the revision of the Constitution, as this procedure is not completed by the Parliament that has ascertained the need for revising the Constitution, but by the Parliament that follows it.

The people, within the framework of the institutions pertaining to parliamentary representative democracy, elect at regular intervals their representatives in Parliament. The Constitution defines in article 53 that each parliamentary term is set for a period of four years. The people elect their representatives through direct, universal and secret ballot, as it is prescribed by the Constitution in article 51, paragraph 3, which also defines the legal qualifications that each voter must possess, as well as the cases that relate to the restrictions of his/her electoral right. Particular importance has been laid on article 52 of the Constitution, which states that “the free and unfalsified expression of the popular will, as an expression of popular sovereignty, shall be guaranteed by all State officers, who shall be obliged to ensure such under all circumstances. Criminal sanctions for violations of this provision shall be specified by law”. These rules are applicable in the case of the holding of a referendum, as well as in the elections for the appointment of the authorities of local administration.

Moreover, from 1981 onwards, it has become an institution for the Greek legal order to elect Greek representatives to the European Parliament every five years. In implementation of European Community Law provisions, Law No. 2196/1994 provides for the participation in the relevant ballot also of citizens of other European Union member States established in Greece. The role of the deputies of the European Parliament has already assumed great significance, which will become increasingly greater, inasmuch as penetration of European Law into the Greek legal order shall increase, both qualitatively and quantitatively.

The Greek Constitution recognizes, although to a limited extent, institutions of direct democracy. Article 44, paragraph 2, provides for the possibility of holding a referendum, which shall be proclaimed by the President of the Republic: (a) on crucial national matters, following a resolution voted by the absolute majority of the total number of deputies taken upon proposal of the Cabinet, and (b) on bills passed by Parliament regulating important social matters, with the exception of fiscal ones, if this is decided by three-fifths of the total number of deputies, following a proposal put forward by the two-fifths of their total number, subject to the restriction that there shall not be introduced, in the same parliamentary term, more than two proposals to hold a referendum on a bill. The decision, which shall be taken by the people through a referendum, will be totally binding to the other organs of the State.

As regards the free choice of an economic system, it is to be noted that the Constitution safeguards economic freedom (art. 5, para. 1), as well as the right to property (art. 17), while enunciating the limits of private economic initiative (art. 106, para. 2) and enjoining the harmonization of economic development with the fundamental principle of the protection of the environment (art. 24). Within this framework, the legislator and the Government, who enjoy direct or indirect popular legitimacy, are free to design the economic policy of the country.

2. Administration of local affairs

The Greek Constitution enshrines in articles 101 and 102, on the one hand the organization of the State on the basis of the decentralization system, and on the other the subject-matter competence of the local government agencies (OTA) to administer local affairs. The following are relative to the application of the decentralization system in the administration of the country (art. 101, para. 1).

The organization of the State in accordance with the principle of decentralization is consolidated by its division into administrative regions, which are designated on the basis of certain substantive criteria, such as the “geo-economic, social and transportation conditions” (article 101, paragraph 2, of the Constitution). According to this system, there shall be established and operate regional State agencies which shall have general decisive authority on matters concerning their region. The central services and organs of the State shall have, in addition to special powers, the general guidance, coordination and control of the legality of the acts of regional officers (art. 101, para. 3). In this way, the overall unity of the action of the (central and decentralized) administrative organs of the State shall be achieved.

With regard to the administration of local affairs, the Constitution expressly stipulates that the same shall belong to the subject-matter competence of the local government agencies. In this field, the Constitution stipulates the following.

The local government agencies shall have the exclusive authority to administer, dispose of and, in whichever other way, in essence, regulate matters that are characterized as “local affairs” (article 102, paragraph 1 of the Constitution and Presidential Decree No. 410/1995 pertaining to the “Code on Municipalities and Communities”). The Constitution safeguards the presumption of competence in favour of the local government agencies to administer local affairs, and assigns to the law the task to determine the range and the categories of local affairs, as well as their allocation to the separate levels of local administration.

The affairs which refer to a limited number of persons are characterized as “local”, i.e. they concern the advancement of the interests (from a social, cultural, spiritual, economic, and ecological point of view) of citizens falling within the competence of the local administration agencies, and the satisfaction of certain of their basic needs. Article 102, paragraph 1, of the Constitution provides that the exercise of competencies constituting a mission of the State may be assigned by law to local government agencies. According to the case-law, it is accepted that, in view of the decentralized system of administration, it is only possible for central or regional competencies to be transferred to local government agencies, but not vice versa.

Following the constitutional revision that was effected in 2001, the Constitution safeguards both the first level of local administration (municipalities and communities) and the second level relating to prefectural administration. Already prior to the constitutional revision,

there was set up by Law No. 2218/1994, as well as by other relevant laws (i.e. Laws Nos. 2240/1994, 2307/1995, 2396/1996, 2399/1996, 2503/1997, Presidential Decree No. 30/1996 codificatory of all the above-stated Laws, Code of Prefectural Administration), the second degree of local administration operating at the level of prefectures. The institution of the elected prefect is relatively new for the Greek legal order, given the fact that citizens first came to elect local dignitaries at a prefectural level in 1994, and did so again in 1998. We note here that the participation of citizens from European Union member States in the municipal and prefectural elections is provided for by Presidential Decree No. 133/1997.

The Constitution expressly endows the local government agencies with administrative independence, in other words with the power to pursue their goals by means of their own administrative organs. The authorities of the local government agencies shall be elected by universal and secret ballot (art. 102, para. 2).

The Constitution further establishes the obligation of the State to provide for the securing of funds necessary to fulfil the mission of local government agencies which enjoy financial independence (art. 101, para. 5). More specifically, it is envisaged that every transfer of competencies from central or regional officers of the State to local government entails also the transfer of the corresponding funds. Besides, the Constitution safeguards the principle of transparency in the management of such funds and expressly provides for the possibility of the latter determining and collecting local revenues.

In addition, the Constitution provides for the exercise of supervision over the local government agencies by the bodies of the Central Administration of the State (art. 102, para. 4). However, this supervision consists exclusively of the control of the legality of their acts, without impeding their initiative and freedom of action.

With a view to the more efficient operation and action of the first level local government agencies, a law was enacted which provides for wide-ranging associations of municipalities and communities (Law No. 2539/1997). Prior to the entry into force of this law, there were approximately 600 municipalities and communities, whilst after its entry into force there exist 1,300 new ones.

C. Right to free and unobstructed disposal and exploitation of natural wealth and resources

The natural wealth and resources of Greece are freely disposed of and enjoyed by the Greek State under the preconditions and constraints laid down by the Constitution and the respective laws.

Article 2

Constitutional guarantee of the principle of non-discrimination

The principle of non-discrimination is enshrined in various provisions of the Greek Constitution. Article 2, paragraph 1, provides that "Respect and protection of the value of the human being constitutes the primary obligation of the State". Article 4 entrenches the general principle of equality. More specifically, this article guarantees:

The principle of equality before the law (art. 4, para. 1);

The principle of gender equality (art. 4, para. 2). Article 116, paragraph 2, provides for the adoption of positive measures for promoting equality between men and women;

The principle of equality of eligibility for civil service posts (art. 4, para. 3);

The principle of equality of contribution to public charges (art. 4, para. 5); and

The principle of equality in performing military obligations (art. 4, para. 6).

Moreover, according to article 5, paragraph 2, "All persons living within the Greek territory shall enjoy full protection of their life, honour and freedom, irrespective of nationality, race or language and of religious or political beliefs. Exceptions shall be permitted only in cases provided for by international law." Article 13, paragraph 1, provides that enjoyment of individual and civil rights does not depend on the individual's religious beliefs.

According to article 22, paragraph 1 b, "All workers, irrespective of gender or other distinctions, shall be entitled to equal pay for work of equal value." More generally, any form of discrimination in the enjoyment and exercise of individual and social rights is considered as contrary to the Constitution.

The adoption of positive measures

In 1998, the Council of State accepted explicitly the need to adopt positive measures in order to attain effective gender equality and considered that affirmative-action policies conform with the Constitution. The Council of State held that "in case where one may find that a certain category of persons has been discriminated against due to such social prejudices so that the inflexible application of equality would result in a façade of equality, while in fact it consolidates and perpetuates the existing inequalities, the adoption by the legislator [...] of appropriate and necessary positive measures in favour of such categories [...], until such time as real equality is established, fully conforms with the spirit of the constitutional principle of equality. Consequently, if such conditions exist, the adoption of positive measures in favour of women with a view to accelerate the attainment of effective equality between men and women is not contrary to the Constitution" (Judgements Nos. 1917-1929/1998 and 1933/1998).

The above case law concerning gender equality may also be relevant to acts considered discriminatory when they are based on race,

colour, descent, national or ethnic origin and thus have purpose of nullifying or impairing the recognition, enjoyment or exercise, on an equal footing, of human rights and fundamental freedoms. In these cases, positive measures taken with a view to achieving not only de jure, but also de facto equality are fully consistent with paragraph 4 of article 1 of the Constitution.

The taking of affirmative action has recently acquired a constitutional dimension. Under the revised paragraph 2 of article 116 of the Constitution, "Adoption of positive measures for promoting equality between men and women does not constitute discrimination on the basis of gender. The State shall attend to the elimination of inequalities actually existing, especially to the detriment of women."

At the legislative level, the Greek Parliament recently adopted a legislative provision (article 6 of Law No. 2839/2000), whereby the balanced participation of men and women is sought in the decision-making process concerning the State, legal persons of public and private law (belonging to the public sector), as well as first- and second-level local government bodies.

In the field of political rights, Law No. 2910/2001 added a new paragraph 3 to article 54 of Presidential Decree No. 410/1995 "On Code of Municipalities and Communities"; according to which "the number of candidate councillors from each gender shall be equal to at least one-third of the total number of candidates of each list". A similar provision was added to Presidential Decree No. 30/1996 (Official Gazette 21A) "On Code of Prefectural Local Government".

Another example of positive measures relating to rights that are safeguarded by the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights constitute Law No. 2643/1998 on the employment of persons belonging to special categories and Law No. 2956/2001 on the rescheduling of the Manpower Employment Organization, regulating employment terms of persons with special needs.

With regard to the employment of persons with special needs in the public sector, in pursuance of the aforementioned legislation, public services, legal entities of public law and local administration agencies are obliged to appoint or hire, in line of priority, disadvantaged persons or parents with many children, as well as persons belonging to other vulnerable groups, without the latter undergoing a public competition or selection process, to a percentage of 5 per cent on the aggregate number of vacant posts announced. Law No. 2643/1998 also provides for the placement of persons with special needs to job positions in the private sector, i.e. in businesses or business undertakings, Greek or foreign-owned, operating in Greece.

Foreigners as bearers of human rights

In principle, every person, irrespective of his/her nationality is a bearer of the civil and social rights guaranteed by the Constitution, unless the relevant constitutional provision reserves a specific right only to Greek citizens. This is the case of the following rights: the right to equality (art. 4), the right to free exit and entry into the country (art. 5, para. 4, subpara. 2), the right to assembly (art. 11, para. 1), freedom of association (art. 12), the right to free education (art. 16, para. 4), the right to found political parties (art. 29, para. 1), the right to vote and to be elected as Member of Parliament (art. 51, para. 3, and art. 55).

However, the Constitution, in the instances mentioned above, does not prohibit the exercise and enjoyment of individual and social rights by foreigners, but it refers instead the pertinent matters to the common legislator. In any case, the legislator is bound to take into account the constitutional provisions pertaining to the protection of human dignity (art. 2) and the protection of life, honour and freedom of all persons living within Greek territory, without making any distinction whatsoever as to citizenship (art. 5, para. 2), as well as international treaties on the protection of human rights to the extent that these treaties do not make any distinction between nationals and foreigners. If there is not an express legislative provision, which, moreover, must be in conformity with the Constitution, as well as with international treaties, the Administration is not allowed to prohibit the exercise of an activity by foreign nationals.

In accordance with article 4 of the Civil Code, a foreign national enjoys the same civil rights that are accorded to Greek citizens.

Foreign nationals of European Union member States have, in accordance with Presidential Decrees Nos. 499/1987 and 545/1983, the right to free movement and stay in Greece with the view to the exercise of a paid or non-paid activity under the same prerequisites as those required for Greek nationals.

Foreign nationals of non-European Union member States, who are holders of a residence permit, enjoy the same labour rights and have the same obligations as Greek workers relating to remuneration, working terms and conditions, their social security rights and other financial obligations prescribed by the legislation in force (article 6 of Presidential Decree No. 359/1997 on "Granting of limited duration residence card to foreigners", and article 4 of Presidential Decree No. 358/1997 on "Prerequisites and procedure for the legal residence and work in Greece of foreigners who are nationals of European countries which are not members of the EU").

The same applies in the case of foreigners who are holders of a work permit that was granted to them according to the procedure outlined in Law No. 2910/2001 on "Entry and stay of foreigners into the Greek Territory, Acquisition of the Greek citizenship by naturalization and other provisions." In the same vein, the Greek State safeguards the right of refugees to work.

Moreover, according to article 7 of Law No. 264/1982 relating to trade union rights, the foreigners who work legally in Greece have the right to participate in trade unions.

With regard to housing, migrants who live and work regularly in Greece and from whose income contributions are deducted in favour of the Workers' Housing Agency (OEK) are, ipso jure, beneficiaries of OEK's services without discrimination.

In similar fashion, the National General Labour Collective Agreements provide for measures against discrimination. Pursuant to article 20 of the National General Labour Collective Agreement for the years 2000 and 2001, the equality of treatment is mainly guaranteed in matters pertaining to health and safety at work, protection from any form of discrimination in employment on grounds of gender, nationality, race or beliefs, minimum employment age, maternity protection, access to training or refresher training, respect for their right to organize and for their collective action and facilitation of their access to social security and education systems.

According to article 22 of the same National General Labour Collective Agreement, the contracting parties agree that all efforts should be made to ensure respect for all workers, irrespective of race, nationality, culture or religious beliefs and to facilitate their adjustment to the working environment.

Foreigners who provide dependent work within Greek territory, independently of their legal status of residence, are obligatorily insured with the Social Security Foundation (IKA) from the first day of work, if they are not insured in any other social security organization, while the provisions pertaining to social protection are equally applicable to foreigners, as well as to Greek citizens. Exceptions are provided for from the general rule, according to which the public services in general shall be obligated to deny rendering their services to foreigners, who are not in possession of a passport or other legal travel document or entry visa or residence permit or who, by and large, fail to prove that they stay lawfully in Greece, except for cases of foreigners and members of their families who need urgent hospitalization in hospitals, therapeutic centres or clinics.

Moreover, a special additional surcharge to the tune of 75 per cent has been established with regard to contributions owed by employers, who fail to insure foreigners in their employ (art. 11 of Law No. 1976/1991).

Furthermore, according to the case law of the Court of Auditors, the protection of every asset, and as such it is also meant the right to pension of a civil servant, as well as that of the members of his/her family who are entitled to it, must also be ensured for those who do not possess Greek citizenship, under the same preconditions that the same is safeguarded for Greek

citizens. Pursuant to the afore-cited case law, article 21, paragraph 1, of the Constitution, which safeguards the right to protection of marriage and family, is also applicable to families created between Greeks and foreigners, regardless of whether children are borne to them or not (Judgement No. 1617/1998).

For further information regarding the measures and programmes that are implemented by the State for securing equal opportunities to persons belonging to vulnerable social groups, see in

particular hereunder under articles 6 and 9.

Participation in development cooperation

Greece has run an aid programme for third countries, "The Aid Programme of Greece 1997/2001", which covers, inter alia, promotion of economic, social or cultural rights, and has been submitted to the Development Assistance Committee of OECD, after Greece's membership in that Committee. Related to this, Greece submits annually to the Committee the annual report of the Greek Bilateral and Multilateral Official Development Co-operation and Assistance.

Greece also participates in the Stability Pact for South-Eastern Europe and in the High Level Steering Group, both of which are placed within the framework of international effort for reconstruction and development of South-Eastern Europe. Greece's contribution to the Stability Pact amounted to 25.8 million euros for the years 2000 and 2001.

In parallel, Greece has developed the Hellenic Plan for the Economic Reconstruction of the Balkans. The purpose of this Plan is the economic support for the implementation of various programmes in the social and economic reconstruction, services and production proper. For the implementation of the Plan, Greece grants economic resources, amounting to 550 million euros out of the State budget, for a period of five years, that is 2001-2005.

Moreover, Greece is a Member of the Black Sea Economic Co-operation pact (BSEC), which was founded in 1992. It contributes to the implementation of the BSEC Declaration related to Democracy and Prosperity, to be realized through a free economy, social equity and safety for each country in the area.

The percentage of gross national product (GNP) that was granted for official development assistance during 1999 reached 0.17 per cent of GNP. By the end of 2000, this percentage rose approximately to 0.20 per cent of GNP.

Among other fundamental principles that determine Greece's strategy of development cooperation are the struggle against famine, the promotion of peace, the functioning of societies where freedom, human rights, democracy and rule of law are respected, the provision of basic health services, as well as the environmental protection and sustainability.

In general, Greece recognizes that the structural changes aiming at the promotion of development and improvement of national resources in third countries require significant international support. Greece puts special emphasis on the development of human resources, as well as on social progress based on gender and social equality. Greece also considers that a holistic approach to these matters should take into consideration the need for the protection of the environment and natural resources. In the implementation of all these issues, Greece attaches great importance to working in partnership with the recipient countries, in order to ensure that the assistance granted is used in the most effective way and in conformity with the recipient countries' needs and wishes.

In particular, regarding the realization of the right to adequate food, Greece has developed, through the competent Ministry of Agriculture, "partnerships" with African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries, Mediterranean countries since 1988, and more recently with countries in South-Eastern Europe, Central and Eastern Europe and the Confederation of Independent States. These partnerships provide for multi-fold Technical Assistance and Food Aid.

Projects are designed for small land-holders, males, females and young farmers, members of cooperatives and associations, experts of the public sector, researchers, etc. Projects having been implemented since 1988 cover the following broader units: non-farm income generation; production diversification, processing, marketing (plant and animal production fisheries); cooperatives; institutional capacity building; research; consultancy for public sector's institutions; and international conferences, and workshops on the economic role of rural women.

II. Specific rights of the International Covenant

on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

Article 6

The 1980-1990 decade witnessed an increased effort to provide rural women in Greece with a legislative support framework, enhancing their economic and political rights, so as to enable their full participation in economic, as well as in political activities. Laws and decrees were enacted defining gender participation and representation in political-economic associations, such as cooperatives, farmers' associations, unions etc. Other issues such as insurance, credit and financing were also dealt with in a gender perspective.

Indicatively, the main laws, ministerial decisions and the relevant provisions of the "acquis communautaire", operationalized at national level, are the following:

Law No. 1257/82 on cooperatives provides for the participation of married or divorced women and of widows, who have their own rural assets (land, equipment, etc.). At the same time, the right to representation is provided for married women, whose main or complementary activity is agriculture, irrespective of proprietorship or tenure rights;

Law No. 1361/83 provides for women's participation in any union association (agricultural union associations) unconditionally, eliminating any gender discrimination, as it concerns active political representation;

In implementing EU Council Regulation No. 797/85, the Ministerial Decision No. 28331/86 defines that no gender-based constraint exists as regards the leadership of the farm exploitation, the latter perceived as "commonly owned";

Law No. 1790/88 eliminates the discrimination existing for unmarried women, as it concerns their rights of registration in land settlement schemes;

Law No. 1759/88 provides for an insurance scheme for women farmers, working in family exploitation, as non-remunerated members;

Law No. 1329/83 provides for the property independence of the spouses. The same Law provides also that women farmers have equal access to rural credit and financing with their husbands;

Greece has ratified all international conventions mentioned in paragraph 8 of the Guidelines of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

Greece has also ratified the European Social Charter (1961), the Additional Protocol to the European Social Charter (1988), as well as the Additional Protocol to the European Social Charter providing for a system of Collective Complaints (1995).

The right to work is protected by the Greek Constitution, article 22 of which stipulates that "Work constitutes a right and enjoys the protection of the State which seeks to create conditions of employment for all citizens and pursues the moral and material advancement of the rural and urban working population."

Information supplied on situation, level and trends of employment etc. according to gender disaggregated data in the agricultural sector

Table 1

A. Labour Force Survey 1998, 1999

Population of 15 years and over, by employment status and sex in rural areas

1998 (in thousands)

	1st quarter	2nd quarter	3rd quarter	4th quarter
Both sexes:				
Labour force	1 004.2	1 008.4	1 017.6	1 005.3
Employed	931.7	949.6	965.3	938.7
Unemployed	72.6	58.8	52.4	66.6
Males:				
Labour force	622.0	622.8	626.7	620.0
Employed	589.3	596.6	606.7	593.0
Unemployed	32.7	26.1	20.0	27.0
Females:				
Labour force	382.2	385.6	391.0	385.3

Employed	342.3	352.9	358.5	345.8
Unemployed	39.9	32.7	32.4	39.6
1999 (in thousands)				
	1st quarter	2nd quarter	3rd quarter	4th quarter
Both sexes:				
Labour force	1 006.9	974.3	978.2	973.7
Employed	928.8	903.1	912.4	896.1
Unemployed	78.0	71.2	65.8	77.6
Males:				
Labour force	614.2	592.0	594.5	594.3
Employed	581.2	564.5	569.1	562.1
Unemployed	33.0	27.5	25.4	32.2
Females:				
Labour force	392.7	382.3	383.7	3 379.4
Employed	347.7	338.6	343.3	334.0
Unemployed	45.0	43.7	40.4	45.4

B. Employed persons of 15 years and over, by branch of economic activity and sex in 1998 and 1999, in agriculture, livestock, fishing

1998 (in thousands)

	1st quarter	2nd quarter	3rd quarter	4th quarter
Both sexes	713.0	704.2	701.2	699.7
Males	414.7	406.9	405.7	403.0
Females	298.3	297.3	295.5	296.6

1999 (in thousands)

	1st quarter	2nd quarter	3rd quarter	4th quarter
Both sexes	712.3	669.1	679.3	690.8
Males	403.3	385.3	389.8	394.8
Females	308.9	238.8	289.5	296.0

C. Employed persons of 15 years and over, by sex in rural areas

1998 (in thousands)

	1st quarter	2nd quarter	3rd quarter	4th quarter
Both sexes	931.7	949.6	965.3	938.7
Males	589.3	596.6	606.7	593.0
Females	342.3	352.9	358.5	345.8

1999 (in thousands)

	1st quarter	2nd quarter	3rd quarter	4th quarter
Both sexes	928.8	903.1	912.4	896.1
Males	581.2	564.5	569.1	562.1
Females	347.7	338.6	343.3	334.0

D. Unemployed persons of 15 years and over, by sex in rural areas

1998 (in thousands)

1st quarter	2nd quarter	3rd quarter	4th quarter
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Both sexes	72.6	58.8	52.4	66.6
Males	32.7	26.1	20.0	27.0
Females	39.9	32.7	32.4	39.6

1999 (in thousands)

	1st quarter	2nd quarter	3rd quarter	4th quarter
Both sexes	78.0	71.2	65.8	77.6
Males	33.0	27.5	25.4	32.2
Females	45.0	43.7	40.4	45.4

E. Unemployed female age groups

1998 (in thousands)

	1st quarter	2nd quarter	3rd quarter	4th quarter
Females	39.9	32.7	32.4	39.6
15-19 years	5.0	4.5	5.7	5.1
20-24 years	13.9	11.5	12.2	13.2
25-29 years	6.3	6.4	5.2	7.4
30-44 years	10.1	7.5	7.0	9.7
45-64 years	4.5	2.8	2.3	4.1

1999 (in thousands)

	1st quarter	2nd quarter	3rd quarter	4th quarter
Females	45.0	43.7	40.4	45.4
15-19 years	5.7	5.2	5.9	6.1
20-24 years	12.9	13.5	11.5	12.3
25-29 years	9.0	8.5	8.4	8.4
30-44 years	11.8	10.1	10.0	13.3
45-64 years	5.7	6.5	4.7	5.4

Data figuring above point to three basic assumptions (working hypotheses):

There is a gender discrepancy with regard to total employment (farm and nonfarm opportunities) in rural areas;

Female unemployment percentage appears quite increased to that of male unemployment percentage. The same holds true for active population in agriculture, livestock and fishing; and

Female age groups more severely affected by unemployment are those of 20 to 24 years and of 30 to 44 years.

The Greek Government's chief priority is increasing citizens' prosperity. An important factor in achieving this is improving the employment situation. The Government's macroeconomic policy is deemed credible by markets, and successfully fosters high and sustainable growth rates, while, at the same time, keeping inflation and interest rates down. Furthermore, it promotes structural reform in order to ensure better functioning markets and strengthen competition. The Government's macroeconomic policy of the past few years enabled Greece to fulfil the criteria laid down in the European Union Maastricht Treaty; this in itself is a remarkable achievement. The most important thing about it, however, is that it creates favourable conditions for further growth. Putting public finances back on a sound footing, stability of prices and exchange rates and a reduction of interest rates lead, inter alia, to a rise in real incomes, as well as in business activity and investments. Increase in investments and reduction of interest rates will lead to job creation.

Employment - general trends

In Greece, employment increases considerably in the long-term, while, in the short-term, its rate increases slightly. There are fluctuations, depending on seasons, in employment rates in certain branches of economic activity, e.g. tourism, where employment presents its highest levels in spring and mainly in summer, and drops in autumn and in winter.

Table 2

Trends in employment

	1989	1994	1999						
	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total
Employed people	2 379 702	1 283 365	3 663 067	2 449 439	1 336 718	3 786 157	2 466 482	1 473 310	3 939 792
Unemployed people	104 806	150 662	255 468	157 871	212 389	370 261	201 789	321 589	523 375
Labour force	2 484 507	1 434 028	3 918 535	2 607 310	1 549 108	4 156 418	2 668 268	1 794 899	4 463 167
Unemployment rate in per cent	4.4	10.5	6.5	6.1	13.7	8.9	7.6	17.9	11.7

Source: National Statistical Service of Greece, Labour Force Survey, National Observatory for Employment.

In 1999, the employed totalled 3,939,792 people, of which 2,466,482 were men and 1,473,310 women. From 1988 to 1999, employment increased by approximately 7.7 per cent. In the same period, there was a faster increase in the employment of women, 15.4 per cent, while the respective increase for men was approximately 3.6 per cent.

The large majority of the employed persons (approximately 3,704,140), work full-time and only 228,721 persons work part-time. From 1988 to 1999, the number of part-time jobs increased faster than that of full-time jobs. In particular, during the said period, full-time increased by 7.3 per cent, while the increase for part-time work was 15.9 per cent. Although the rate of part-time work continues to be low compared with the total employment rate, there is a trend towards its rise in the long term.

Developments in the field of unemployment over time and structure of unemployment

In 1999, according to data drawn from the Labour Force Survey, the number of unemployed totalled 532,578 people, whose 210,169 were men and 322,419 women. In 1999, the unemployment rate was 11.9 per cent on an average (the unemployment rate was 11.9 per cent, 11.7 per cent, 11.6 per cent and 12.4 per cent in the first, second, third and fourth quarter of 1999 respectively). From 1990 to 1999, the number of the unemployed in Greece increased by 146,000 people. It is noted, however, that in the same period the average annual increase of the labour force in the country was the third largest among the European Union member States. Although the number of people wishing to enter the Greek labour market has risen, the average annual increase of employment in percentage points in Greece was 5.5 times greater than in the EU, which led to the creation of 255,000 new jobs. These comments show that the rise in unemployment in the country is largely due to the increase in the work force, particularly because of the influx of women and immigrants. At the same time, however, the Greek economy has shown its stable capacity to create jobs, at a rate more intensive than any other time in recent years. It is estimated that this stable macro-economic framework, which has already been analysed, and the expected improvement in productivity will have an even more favourable effect on the creation of new jobs in the coming years.

In accordance with data recently made available, in the second quarter of the year 2001 the unemployment rate was reduced almost by 1 per cent (from 11.1 per cent in the second quarter of the year 2000 to 10.2 per cent). The unemployment rate for women (15.4 per cent) was reduced faster than for men (unemployment rate 6.7 per cent, reduction by 0.6 per cent). The number of the unemployed is estimated at 444,700 (it declined by 9.4 per cent compared with 2000). There is a remarkable decline in youth unemployment (by 11.8 per cent for the age group 15-29) and in the long-term unemployment (by 15.5 per cent).

Structure of employment based on sex

Data on employment differ between men and women. Women compared with men face greater difficulties in finding a job. In 1999, 60.5 per cent of the unemployed were women. In the same period, when the average unemployment rate was 11.9 per cent, the unemployment rate for women and men was 18 per cent and 8 per cent respectively. Nevertheless, the situation seems to change in favour of women, since their participation rate in the labour market rises rapidly. In 1988, women constituted 34.9 per cent of the employed and 36.7 per cent of the labour force, while the respective rates for the year 1999 were 37.4 per cent and 40.2 per cent. Women are more often engaged in part-time work compared with men. In 1999, the rate for men engaged in part-time work was 3.3 per cent, while the respective rate for women was 9.9 per cent. In fact, the rate for part-time employed men rises more rapidly than for women over the years, which will lead to a more equal distribution of part-time jobs between the sexes.

In order to meet the difficulties that women face in the labour market, the Greek Government and the social partners decided, apart from taking additional measures, to incorporate the principle of gender equality into the four pillars of the National Action Plan for Employment. The principle of gender equality is also incorporated into employment and vocational training programmes, in which women participate at a rate proportional to that of women's unemployment. New opportunities are offered to strengthen female entrepreneurship, and women receive training and education in dynamic occupations oriented towards the society of information.

Regarding measures taken to promote employment and reduce unemployment for women, reference is made to the national reports submitted to the International Labour Organization as follows: in 2000 on the application of the International Labour Convention (ILO) Convention No. 122 (appendix II), in 1997 on the application of the ILO Convention No. 111 (appendix II), in 1999 on the application of the ILO Convention No. 111 (appendix II), and in 2000 on the application of the ILO Convention No. 100 (appendix II).

Structure of employment based on age

In Greece, young people are the second group which has difficulties in finding a job. However, the distribution of the unemployed by groups based on age in the years 1988-1999 shows that the participation rates for very young people in the total of the unemployed were reduced during the said period. While in 1988 the unemployment rates for young people aged 15-19 and 20-24 were 14.3 per cent and 29.7 per cent of the total of the unemployed respectively, in 1999 the said rates were reduced to 8.6 per cent and 24.5 per cent respectively.

Policy measures to prevent and reduce youth unemployment

The basic objective of the policy implemented is to prevent long-term unemployment among young people (more than six months of unemployment), either by finding them a job, or by offering a choice of different programmes to boost their employability. Unemployment among young people that has already exceeded six months is also to be combated in a similar way.

Integrated intervention for preventing and combating unemployment is being implemented with the introduction of a series of measures (training, work experience, employment, self-employment), which are further tailored to meet needs in the individual target groups and the requirements of the labour market. Either special programmes aimed at specific groups (e.g. university graduates) are being introduced, or favourable arrangements are being made through existing programmes for specific groups (e.g. for the unemployment in pockets of unemployment). As far as sectoral specialization within programmes is concerned, projects are being implemented either in sectors in which increase in employment is expected or in those with a serious unemployment problem (e.g. programmes concerning cultural employment have been planned and are being implemented), while special incentives have been incorporated into existing programmes to encourage the unemployed to learn new technologies.

Integrated intervention in the problem of unemployment is the objective at the employment promotion centres of the Manpower Employment Organization (OAED) with individually tailored support for the unemployed by special advisors. Work advisors attempt to place unemployed young people in non-subsidized jobs and, when this is not possible, to offer them one of the following choices:

To attend a short-term training programme at the Job Club;

To attend a continuous training alternate course in collaboration with the Employment Promotion Centres and the OAED's Centres for Vocational Technical Training;

To attend an apprenticeship course for young people under 18;

To attend courses at the Institutes for Vocational Training (for lyceum graduates);

To gain work experience through the "Stage" Programme; and

To take part in the main programme of the OAED, "Young People in Active Life", which consists of two subprogrammes, especially the subprogramme "Young Professionals" promoting self-employment. It must be pointed out that 60 per cent of new jobs created through the said programme were maintained beyond its end.

In 1999, in relation to previous years, the implementation of the programme "Young People in Active Life" brought about an innovation: part of the programme concerns subsidization for the creation of new jobs and new businesses in the cultural sector, i.e. sectors related to the exploitation of the cultural heritage, music, performance, visual and graphic arts, books, cultural tourism, and audio-visual media. Some of these sub-sectors are facing a serious unemployment problem (e.g. performance arts), while in others a considerable increase in employment is expected (e.g. audio-visual media).

To ensure greater participation of unemployed young people in the programme "Young People in Active Life", the procedures for implementing programmes are being simplified and the subsidization of the subprogramme "Young Professionals" is more favourable, as long as the unemployed person's activities are related to computers or technology in general. More funds are also made available to areas with low development and higher unemployment indicators, as well as to agricultural areas and islands.

Persons with special needs

Persons with special needs face difficulties in competing against other people in the labour market. In order to increase the employment rate of people belonging to this vulnerable group, special protective legislation has been enacted, as well as programmes for the promotion of employment. Greece has validated Laws Nos. 2643/1998 and 2956/2001, which regulate employment terms for disadvantaged people in the public sector.

In particular, regarding employment of persons with special needs in the public sector according to those Laws, public services, public bodies, corporate and local self-government agencies are obliged to appoint or hire by order of priority disadvantaged persons or parents with many children, as well as other vulnerable groups, without public competition or selection for the 5 per cent of the total number of vacancies announced. Also, persons with a disability percentage of 50 per cent and above, who have limited opportunities to find a job, are entitled to three-eighths of this 50 per cent. Besides, persons who have a child, brother of husband/wife with a disability percentage of 67 per cent and above are entitled to one-eighth of the same 5 per cent of vacancies.

Moreover, public services, legal persons of public law and organizations of local authorities are also obliged to hire blind graduates of the training schools for blind telephone operators, for the 80 per cent of the total number of vacancies at telephone centres.

Besides the percentage of vacancies held for disabled people, the aforesaid laws also establish for this group of people the age of 45 as the upper age limit for employment, which is much higher than the ordinary one of 35 years of age.

It is pointed out that all the above-mentioned provisions are in effect not only for employment at public services, legal persons of

public law and organizations of local authorities, but also for employment at public companies and organizations, as well as at legal persons of private law.

Last but not least, the measures in favour of disabled people are expanded to administrative facilities concerning matters such as the reduction in working hours, as well as the improvement of both the accessibility to public buildings and the service during their exchanges with public administration.

More specifically, according to Law No. 2527/1997, civil servants who have children with a disability percentage of 67 per cent and above, or a husband/wife with a disability percentage of 100 per cent are entitled to a reduction in their working hours of one hour per day. The same regulation is in effect for civil servants who are blind or suffer paraplegia. Especially for blind telephone operators, there is a reduction in working hours of two hours per day.

The above-mentioned working hour reduction of one hour per day has been expanded by Law No. 2880/2001 to civil servants who have, by a court judgement, the custody of a disadvantaged person, as well as to single parents civil servants who undertake, under certain prerequisites, the responsibility to raise a disadvantaged person, for the duration of this responsibility.

All buildings must provide to disadvantaged people both vertical and horizontal facilities that ease accessibility outside and inside those buildings, especially public buildings that house civil services of ministries, legal persons of public and private law, organizations of local authorities and public benefit organizations which offer services concerning health and social welfare, education, tax and trade offices, parking areas, and generally speaking in public services where a high concentration of people is observed.

Finally, concerning the improvement of administrative exchanges, a series of measures have been applied, such as the following:

Disadvantaged people are always served with priority;

In cases of internal transactions, the necessary procedure is undertaken by a civil servant instead of the disadvantaged person himself;

Certificates and other documents are issued as soon as possible, in order to avoid a second arrival to the service;

Disadvantaged persons are allowed to submit their requests by telephone and receive certificates and other documents by mail;

Important public services, such as police and fire sections, hospitals, etc., are equipped with special notifications and telephone devices especially designed for disadvantaged people; and

All public services are able to provide registration forms especially designed for disadvantaged people.

Act No. 2643/1998 provides for the placement of persons with special needs to jobs in bodies of the private sector, too, i.e. in businesses or business undertakings, Greek or foreign owned operating in Greece. As already mentioned, Act No. 2643/1998 replaced Act No. 1648/1986. From 1987, when the first placements to jobs took place, till 1998, 13,000 persons with special needs were placed in jobs.

For more details about programmes for the promotion of employment of persons with special needs, reference is made to the national report submitted to ILO in 2000 on the application of the International Labour Convention No. 122.

Regional differences

In Greece, the regional unemployment rates ranged from 14.5 per cent (Western Macedonia) to 7.8 per cent (Peloponnese) in 1999. It is of interest to note the level and type of unemployment in several regions during the seasons. In the Ionian Islands, Crete and the South Aegean Islands, fluctuations in unemployment rate are sharp during the seasons, while unemployment rate is considerably reduced in summer. In the South Aegean Islands, for example, unemployment rate was 20.3 per cent, 7.3 per cent, 4.5 per cent and 14.4 per cent in the first, second, third, and fourth quarter of 1999 respectively. These fluctuations are due to the large participation of tourism in the product of the said regions, the activities of which are dynamic in the summer months, while they almost halt at the beginning, as well as at the end of the year.

In order to prevent and combat unemployment, the Government introduces statutory regulations for the modernization of the labour market, carries out a series of active policies promoting employment and makes use of opportunities provided by new information and communications technologies to acquire knowledge, enhance business activity and improve the public sector.

In the framework of the overall policy for employment, the National Employment Action Plan (ESDA) is drawn up on an annual basis as from the year 1998. The ESDAs for the years 1999 and 2000, based on European Commission Guidelines, were developed around four main axes (pillars):

Pillar I: Improvement of employability - Measures are taken for the tackling of unemployment for all population groups of the labour force and the prevention of long-term unemployment;

Pillar II: Development of the entrepreneurial spirit - Measures are taken to encourage the creation and operation of enterprises;

Pillar III: Encouragement of the adaptability of the enterprises and their workers - Actions and measures are taken for the modernization of the work organization;

Pillar IV: Reinforcement of equal opportunities policies for men and women - Measures are taken for the tackling of differences in employment between the sexes, the combination of occupational and family life and the facilitation of the reintegration into the labour market.

For more information about the policies carried out with a view to preventing and combating unemployment, reference is made to the National Report on the application of ILO Convention No. 122, which was submitted to ILO in August 2000.

In addition, a latest development was the passing in December 2000 of the Act No. 2874/2000 regarding "Promotion of Employment and Other Provisions", with a view to supplementing the employment policy by creating or/and supporting operational and institutional conditions for increasing its effectiveness. The main regulations of the new Act, which is expected to increase the effectiveness of active employment policies, are as follows:

- (a) Abolition of working hours exceeding the contractual hours of work and increase in overtime rate of remuneration aiming at reinforcing the incentives for new recruitments (article 4 of Act No. 2874/2000);
- (b) Arrangement of working time (article 5 of Act No. 2874/2000), through the conclusion of agreements between undertakings and workers on the arrangement of working hours on an annual basis. The arrangement of working time on an annual basis enables undertakings to faster adapt the production to fluctuating demand and to develop their capital equipment more rationally. This leads to the reduction of cost of production and, also, to the increase in productivity, which results in increase in business competitiveness and in employment and in reduction in unemployment rates;
- (c) Reduction in contributions paid by employers (article 6 of Act No. 2874/2000), which will, inter alia, result in the reduction in the total labour cost in all undertakings, which in turn will be encouraged to make new recruitment in order to meet their needs.

Also, under the above-mentioned Act, a Council of Experts is being established at the Ministry of Labour and Social Security dealing with issues of employment, social security and social policy. The said Council shall present proposals, study and analyse developments at national, European and international level. It shall also process alternative possibilities for the choice of suitable measures, assess the effectiveness of relevant interventions and give expert opinion for any question assigned to it by the Minister of Labour and Social Security. The composition of this Council satisfies the need for the existence of a central advisory/expert opinion-giving body for the purposes determined above.

Productive work

National Action Plan for Employment

The adaptation of businesses and the workforce to the new conditions of production and work organization is a major axis of the Greek employment policy. The third pillar (basic axis) of the National Action Plan for Employment refers in particular to the encouragement of adaptation of businesses and of their workers, with a view to enabling businesses to adapt to changing conditions, so that their competitiveness may be preserved and increase, thus producing beneficial effect on employment.

Employee in-house training programmes organized by the OAED

The OAED implements in-house training programmes for workers in both the private and the public sector, which are intended to help workers adjust more rapidly to the new requirements entailed by the introduction of new technologies and new methods of work organization. These programmes are intended to increase workers' productivity and competitiveness of businesses. They consist of two subprogrammes, the first of which covers businesses with from 1 to 99 employees, and the second covers those with 100 or more employees. The implementation of the said programmes has been very successful. The OAED also implements a training programme for the self-employed and for people employed in businesses of one to five employees.

Community Initiative ADAPT

The European Community Initiative ADAPT made a contribution to increasing productivity. The Initiative sought to facilitate the adjustment of the workforce to industrial changes and to assist businesses to increase their productivity. It should be noted that the social partners played an active part in the initiative, since most of its projects involved them in the partnerships.

Act No. 2639/1998

Act No. 2639 passed in 1998 provides for more flexible forms of work organization. It has established regulation for informal employment arrangements, introduced measures for parttime employment and provided for the operation of private employment agencies. The new legislative framework led to the signing of 190,311 contracts involving new forms of employment in all parts of the country up to 31 December 1999. The new provisions are intended to introduce a series of structural changes in the labour market, which will contribute to the preservation of existing jobs and the creation of new ones, while also increasing business productivity and competitiveness.

Act No. 2874/2000 ("Promotion of Employment and other provisions")

Act No. 2874/2000 provides for the working time organization on an annual basis, allows businesses to adapt as quickly as possible their production to changes in demand through the decrease of the need for accumulation of reserves and through the more rational utilization of their capital equipment. This entails the possibility of reduction of the production cost, and, also, leads to the increase in productivity, having as a result the increase in employment and the decrease in unemployment. A large part of Greek industrial and trade businesses look forward to the application of flexible time organization. On the other hand, as far as workers are concerned, the flexible organization of working time offers a better combination of their working life with their training activities and their family needs.

Free choice of employment - safeguarding of rights

The right to freely participate in the economic and social life of the country is one of the citizens' fundamental rights (article 5 of the Constitution). In particular, article 22, paragraph 3, of the Constitution prohibits any form of compulsory work and provides for special regulations in case of war or urgent social emergencies resulting from disasters. Both Greek nationals and foreigners, either bound by a dependent working relationship or being liberal professionals, enjoy the said right.

Technical and vocational programmes - practical availability

The Ministry of Agriculture/Directorates for Extension Services and Home Rural Economics organize technical and vocational training in the following sectors: agricultural (forestry, plant production, fisheries, animal breeding); home rural economics (nutrition - food technology, management of family resources, consumer protection, family caring, gender equality); cooperatives (management and administration); and non-farm activities (agrotourism, processing and marketing, handicrafts, agricultural machinery, management of small enterprises and computers).

In the years 1995-1999, the Home Rural Economics Directorate, in cooperation with regional services in the country, implemented the following training courses:

Table 3

Training courses

Sector	Training courses	Participants
Handicrafts	329	7 7739
Clothing	173	4 300
Food technology	136	3 118
Agrotourism	107	2 499
Computers	5	109
Management	3	62
Third age care	3	59
Child care	1	25
Agricultural machinery	2	65
Total	759	17 976

Courses such as described above are addressed to rural women, whether engaged in primary sector directly or indirectly (non-remunerated members of family exploitation), or in non-farm activities.

The Extension Services Directorate, currently decentralized, focuses more on processing, marketing and diversification training, albeit the fact that advanced cultivation and protection methods still hold strongly in the farmer's training needs.

These courses are addressed to both male and female farmers. Gender disaggregated data about professional training appears below. In 2001, professional training appears significantly lesser, compared to previous years' activities. The decline is exclusively due to the fact that professional training since 2001 has been assigned to and carried out by "DIMITRA", the new Organization for Agricultural and Vocational Training.

Table 4

Training courses by gender data

Years	Total participants	Male (in per cent)	Female (in per cent)
1997	21 567	55.5	44.5
1998	23 965	48.4	51.6
1999	15 903	30.7	49.3
2001	861	62.7	37.3

Source: Extension Directorate/Ministry of Agriculture.

Technical and vocational training systems/programmes

In Greece, two vocational training systems are developed: initial vocational training and continuing vocational training.

Initial vocational training includes Apprenticeship Schools and Institutes for Vocational Training. Apprenticeship courses last three years, and are attended by people who have completed the first three classes of secondary education.

Public and private bodies implement continuing vocational training programmes.

The Manpower Employment Organization (OAED) plays a major role in the implementation of vocational training programmes. The OAED is a public body which operates under the supervision of the Ministry of Labour and Social Security, and is managed by an Administrative Council where the State and the social partners are equally represented. The OAED implements programmes for initial training at the Apprenticeship Schools and the Institutes for Vocational Training (IEK), programmes for continuing and alternate

continuing training and other training programmes for unemployed young people that combine theoretical training with practical training and help them acquire professional qualifications to meet the requirements of the labour market. Also, the OAED, through the Service for Special Social Groups, implements vocational training programmes and programmes for the psychosocial support of persons with special needs who cannot participate in the regular programmes; the said programmes last two or four years and are implemented at the OAED's special Centres for Vocational Training.

It must be pointed out that a decision has been taken for the planning of OAED's training programmes in the future to begin with setting down the needs of enterprises, and to lead to all graduates gaining vocational experience, after training has finished, in enterprises which will be incorporated into special programmes for subsidized employment. As a result, training programmes will not be carried out unless positions for practical work and gaining work experience have previously been secured.

In 1999, important improvements in the provision of vocational training programmes were made: the statutory and administrative operational framework of the programmes was improved, social partners' and local agencies' involvement was intensified regarding the design and implementation of programmes, and substantive changes were made in the accreditation of training agencies. It is intended to improve vocational training so that it may remain with workers throughout their professional life, and offer lifelong learning and the chance to adapt to ever-changing conditions. Further reference is recommended to the national report made in 2000 on the application of the ILO Convention No. 122 regarding "Employment policy" (appendix II).

Female farmers and self-employed women are often faced with the difficulty of preschool children and third-age care without available support units. The difficulty is mainly encountered in mountainous or less-favoured regions.

Special difficulties in attaining full, effective and freely chosen employment

Special difficulties encountered in attaining the objectives relating to the full, productive and freely chosen employment are as follows:

The number of vacant jobs supplied by business is significantly below that of vacant jobs in demand;

There is a wide discrepancy between the supplied jobs and those in demand in terms of professional qualifications, mainly due to the slow rate of adjustment of the typical educational system to the needs of the labour market; and

There is a considerable increase in the number of immigrant workers.

With a view to overcoming the aforementioned difficulties, the following efforts are being made:

To link more closely and systematically typical education with continuing training;

To investigate systematically into the needs of the labour market at local level;

To ensure closer and systematic collaboration of the Employment Promotion Centres with the Centres for Vocational Training, the social partners, and the local bodies of the labour market; and

To enforce and extend active policies designed to combat unemployment, especially to provide individually tailored support for the unemployed through the implementation of special programmes by the OAED.

Prohibition of discrimination in vocational guidance training employment occupation on grounds of race, sex, religious beliefs, and national origin

In accordance with article 5 of the Greek Constitution, "All persons have the right to develop freely their personality and to participate in the social, economic and political life of the country, insofar as they do not infringe the rights of others or violate the Constitution and the good usages. All persons living within the Greek territory enjoy full protection of their life, honour and liberty irrespective of nationality, race or language and of religious or political beliefs." Also, under article 13 of the Constitution, "Freedom of religious conscience is inviolable. The enjoyment of civil rights and liberties does not depend on the individual's religious beliefs."

Immigrant workers

In accordance with the provisions of the Civil Code, "immigrant workers enjoy the same rights as nationals" (art. 4) and "the contracting parties can choose the law which must be applied to their contractual relationship" (art. 25).

In accordance with the provisions of Presidential Decrees Nos. 499/1987 and 545/1983, nationals of the European Union member States are entitled to free movement and residence in Greece, in order to carry out a paid or non-paid activity under the same conditions as Greek workers.

Foreigners who are nationals of European countries that are non-members of the European Union, and who have been granted a residence permit enjoy the same rights and assume the same obligations as Greek workers relating to remuneration, working terms and conditions, social insurance and other financial obligations provided for in the legislation in force (article 6 of Presidential Decree No. 359/1997 regarding the Granting of Limited Duration Residence Card to Foreigners, and article 4 of Presidential Decree No. 358/1997 regarding prerequisites and procedure for the legal residence and work in Greece of foreigners who are nationals of European countries which are not members of the EU). The same applies also to foreigners who have been given a work permit in accordance with the procedure provided for in the new Act No. 2910/2001 on Foreigners entry to and residence in the Greek territory.

Prohibition of discrimination on grounds of sex

Act No. 1414/84 (Official Gazette 10/A), on the application of the principle of gender equality in employment relationships and on other provisions, ensures equal treatment and equal opportunities of the two sexes regarding their access to employment and occupations. Access to all branches of employment and all grades of every type of employment is without distinction based on sex or family situation (art. 3).

In publications, advertisements, publicity, notices of competitions, circulars and regulations concerning the choice of candidates for a vacant post, instruction, vocational training or paid education leave, it is prohibited to make reference to the sex or family situation of the persons concerned or to employ criteria or elements which would lead even indirectly to discrimination based on sex. Article 6 (a) of Act No. 1414/84 provides that it is prohibited to terminate the employment relationship on grounds of sex.

Also, subject to the provisions of article 2 of the same Act, it is prohibited to make any distinction based on sex and family situation in connection with the contents and implementation of programmes or schemes of vocational guidance and retraining, training for the change of occupation, training targeted on the general public, and information of workers and their families, as well as access to such programmes.

Any discrimination based on sex is also prohibited as regards conditions of work, promotion and the professional career of workers (article 5 of Act No. 1414/84).

The application of the provisions of the labour law relating to equality of treatment is supervised by the Labour Inspectorate Body. Also, women workers, considering that they are affected due to infringements of the said legislation, are entitled to appeal to the civil courts. For their protection, article 6 (b) of Act No. 1414/84 provides that it is prohibited to terminate the employment relationship as an act of reprisal on the part of the employer against a court action or any other action undertaken by the worker for the purpose of achieving gender equality in employment relationships.

The Greek Government is strongly interested in the achievement of a substantial equality between the two sexes. During the recent revision of the Greek Constitution by virtue of the Resolution of 6 April 2001 of the 3rd Revisionary Parliamentary Assembly, article 116, paragraph 2, of the Constitution was revised as follows: "The taking of positive measures for the promotion of the equality between men and women does not constitute an act of discrimination based on sex. The State attends to the removal of inequalities existing in practice, mainly against women." It is for the first time that the constitutional basis for taking positive measures towards the removal of existing inequalities against women is being provided in the Greek Constitution.

National General Labour Collective Agreements also provide for taking measures against discrimination. In accordance with article 20 of the National General Labour Collective Agreement for the period 2000-2001, "Persons performing independent work must receive equal or relevant, as the case may be, treatment to that other workers receive, each time it is necessary due to the conditions in which they provide their services. Equality of treatment refers, mainly, to health and safety at work, protection against any form of discrimination in employment on grounds of sex, nationality, race or beliefs, minimum age for admission to employment, maternity protection, access to training and further training, respect for their right to organize and for their collective action and facilitation of their access to social insurance and education schemes."

Also, in accordance with article 22 of the aforementioned Agreement, "The contracting parties agree that all efforts should be made, so that all workers' racial, national, religious or cultural peculiarities be respected and their adjustment to their working environment be facilitated."

The Manpower Employment Organization (OAED) offers services relating to vocational guidance, which both individuals and organized groups of people may have access to, aiming at offering information about opportunities for employment. Access to vocational guidance services is safeguarded for all persons concerned, nationals of other countries included.

In order to ensure equal opportunities for all people as regards access to employment, the "Operational Programme to combat Exclusion from the Labour Market" is implemented. The beneficiaries of this programme are unemployed persons or persons with no steady employment, belonging to the following groups: persons with special needs, repatriated Greeks, immigrants, refugees, prisoners, ex-prisoners, juvenile delinquents, leaders of single-parent families, ex-drug addicts, persons with cultural and religious peculiarities, persons residing in mountainous and distant areas.

This Operational Programme assists in the vocational rehabilitation of the members of vulnerable social groups in the following manner: Firstly, it helps them, mainly through vocational training, in developing skills and acquiring professional qualifications. Secondly, it facilitates their access to the labour market either by helping them to start their own business or by giving incentives to the employers in order to hire persons that have received training under the said programme. Thirdly, it provides them with social and psychological support through Accompanying and Support Services and helps them in adapting smoothly in the workplace.

The duties of the staff providing Accompanying Support and Services consist in encouraging and providing information and psychological support to people, in sensitizing and providing information to employers, and in providing advice and support to their families.

Each integrated programme includes pre-training aiming at preparing the groups of people which the programme is targeted on to participate therein. The purpose of pre-training given to the target-group of the repatriated, immigrants and refugees is mainly to enable them to learn the Greek language, in order to be familiarized with the terminology relating to occupations for whose exercise high skills are required in several branches of the economic activity.

Table 5

Data of the operational programme targeted to immigrants, refugees,

repatriated persons and persons with cultural peculiarities

Operational programme "Fighting exclusion from the labour market"
1997-2000

Target-group	Number of programmes	Number of participants	Total cost (in Greek Drs.)
Immigrants from third countries	21	325	907 107 340
Refugees	19	284	843 490 106
Persons repatriated from Western European countries	5	93	94 889 075
Persons repatriated from countries other than Western European ones	50	884	1 367 463 098
Pomaks	20	326	674 647 655
Roma	35	531	1 342 266 116

Immigrants' employment

From the beginning of the 1990s, Greece, which previously was a country of origin, has become a host country. In accordance with data on immigrants' employment in virtue of Act No. 1975/1991 "On entry-departure-residence and employment of foreigners" which have been gathered by the National Statistical Service of Greece, work permits granted to immigrant workers are as follows:

Table 6

Work permits granted

Year	Work permits
1994	28 730
1995	27 434
1996	24 965
1997	23 551
1998	25 017
1999	20 365

By virtue of Presidential Decree No. 359/97 "regarding the granting of the limited duration residence card to foreigners" and of Presidential Decree No. 358/97 "regarding prerequisites and procedure for the legal residence and work of foreigners in Greece", foreigners who resided in Greece illegally could be regularized. Following this procedure, the OAED, which was the competent authority in this field, issued 233,000 green cards which mean residence and work permits.

In order to meet the increased migratory flow and the problems therefrom, the formulation of a long-term migration policy was considered imperative, taking into account the created new conditions and the tendencies formed at international level. Therefore, the Law No. 2910/2001 "Entry and Stay of Foreigners into the Greek Territory, Acquisition of the Greek Nationality by Naturalization and other provisions" (Government Gazette, A Bulletin, Issue No. 91/2.5.2001) was voted by the Parliament. The new migratory policy meets in its entirety the phenomenon of immigration, on the one hand by the determination of the preconditions for the legal entry, stay and work of foreigners in the country, and on the other by the protection of the rights of foreigners living in Greece and the creation of the preconditions for their accession into Greek society.

The new Act gave, inter alia, a second opportunity to immigrants who resided in Greece illegally, to be regularized. In accordance with the first data made available, the number of the relevant applications amounted to 367,504.

Women's Employment

The OAED, in order to ensure the effective exercise of the right for equal opportunities and equal treatment in matters of employment of men and women in the workplace, facilitates women's employment by taking special measures in the programmes for the subsidy of employment which the OAED plans and implements.

More specifically, the OAED, through the "Young Professionals" and "New Jobs" programmes it implements, supports and promotes in the labour market, with more favourable economic and other terms, the vulnerable social groups, women also included, who encounter more serious problems and whose entry into the labour market is more difficult. In order to help women to resolve those problems, special measures have been taken in their favour (e.g. higher subsidies).

For more details about programmes promoting employment targeted on vulnerable social groups, reference is recommended to the national reports submitted to ILO in 2000 on the application of the Employment Policy Convention No. 122 (appendix II).

Proportion of the working population holding more than one full-time job

The proportion of working people holding a second job from 1997 to 2000 was as follows. It is to be noted that, in the total of working people, people employed both full-time and

part-time are included, i.e. data do not show whether the first job is a full-time one, nor whether people hold a second job to secure an adequate standard of living:

Year	Percentage
1997	3.6
1998	4.7
1999	4.3
2000	3.6

Source: Labour Force Survey (2nd quarter of the years 1997-2000), National Statistical Service of Greece.

International assistance to third countries with a view to implementing article 6 of the Covenant is provided within the EU framework of development cooperation (Green Bible, Cotonou Agreement, Euro-Mediterranean Agreement), as well as within the context of the seven international development goals, primarily focused on "rural poverty reduction".

Article 7

Greece is a Party to the following ILO Conventions:

Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951 (No. 100);

Weekly Rest (Industry) Convention, 1921 (No. 14);

Weekly Rest (Commerce and Offices) Convention, 1957 (No. 106); and

Labour Inspection Convention, 1947 (No. 81).

Article 22, paragraph 2, of the Greek Constitution, stipulates that "General working conditions shall be determined by law, supplemented by labour collective agreements contracted through free negotiations and, in the case of failure of such, by the rules stipulated by arbitration."

Towards that purpose and within the scope of realizing the constitutional order of article 22 of the Constitution, Act No. 1876/90 "Free Collective Bargaining", was voted for by the Parliament and put into force in 1990. This Act grants vocational organizations (workers' and employers') the right to promote and vindicate their demands collectively and following free collective bargaining, to include labour collective agreements (LCA), by which the working conditions and the remuneration of paid workers (technicians and office employees) are regulated.

According to the aforementioned provisions and following free collective bargaining of the trade union organizations of both employers and workers, wages are determined by category and expertise of the workers. The aim of the Labour Collective Agreement is to ensure a minimum protection limit for the workers, which is the minimum wage per sector or occupation.

Beyond collective labour agreements, the National General Labour Collective Agreement (NGLCA) is also concluded between tertiary trade union organizations of workers and

employers' organizations acknowledged as the most representative or nation-wide, which applies to all workers irrespective of whether they are covered by more specific regulations. Through the NGLCA, minimum wage limits are determined, that is, a safety wage for salaries and wages for all workers of the country. According to article 7 of Act No. 1876/1990, the clauses of the agreements have immediate and compulsory force, that is they come into force as an act.

During negotiations, the principle of good faith among the parties must be abided by. State authorities are obliged to supply the parties concerned with all the necessary information on the developments of the National Economy and data on the employment situation in the various sectors of the economy and on prices and wages. The factors taken into consideration are the level of remuneration in relation to the cost of living and the just remuneration of work. An important element concerning the determination of just remuneration is inflation, so that no reduction of real income may take place and the material, intellectual, and cultural standard of life of workers be secured.

In the last decade, the minimum monthly salary paid to employees under the National General Labour Collective Agreements was formulated as follows:

1990 (from 1/1/1990) 65,105 Dr and, from 1/7/1990, 69,728 Dr;

1995 (from 1/1/1995) 114,634 Dr and, from 1/7/2000, 119,220 Dr; and

2000 (from 1/1/2000) 153,643 Dr and, from 1/7/2000, 155,948 Dr.

In the last decade, the average gross monthly salary was formulated as follows:

1990, 164,076 Dr;

1995, 303,236 Dr;

2000, 442,814 Dr.

Social insurance contributions paid by both employers and workers are included in the said amounts.

The application of Labour Collective Agreements and of the labour law in general has been entrusted to labour inspectors who supervise businesses and, in case of infringement of law, imposes legal sanctions. Pay-sheets provided for by collective agreements each time in force are the main tool used by Social Inspectors with a view to checking wages paid to workers. For this reason, the Labour Inspectorate Body and the Ministry of Labour and Social Security are in the process for creating a codification of collective agreements and pay-sheets each time in force for computer filing; as a start, pay-sheets exist as computer files in the Ministry's web site on the Internet.

From 1 July 1999 onwards, the Labour Inspectorate Body (SEPE) (under Act No. 2639/98 on the "Regulation of working relations, establishment of the Labour Inspectorate Body and other provisions") constitutes the new body entrusted with the supervision of the application of labour legislation. The SEPE has replaced the labour inspectorate, which operated in the past under the supervision of the prefectural self-government. The main principles which the SEPE is based on, regarding both its organizational structure and its supervision practices, are as follows:

The operation of the SEPE under the supervision of a central authority, the Minister of Labour and Social Security, so that a unified policy of supervision of the application of the labour legislation may be safeguarded;

The structure of the SEPE; it is about a sound Central Authority and its Regional Services;

Increase of its competencies aiming at spotting illegal employment and uninsured workers;

Separation of Labour Inspectors' duties (there are social, technical and medical inspectors), with a view to improving the quality of the inspection services;

Compulsory initial and continuing training provided to inspectors; and

The social inspection carried out by the SEPE by means of institutional bodies in which representatives of employers and workers participate.

The SEPE services operate every day in a month and their staff, because of the nature of their work, carry out inspection visits 24 hours a day and seven days a week. Labour inspectors are empowered to carry out any necessary examination, test or enquiry with a view to securing the application of the provisions of labour legislation, to imposing administrative sanctions or to appealing to a court, so that penal sanctions may be imposed.

The SEPE services operate from 1 July 1999 onwards; consequently, data mentioned below refer to the period from 1 July 1999 onwards:

Table 7

Inspections 1999-2000

1999 - Second half

Social inspections 1

17 027 on-the-spot inspections

1 192 sanctions:

892 complaints

300 fines

Technical inspections

4 413 on-the-spot inspections

98 sanctions:

26 complaints

22 fines

50 stoppages of work

Table 7 (continued)

2000

Social inspections

47 528 on-the-spot inspections

2 690 sanctions:

2 004 complaints

686 fines

Technical inspections

18 141 on-the-spot inspections

899 sanctions:

299 complaints

207 fines

The term “social inspection” refers to inspection of working conditions, illegal employment and workers’ social insurance coverage, while the term “technical inspection” refers to the inspection of health and safety at work and to the prevention of occupational hazards.

It should be stressed that figures mentioned above refer to on-the-spot inspections in several enterprises, because, due to the way in which data relating to inspections carried out by the Labour Inspectorate are recorded, inspections made by inspectors inside the inspection services and based on data supplied by enterprises, either following a written notice given by the inspection service or after an inspection has been carried out by labour inspectors in these enterprises, are not recorded.

The small number of penalties imposed and inspections carried out during the initial period of operation of the SEPE service is due to the fact that the SEPE began to operate on 1 July 1999 and, as a newly-established body, had some problems to deal with. The increasing number of penalties and inspections, which appears afterwards, shows that problems are gradually overcome, which results in the improvement of the operation of the SEPE service.

Further refer to the national reports on the measures taken to apply the Labour Inspection Convention No. 81, which were submitted to ILO in 1999 and in 2001.

In accordance with article 22, paragraph 1, of the Constitution: “All workers, irrespective of sex or other distinctions, shall be entitled to equal pay for work of equal value.”

In order to apply the said constitutional provision, Act No. 1414/84, regarding the application of the principle of gender equality in employment relationships, defines that men and women are entitled to equality of remuneration for work of equal worth (art. 4). The term “remuneration” means the wage, together with any other additional benefits in cash or in kind, awarded by the employer to the worker either directly or indirectly in exchange for work performed. Job classification for purposes of fixing the amount of remuneration shall be based on the same criteria for men and women workers and shall be applied without discrimination based on sex.

However, the average earnings of women continue to be lower than those of men. In 1998, those earnings amounted as follows:

Table 8

Women’s earnings as a percentage of men’s

Average earnings by sex and by branch of economic activity	
Branch of economic activity	Women’s earnings as a percentage of men’s earnings
Average monthly earnings of employees	
Insurance	62.8
Banks	76.8
Wholesale trade	83.5
Retail trade	94.4
Mines	70.1
Electricity and water supply	63.1
Industry - Handicraft	71.1
Average hourly earnings of workers	
Mines	78.6
Electricity and water supply	79.0
Industry - Handicraft	82.5

Source: Secretariat-General for Gender Equality, Research Centre for Gender Equality, Data processing by the National Statistical Service of Greece.

A series of systematic studies of statistical data and of the pay structure systems included in the fifth Medium-Term Action Plan for Gender Equality organized by the European Commission have started with a view to ensuring in practice equality of the sexes in remuneration.

In particular, primary statistical data from the survey of pay structure in the manufacturing sector and in services are used to investigate the determinants of the pay gap between men and women, while inequality in remuneration in selected branches and occupations in Greece is under consideration, especially in the following branches of economic activity: tourism, banks, health, and retail trade. Also, the Research Centre for Gender Equality, which operates under the supervision of the Secretariat-General for Gender Equality, implements, as coordinator, the “Equal pay-Mind the gap” programme. It also participates, as partner, in the implementation of the programme “Towards closing the gender pay gap.”

The said programmes aim at providing women social partners and professionals with information about, and to sensitize them to, inequalities in remuneration between men and women, to promote the exchange of experience from the implementation of measures for ensuring equality of opportunities and to seek mechanisms for bridging the pay gap.

Further reference is recommended to the national reports submitted to the International Labour Organization in 1998 on the

implementation in Greece of International Labour Convention No. 100 on equal remuneration (1951) (appendix I), as well as to the national report submitted to ILO in 1999 on the implementation of ILO Convention No. 111 on discrimination in employment and occupation (appendix II).

The Greek national legislation on health and safety of workers includes 93 legislative texts concerning employment and other regulations: in industrial legislation, in social security legislation, in environmental-protection legislation, in regulations concerning protection against fire, in sanitary provisions, in regulations on the construction and free circulation of equipment, in regulations on protection against radiation, in collective labour agreements, in the civil code, in maritime law, in various other regulations, such as the regulation on mining and quarrying (activities).

The legislative framework on safety and health of workers, as it is structured, forms: obligations for the employers; obligations and rights for the workers; and obligations for the State. The provisions on workers' health and safety during work are applied in all branches of economic activity and concern all workers of the private and public sector.

A general principle of the legislation on health and safety of workers is the principle of the employer's responsibility. That is, the employer is responsible for the safety and health of workers in his undertaking and is not relieved of this personal responsibility, neither when his employees do not abide by their obligations nor when he allocates duties concerning protection and prevention against occupational hazards to other individuals or services.

Employers have the obligations:

To provide services of protection and prevention against occupational hazards (services of a safety technician and/or a work doctor);

To assess the risk for the safety and health of workers and, on the grounds of this assessment, to form a plan of precautionary action and improvement of working conditions, as well as to determine the measures that should be taken;

To take all the necessary measures towards the protection of workers' health and safety, the prevention of occupational hazards, informing and training, the establishment of a necessary organization and the provision of necessary means;

To consult with the workers, that is to ask the opinion of workers and their representatives on every issue concerning their safety and health;

To inform the workers and their representatives on the legislation in force and its application in the undertaking, the risks and every technical and organizational measure taken or in need to be taken;

To provide every worker with appropriate and adequate training as far as safety and health are concerned, especially by supplying information and guidelines on the event of his/her employment, transfer or change of duties, introduction or change of working equipment and introduction of a new technology concerning specifically his/her workplace or duties; and

To provide appropriate monitoring of workers' health, where this is stipulated by the legislation in force.

Workers have the obligation to apply the regulations of health and safety and to assure, considering their potentials, their health and safety, as well as the health and safety of others affected by their actions or omissions during work, in accordance with their training and the relevant instructions of their employer. More specifically, workers should: report immediately to the employer or to the authorized persons any situation presenting serious and immediate danger to health and safety and any failure in the protection systems, and participate in all duties imposed by safety regulations and cooperate with the employer in ensuring that environment and working conditions be free of risks for safety and health.

To enable employers to fulfil their obligations, the institution of External Protection and Prevention Services was introduced, with which employers may contract for the provision of protection and prevention services. These services with their scientific character, their scientific personnel (technicians and doctors) and their necessary equipment for the sampling and measuring of physical, chemical and biological factors, offer the undertakings attainable and effective solutions with a view to tackling workers' safety and health problems.

Actions for the improvement of working conditions concerning the health and safety of workers are taken following wide social dialogue established by law or otherwise at all levels, and always with the participation of workers' and employers' representatives.

At the national level, social dialogue is promoted through the Council for Health and Safety at Work and in the Council for Social Control of the Labour Inspectorate. At the regional level, social dialogue is contacted in the Regional Committee for Social Control of the Labour Inspectorate. At the prefectural level, social dialogue is contacted in the Prefectural Committees for Health and Safety at Work.

Beyond the aforementioned cases, the technical and sanitary labour inspectors, within their competence, promote social dialogue:

With employers and workers within the firms during inspections for the monitoring of the implementation of the legislation and the abiding by the provisions and recommendations for the improvement of working conditions; and

Through their participation in discussions, one-day meetings and other activities at national or local level, which are organized by various bodies involved with issues of workers' protection.

Furthermore, the Ministry of Labour and Social Security supports and cooperates with all the organizations and institutes involved with workers' health and safety and takes an active part in bodies, committees, workgroups, etc. of various ministries or other bodies for the promotion of issues concerning the health and safety of workers.

With a view to the proper realization and implementation of the legislation, the Ministry of Labour and Social Security takes two main courses of action: the information for the parties concerned, employers and workers, and monitoring of the implementation of the legislation.

As far as information is concerned, the creation of an informative web site on the Internet and the National Information Net on workers' safety and health issues (created within the framework of the European Information Net of the European Organization on Safety and Health of Workers in Bilbao, Spain), will help all concerned parties to obtain in time valid and complete information about all relevant issues, among other things, about legislation, practical solutions and implementations, research, statistics, etc.

In the same direction, the Ministry of Labour and Social Security:

Issues explanatory circulars on the implementation of the legislation;

Issues informative material on the legislation and simplified booklets on its implementation;

Organizes information campaigns;

Organizes annually the European Week on Safety and Health of Workers, during which one-day meetings are held, leaflets are issued, and television spots are shown; and

Finances through the Workers' Fund conferences and one-day meetings held by the workers' union trade organizations.

The second course of action, following information, is the monitoring of the implementation of the legislation. A new Labour Inspectorate Body aimed at the monitoring of the implementation of the legislation was established, which is an independent monitoring mechanism of high standards providing specialized training to inspectors. The monitoring of the implementation of the legislation on workers safety and health is performed by the technicians and sanitary labour inspectors, who, in the event of legislative violation, have the authority to impose penal or administrative sanctions.

The implementation of Labour Collective Agreements and labour legislation in general has been assigned to the Labour Inspectorate, which inspects enterprises and imposes legal penalties in the case of violations. Reference is made to the national report submitted to the International Labour Organization in 1999 concerning the implementation of International Labour Convention No. 81 concerning labour inspection in industry and commerce.

Table 9

Selective statistics on occupational accidents

Years	Accidents
1988	32 192 (79 fatal)
1993	23 959 (99 fatal)
1998	18 615 (78 fatal)

Source: Social Security Institute, the main security organization in Greece.

Equal treatment constitutes a fundamental principle of Greek labour law, which binds the employer and aims at the fair treatment of all the workers. Pursuant to article 288 of the Civil Code, the employer is obliged to fulfil his/her obligations to his/her workers in good faith based on professional ethics.

In particular, regarding the two sexes, Act No. 1414/84 "for the implementation of equality of the two sexes in working relations", forbids any discrimination on the grounds of sex in the course of occupational promotion and career.

Further consult the national report submitted to ILO on the implementation of International Labour Convention No. 111 on discrimination in employment and occupation of 1999 (appendix II) and 1997 (appendix II).

Every worker, after continuous employment of at least 12 months in a certain firm, is entitled to an annual paid leave of 24 working days. When a system of a 5-day working week is applied in the firm, the worker is entitled to a leave of 20 working days (the day of the week during which the worker is not employed, due to the applied working system, is not taken into account). This leave is increased by one working day for each year of employment, up to 26 working days, and in the case of workers under the system of a 5-day working week, up to 22 working days (Act No. 539/45, in combination with Act No. 1346/83 and the National Labour Collective Agreements in force for each case).

According to article 6 of the National General Labour Collective Agreement for the years 2000 and 2001, workers who have completed 10 years' employment with the same employer or have previous employment of 12 years with any employer are entitled to a leave of five weeks or of 25 working days, if they work 5 days a week, or a 30-day leave, if they work 6 days a week.

As far as public holidays are concerned, according to article 4 of Royal Decree No. 748/1966, the following days are determined as days of compulsory public holiday, in the private sector: (a) 25 March, (b) Easter Monday, (c) Assumption, (d) 25 December. Days of optional holiday are 28 October and 1 May, which however may be declared compulsory (public holiday) by decision of the Minister of Labour and Social Security (Act No. 380/68).

Workers who are not working on public holidays are entitled to the wages for those days, whereas, if they do work, they are entitled to a wage supplement of 75 per cent.

Workers' breaks during the period of their working time

According to Presidential Decree No. 88/1999, "Minimum requirements for the organization of working time in conformity with Directive No. 93/104/EC", by which the Greek legislation complied with the above-mentioned Directive of the European Community, when the daily working time of workers is more than six hours, a rest break of at least 15 minutes is granted, during which workers have the right to leave their posts. Moreover, these rest breaks are not granted before the beginning or at the end of their daily work. The same provisions determine that the details of the rest break, particularly its duration and the terms on which it is granted, in the case they are not laid down in collective agreements or in the legislation in force, are determined by the firm after consultations between the employer and the workers' delegation (Act 1264/82).

Workers' daily and weekly rest period

According to the provisions in force (Presidential Decree No. 88/1999), the minimum rest period for workers cannot be shorter than 12 uninterrupted hours for each period of 24 hours. The workers' weekly rest period must be equal to 24 hours of consecutive rest and include primarily Sunday. However, in those categories of workers where a 5-day working week is established, the weekly rest period is prolonged to 48 hours.

Further reference is recommended to the national reports submitted to ILO on the implementation of International Labour Convention No. 106 concerning weekly rest (commerce and offices) in 2000 (appendix I) and of Labour Convention No. 14 concerning weekly rest (industry) in 2000 (appendices I-II).

The aforementioned provisions concerning the workers' daily and weekly rest period are not applicable to the supervising, directing and confidence individuals (i.e. executive personnel), who, due to exceptional education, outstanding capacities and the distinctive confidence put in them by their employer, are responsible for the general management and supervision of an undertaking.

Article 8

Greece has ratified all international conventions mentioned in paragraph 21 of the Guidelines for reporting on implementation of the Covenant.

Article 23, paragraph 1, of the Greek Constitution safeguards trade union freedom and related rights and obligates the State to adopt all due measures for the unhindered exercise of these rights. Furthermore, the exercise of the right to organize and the protection of the establishment of a trade union organization are guaranteed in article 12 of the Constitution, which safeguards the right to form non-profit associations and unions.

The necessary requirements for the establishment and the participation of workers in trade union organizations are regulated by Act No. 1264/1982, "On the democratization of the Trade Union Movement and the consolidation of the freedom of association of the workers" (Official Gazette 79/A/1.7.1982). Reference in detail is made in the national report submitted to ILO on the implementation in Greece of International Labour Convention No. 87 concerning trade union freedom and the protection of the right to organize in 2000 and in 1998 (chap. II).

Act No. 1264/82 (art. 1, para. 3 (b)) safeguards the right of trade union organizations to form federations or labour centres (secondary trade union organizations). The labour centres are established by two or more primary organizations of the same district, whereas federations are established by two or more primary organizations of the same branch of economic activity or occupation. Every trade union has the right to become member of the respective federation and the respective labour centre. In addition to a Federation, every labour centre has the right to be a member of a confederation (a tertiary trade union organization).

The right of trade union organizations to take part in international trade union organizations is guaranteed by article 5 of International Labour Convention No. 87 concerning trade union freedom and the protection of the right to organize, which was ratified by Legislative Decree No. 4204/61.

Article 23, paragraph 1, of the Constitution provides that the State has the obligation to adopt due measures, not only for the safeguarding on trade union freedom, but also for the unhindered exercise of related rights. Apart from the Constitution and the International Labour Conventions, trade union activity is also protected by Act No. 1264/82, which provides general protection to the trade union organizations and special protection to the members of administration boards.

General protection

State authorities are obliged to apply all necessary measures in order to safeguard the free exercise of the right of establishment and autonomous operation of trade union organizations (article 14 of Act No. 1264/82). It shall be unlawful for employers or persons acting on their account or for any third party whatsoever to commit any act or omission likely to impede the exercise of workers' trade union rights and, inter alia:

To exert influence on workers to set up or not to set up a trade union organization;

In any way or by any means to oblige workers to join, or prevent them from joining, a particular trade union organization;

To intervene in any way in the administration, functioning or activities of trade union organizations;

To treat workers favourably or unfavourably depending on their participation in a particular trade union organization.

Protection of trade union activity at the workplace

According to article 16 of Law No. 1264/82, workers and their trade union organizations shall be protected in the exercise of all their trade union rights at the workplace. The trade unions shall be entitled to have notice boards for their purposes at the workplace and at places agreed upon in each case between the employer and the management of the trade union concerned. It shall be the obligation of the employer, or of a fully authorized representative of the employer, to meet the representatives of the trade union organizations at least once a month and to provide for the settlement of issues which are a cause of concern to the workers or their organizations. The representatives of the administration board of the trade union of the firm, and, if the workers have not established a trade union, the representatives of the Labour Centre for the district, shall be entitled to be present during any inspection carried out by the competent bodies of the Ministry of Labour and Social Security, to submit their observations.

Special protection of trade union members

In order to guarantee that trade union members shall be free to perform their duties, special provisions provide for their protection against discriminative treatment (protection against termination of employment relationships and transfers), and special leaves of absence are granted to facilitate the performance of their duties.

Protection against the termination of employment

Termination of the employment relationship shall be invalid in the case of members of the administration board of a trade union organization (section 92 of the Civil Code). This prohibition shall be valid throughout the member's term of office and for one year thereafter, except where one of the reasons specified by law exists (article 14, paragraph 10, of Act No. 1264/82). Termination of the employment relationships of protected members shall be permissible when:

(a) During the conclusion of the contract of employment with the employer, the worker deceives the latter by presenting false certificates or insurance cards for the purpose of being recruited or of obtaining a higher rate of pay; or

(b) The worker discloses industrial or commercial secrets or accepts or requests illegal advantages, especially commissions, from third parties.

Decisions as to the existence of any of the reasons specified in article 14, paragraph 10, of Act No. 1264/1982, shall be taken prior to termination of the employment relationship by the majority vote of the three-member Committee of Protection of Trade Union Members (article 25 of Act No. 1545/85 "National System of Protection against unemployment and other provisions", which replaced article 15 of Act No. 1264/82). The existence of any of the above substantial reasons shall not release the employer from his obligations under the provisions of the Civil Code and those of labour legislation regarding termination of employment relationships.

Protection against transfers

Transfer of trade union organizations members is not allowed without the consent of the appropriate trade union organization. The employer shall be entitled to appeal to the Committee of Protection of Trade Union Members, which shall decide as to the necessity or not of the transfer.

Facilitations for trade union facilities and leave of absence for trade union activities

The employer is obliged to grant facilities to enable the members of the administration boards and auditing committees and the delegates of trade union organizations in secondary and tertiary trade union organizations to perform their duties (article 17, paragraph 2, of Act No. 1264/82). For this purpose, the employer is obliged to grant both paid leaves of absence and unpaid leaves of absence. In the case of unpaid leaves of absence, the workers period of absence shall be regarded as time actually worked for the purposes of all entitlements arising out of their employment and social insurance relationships, other than entitlement to remuneration in respect of the period concerned.

Promotion of free collective negotiations

Article 22, paragraph 2, of the Constitution stipulates that "general working conditions shall be determined by law, supplemented by labour collective agreements contracted through free negotiations and, in case of failure of such, by rules stipulated by arbitration".

For that purpose and within the scope of realizing the constitutional order of article 22 of the Constitution, Act No. 1876/90 "Free Collective Bargaining" was voted for by the Parliament and came into force in 1990. By this Act vocational organizations (workers' and employers') are granted the right to promote and vindicate their demands collectively and following free collective bargaining, to conclude Labour Collective Agreements by which the working conditions of paid workers (technicians and office employees) are regulated in a binding manner (immediate and binding effect of the clauses of a collective agreement, according to article 7, Act No. 1876/90).

More specifically, General National Labour Collective Agreements shall be concluded between the tertiary trade union organizations of workers and the most representative or nationwide employers' organizations, and shall set minimum standards in respect of working conditions which shall apply to all workers throughout the country (art. 8, Act No. 1876/90).

According to both national legislation and practice, the criteria on the grounds of which paid workers are organized in trade unions are the following two:

(a) The enterprise or undertaking or the branch of economic activity to which the undertaking belongs in general; and

(b)The occupation in which the paid worker is engaged.

Consequently, in Greece are established:

Trade unions organized on the basis of a single undertaking or business, where the paid worker is employed (enterprise trade unions);

Trade unions organized on the basis of the branch of economic activity to which the undertaking, where the paid worker is employed, belongs (sectoral trade unions); and

Trade unions organized on the basis of the occupation in which the paid worker is engaged, irrespective of the enterprise or undertaking, where he/she is employed (occupational trade unions).

According to data of the General Confederation of Greek Workers, 123 secondary trade union organizations (federations, labour centres) took part in its 29th Panhellenic Conference. These represent 2,282 primary trade union organizations with 752,818 registered members.

The right to strike

In Greece, the right of workers to strike is safeguarded by the Constitution and the International Conventions and, in particular, by the provisions of the common law. Article 23, paragraph 2, of the Constitution stipulates that “The strike constitutes a right to be exercised by lawfully established trade unions in order to protect and promote the financial and the general labour interests of the working people.”

The right to strike is also protected by international or regional conventions ratified by the country, in particular by:

Article 11 of the European Convention on the Human Rights of 1950, which has been ratified by Legislative Decree No. 53/74; and by

The International Labour Convention No. 87 (1948) concerning freedom of association and protection of the right to organize, which has been ratified by Legislative Decree No. 4204/1961.

From the legislative point of view, in the spirit of the Constitution and of the International Conventions ratified by Greece, Act No. 1264/82, as amended by Acts Nos. 1915/90 and 2224/94, protects and safeguards in particular the right of workers to strike.

In virtue of article 19 of Act No. 1264/82, the strike constitutes a right of the workers which is exercised by the trade union organizations as a means of preserving and promoting the economic, labour, trade union, and social insurance interests of the workers, and as a manifestation of solidarity in relation to these objectives.

The exercise of the right to strike shall be conditional upon notice being given to the employer or his representative organization at least 24 hours before its implementation.

Strikes by workers who are parties to employment relationships in private law with the State, local self-government agencies or public bodies, corporate, public or utility enterprises whose operation is vital to the basic needs of society as a whole, are authorized subject to the provisions of article 20, paragraph 2, of Act No. 1264/82 and of article 2 of Act No. 2224/94.

In particular, the trade union organizations of the above-mentioned bodies or businesses, prior to the exercise of the right to strike, are obliged to invite their employer to have a public dialogue with them on issues which must be settled. In the other businesses, the trade union organization which calls the strike can seek public dialogue with the employer prior to or even during the strike. The employer, too, can seek public dialogue, as soon as he is informed of workers' claims or of the calling of a strike or in case he considers that the strike might endanger the peace in the business.

Workers employed in public enterprises or public utility firms whose operation is vital to the basic needs of society as a whole (article 19, paragraph 2, of Act No. 1264/82) cannot call a strike until four full days have elapsed since the date on which the claims and the reasons for them have been announced by means of a document communicated by a court officer to the employer or employers, to the appropriate Ministry and to the Ministry of Labour and Social Security. The strike must not relate to claims other than those announced.

The trade union organization which calls the strike is obliged to ensure that the necessary personnel are available during the strike to safeguard the installations of the business and to prevent damages and accidents (article 1 of Act No. 2224/94 which replaced article 21 of Act No. 1264/82). Especially, in the agencies, bodies and public utility undertakings whose operation is vital to the basic needs of the society as a whole (article 19, paragraph 2, of Act No. 1264/82 as supplemented by article 3, paragraphs 1 and 2, and article 4, paragraph 1, of Act No. 1915/1990), in addition to the safety personnel, additional personnel are available to meet basic needs of the society as a whole during the strike.

Armed forces

Both military and civilian staff serve in the Ministry of National Defence. As regards the civilian staff, the right to join a union is safeguarded by article 23 of the Constitution, which is determined by Act No. 1264/82 “on the democratization of the trade union movement and the protection of the trade union freedoms of the employees”, already mentioned above.

In connection with the military staff, the right to form collective organizations (union right) is not prohibited in principle, within the context of article 23, paragraph 1, of the Constitution, providing that “the State takes the necessary measures to safeguard the union freedoms and the unhindered performance of the rights relevant to it, against any infringement, within the context of the law”. It may

be considered, though, that the Armed Forces belong to the Security Corps, in the broader meaning of the term, due to the nature of their mission, which is to safeguard the territorial integrity of the country and to provide national defence and, on the basis of this interpretation, it should be considered that the right to strike, deriving from the right to join unions, which is forbidden in accordance with article 23, paragraph 2, of the Constitution, to the judicial officials and to those serving in the Security Corps, is extended over the area of the armed forces, as well.

The performance of the right related to union freedoms by the military staff, as previously said, cannot be expressed through a strike, not even be combined in any way with the accomplishment of the military duties of the military staff, because it is then that the common legislator intervenes and punishes criminally this behaviour (article 63, Legislative Decree No. 1400/73 "On the status of Officers" of the Armed Forces, article 46 and subsequent ones of Law No. 2287/95, by which the Military Penal Code was ratified and which refer to the crimes committed against the military discipline).

Police force

The provisions of Act No. 1264/82 on "the democratization of the trade union movement and the protection of the trade union freedoms of the employees" have been extended to the police staff of the Hellenic Police Force by Act No. 2265/1994. It is estimated that 54,000 police officers are covered by the said provisions.

Subject to the provisions of this Act's article 1, there is no limitation regarding the establishment of trade union organizations by the police staff. However, as it is mentioned in article 1, paragraph 3, "the exercise of trade union rights of the police officers is not permitted to exceed the limits set due to the peculiarities and the mission of the Hellenic Police Force, in particular due to its national and social character which is beyond political parties".

By virtue of Act No. 2265/1994 (art. 1, para. 4), police officers are entitled to establish primary trade union organizations in each prefecture and administrative local district all over the country, as well as federations of trade union organizations at secondary and tertiary levels. Each police officer is entitled to be a member of the primary trade union organization established in the prefecture or the administrative local district where he/she serves (art. 1, para. 5). The trade union organizations of the police officers can join or become members of international police trade union organizations (art. 1, para. 10).

There are 64 primary trade union organizations of police officers. Also, two secondary trade union organizations have been established with approximately 34,000 members.

By virtue of Act No. 2265/1994 (art. 1, para. 10), trade union organizations of police officers are not permitted to participate in strikes. It is estimated that 54,000 police officers are covered by this provision.

Public administration

Regarding trade union rights of civil servants, reference is made in the national reports submitted on the application of the International Labour Convention No. 151 (1978) respecting labour relations in the public service, for the years 1999 and 1998 (chaps. I, II, III and V). As it is mentioned in the last report, Greece has validated through Law No. 2738/1999 the institution of collective bargaining in Greek public administration, which gives to trade unions of civil servants the right to negotiate with the Administration both the terms of employment and the labour conditions of civil servants, who work in public services, legal persons of public law, and organizations of local authorities.

The Supreme Civil Servants' Trade Union (ADEDY) and 20 other labour unions of civil servants participated in the first implementation of this institution in 2000. The result of the bargaining procedure was the signing of two special collective contracts and two special collective agreements.

In 2001, ADEDY and 25 other trade unions of civil servants participated in a negotiating procedure that was better organized, based on the experience of the previous year's first implementation of the institution. The result of the negotiating procedure in 2001 was the signing of four special collective contracts and 15 special collective agreements. These results indicate that the new institution matures gradually, and trade unions realize that their demands can be effectively promoted through institutionalized procedures.

Finally, as a latest development, it is noted that the Ministry of the Interior, Public Administration and decentralization launched at an early date the procedure for the collective negotiations of the year 2002, in order for the negotiating parties to have adequate time to state their demands in a climate of consensus.

Article 9

Greece has been a party to the ILO Social Security Convention No. 102 (1952), (Minimum Standards) for all parts, as from 1955, and submits reports every two years to the relevant supervisory committee.

Social Security in Greece covers all social security branches (sickness and maternity, old age, invalidity, survivors, work accidents and occupational diseases, unemployment and family).

Maternity allowances

These allowances are granted either to employed mothers, who cannot claim such benefits from an insurance fund, or even to uninsured mothers, for a period of six weeks before birth and six weeks after birth, aiming at securing a satisfactory living standard for them, according to the following legislation: article 4, paragraph 5, of Law No. 1302/82, by which International Labour Convention No. 103 (1952) on maternity protection was ratified (Official Gazette 133, vol. A'), Ministerial Decisions Γ2β/10195/12.12.83 (Official Gazette 769, vol. B') and Γ2β/ouc.133/84 (Official Gazette 40, vol. B'), and Π2β/ouc.2331/96 (Official Gazette 467, vol. B').

The allowance sum is determined by a Ministerial Decision and amounts nowadays to 220.10 euros (110.5 euros before birth and 110.5 euros after birth). The number of beneficiaries, according to this programme, is as follows: 797 mothers in 2000 and 712 mothers in 2001, according to the Ministry of Health and Welfare/Division of Family Protection.

Family allowances

(a) Allowance for the third child; allowance for mothers having many children;

maternity allowance for life

The present programme has come into effect according to article 63 of Law No. 1892/1990 (Official Gazette 101/90, vol. A') and article 39 of Law No. 2459/97 (Official Gazette 17, vol. A'), and is carried out by OGA (Social Security Fund for the Rural Population).

The third child allowance is given to mothers having a third child, up to the completion of 6 years of age; 41,000 mothers are financed with the sum of 140.35 euros per month. The allowance for mothers having many children is offered, according to Laws Nos. 1910/44 and 860/1979, to these mothers for each unmarried child up to the age of 23 years; 81,280 mothers are supported by the monthly sum of 35.09 euros for each unmarried child. This allowance cannot be less than 70.17 euros per month. According to article 2 of Law No. 2163/1993, a father having at least four children is considered also to be a beneficiary of the above-mentioned allowance, under the condition that this is not given to the mother. It is also available for orphans who have lost both parents and constitute a family.

The lifelong allowance/pension is given to mothers no longer entitled to the aforesaid allowance. This kind of pension is allocated to 191,500 mothers and amounts to the sum of 80.70 euros per month. The whole programme is subsidized by the State budget and paid by OGA.

The above-described allowances are also offered to the European Union's citizens. In conformity with articles 39 and 11 of Laws Nos. 2459/1997 and 2972/2001 respectively, the European Union's citizens, as well as those of the European Economic Area, who have many children, living and working in Greece, are also entitled to these allowances.

(b) Allowance for unprotected children

This allowance (44.02 euros per month), in harmony with Law No. 4051/1960 and Presidential Decree No. 108/83 (Official Gazette 49, vol. A) modified by Presidential Decree No. 48/97 (Official Gazette 148, vol. A), is provided to each unprotected child up to the age of 16 years, under the condition that the annual income of the family in which he/she lives, does not exceed, for a three-member family, the monthly sum of 234.78 euros, increased by 20.54 euros for every child exceeding the third; 27,998 children are subsidized in this way.

This allowance is supplied by the welfare divisions of the prefectures on the cost of the State budget. The Ministry of Health and Welfare aims at the gradual increase of such benefits, to the maximum of the available resources of the State budget.

(c) Allowances for the elderly

The uninsured elderly, over 65 years old, get an allowance equal to the basic pension of that given by OGA (the Social Security Fund for the rural population), which for this allowance acts on behalf of the Ministry of Health and Welfare. This sum amounts to 141.46 euros per month, increased in case either of an existing husband/wife (144.38 euros) or of an existing child under 18 years (147.31 euros) (Law Nos. 128/82 (Official Gazette 128/82, vol. A') and 2556/97, art. 20, para. 13 (Official Gazette 270/97, vol. A')).

Housing allowance

This allowance is offered to single, uninsured, poor senior citizens over 65 years old, as well as to uninsured indigent old-age couples obviously deprived of housing facilities or using a house for rent, reaching the sum of 146.73 euros per month, paid directly to the landlord by the Welfare Services of Prefectural Authorities.

Disease allowance for the disabled

The Ministry of Health and Welfare implements 12 programmes for financing disabled persons, taking into consideration the type, category and percentage of disability. This ministry formulates the subsidy policy for the disabled, the Ministry of Interior, Public Administration and Decentralization finances it, and the prefectural authorities implement it.

The criteria for determining the beneficiaries are the type, the category and the percentage of disability, the insurance status, the financial benefits derived from other sources and the use of institutional or hospital care.

The philosophy of the financing policy for the disabled, as applied by the Ministry of Health and Welfare, aims at covering the increased specific needs of those persons owing to their disability. In this context, there are no thoughts for determining beneficiaries according to their income.

The number of people, in total and by group, financed by the aforementioned programmes, is as follows according to the existing figures for the year 2002.

Table 10

Monthly financial support programmes for the disabled (Ministerial

Decision P3A/F18/1368, Official Gazette 26/2002, vol. A)

Disability	Beneficiaries	Sum in Drachmas	Sum in euros
Serious mental disability	14 500	51 497-78 048	151.13-229.05
Serious disability	87 500	58 697	172.26
Blindness	23 705	49 998-101 390	146.73-297.55
Deafness	4 500	49 998	146.73
Thalassaemia	4 000	55 648	163.31
AIDS/haemophilia	2 700	115 899	340.13
General paralysis	185	41 622	222.15
Fuel/transport benefit	4 400	46 747	137.19
Tetraplegia/paraplegia	3 500	144 420	423.83

Table 10 (continued)

Disability	Beneficiaries	Sum in Drachmas	Sum in euros
Housing benefit	860	49 998	146.73
Hancenics	600	49 998	146.73
Total	146 450	109 139-278 000	320 291 350

Source: Ministry of Health and Welfare/Division of Disabled Persons.

The sum of 117.39 euros per month is also granted to persons suffering from nephropathy, being either under haemodialysis or having undergone a kidney transplant (8,000 persons). This allowance is paid by the Health Divisions of Prefecture Authorities.

The social security system in Greece is compulsory and contributory. According to the benefits they provide, the social security institutions are divided into institutions of main insurance, supplementary insurance, and sickness insurance. The public social security funds are established by law. Each fund has its own administrative structure with its own administrative body. There are also certain funds which have been created by private initiative or have been qualified by legislation as belonging to private law (occupational mutual funds). The Greek social security system ensures to insured persons protection for all social security risks (old age, invalidity, death, sickness, maternity, work accidents and occupational diseases, unemployment, and family benefits).

The main characteristic of the Greek system is the existence of a large number of funds (about 170, divided into main insurance, supplementary insurance, sickness insurance organizations, etc.) for salaried persons, self-employed and other categories of employees. The affiliation to these funds depends on the occupational activity. Reforms which are actually planned in the social security sector will concern an important reduction of the number of social security funds.

The majority of the employees in the private sector is affiliated to the Social Security Institute (IKA). IKA is the biggest insurance organization in Greece, and protects more than half of the population in the country. It covers employed persons working in Greece or abroad for employers whose headquarters are situated in Greece, as well as other categories of employed persons on a non-permanent basis, such as loaders and dischargers, private nurses, newspaper salesmen, etc. The main aim of this social security fund is the protection of insured persons, which is provided through benefits in kind and in cash. In particular:

Benefits in kind: Medical care (medical examinations etc.), pharmaceutical care (medicines), hospital care (hospitalization expenses), transport of patients (daily grant and tickets), dental care (including orthodontic therapy of children), additional health care (cost of prostheses and major appliances), SPA treatment (bath, transport expenses, daily allowances), therapeutic tourism (special benefit and expenses for the accommodation to low-income pensioners), preventive medicine (cytology, family planning, blood donation, medical and educational services to handicapped children, services of social welfare and special services for handicapped persons, vaccinations), maternity grant (it is granted to insured women, as well as to the wives of insured persons);

Cash benefits: Pregnancy and confinement allowance (it is granted for 17 weeks), sickness and accident allowance, death grant, pensions. Namely:

(a) Old-age pension (usual cases, 4,500 days of insurance and 65 years of age for men and 60 for women):

Full old-age pension for mothers of minors (under 18): Conditions necessary are 55 years of age and 5,500 days of insurance;

Para/quadruplegic allowance (Law No. 1140/81): beneficiaries include insured persons, pensioners and members of their families, provided they are suffering from paraplegia or quadriplegia with a medical disability of 67 per cent. Old-age pension for disability due to paraplegia or quadriplegia requires 4,050 days of insurance without age limit;

(b) Disability pension due to common illness (a certain number of days

of insurance is required), or a work accident and professional illness (one day of work is sufficient) give rights to varying amounts of pension: with a percentage of 80 per cent disability (full pension), 67 per cent disability (three-quarters of the full pension) and 50 per cent disability (50 per cent of the full pension).

Survivors benefit beneficiaries include the surviving spouse, their unmarried children if they do not work or receive a pension and if

they have not reached 18 years of age if they are in higher education or are children orphaned from both parents or if they were supported by the deceased parent, children who are disabled or unfit for employment and whose disability started before they became 18 years old, grandchildren or step-grandchildren who are orphaned from their parents and were supported by the deceased, and parents if they were supported by the deceased. As for conditions: a certain number of days of insurance are required.

Persons working in the broad public sector (telecommunications, electricity, etc.) are affiliated to special corresponding funds. There are insurance funds for press owners and press personnel or workers, as well as funds for personnel of banks and public companies for electricity, railways and telecommunications. The public companies in Greece operate as sociétés anonymes, under the supervision of the State. Each company insures its employees in a corresponding fund.

The self-employed are insured in the relevant funds for the independently employed and professionals. The main characteristic of this group of funds is the insurance of the profession (merchants, professionals and craftsmen, owners of car in public use, engineers, medical personnel, and juridical professions).

Apart from those funds, in the Greek social security system there is a special scheme for civil servants. The State provides pensions, sickness insurance for civil and military personnel, as well as for persons assimilated to them. A separate fund exists for seamen (NAT).

As a general rule, the social security funds are financed by employer/employee contributions or, as regards the independently employed and professionals, by the insured themselves. State subsidies have been granted to some funds in order to cover any shortfall of income.

The vast majority of funds are supervised by the Ministry of Labour and Social Security, with the exception of the scheme for seamen (Ministry of Merchant Marine), and a few funds for certain civil and military personnel (Ministry of National Economy and Finance, Ministry of Defence).

Developments in the 1990s

New regulations have been established for persons entering into the labour force after 1 January 1993. Unified principles have been introduced for all insured persons (except for farmers and seamen) concerning retirement conditions and age requirements (65 for men and women), as well as percentages of contributions in relation to insurance period. Financing for the employees (insurance for main pension and sickness) is tripartite (proportionally two-ninths by employees, four-ninths by employers and three-ninths by the State), and for the self-employed bipartite (proportionally six-ninths by the self-employed and three-ninths by the State). For the supplementary pension, financing is bipartite.

A new pension plan on a contributory basis has been introduced since 1997 for farmers, with the Government providing two-thirds of the contributions. This new system provides the opportunity for raising farmers' pensions.

Developments since 1999

Survivors' pensions are provided to both sexes under the same conditions - men had previously eligibility under special conditions not required for women. Obligatory preventive medical treatment has been established in the social security institutions.

The contribution to medicines for the low-paid pensioners was reduced from 25 per cent to 10 per cent as of 1 January 1999. Medicines for AIDS patients and organs for transplant are provided without any contribution.

Medical treatment is also provided for all young unemployed people of 18 to 29 years of age under insurance requirements as of 1 January 1999 and for unemployed people of 29 to 55 years of age under insurance requirements as from 1 January 2000. (Medical treatment is provided for unemployed people over 55 years of age under insurance requirements already as of 1 September 1996.)

According to Greek legislation, insurance is compulsory and all persons working in Greece, regardless of nationality, race, sex, colour, language and religious or political beliefs are affiliated to IKA from the very first day of work, if they are not insured in any other social security organization and enjoy complete social security protection, if they reside legally in the territory of Greece.

Non-discrimination in the sector of social security

Presidential Decrees Nos. 358 and 359/1997 established full equality of social security rights between all foreign nationals legally working in Greece and Greek citizens. The new law on immigration No. 2910/2001 established the conditions and procedure for the legal stay and employment of foreigners in Greece who are not citizens of European Union member States.

Foreigners lawfully residing in the Greek territory are covered by the respective social insurance organizations and enjoy the same social insurance rights as Greek citizens, while the provisions pertaining to social protection are equally applicable to foreigners, as well as to Greek citizens.

Exceptions to the general rule exist, according to which public services in general shall be obligated to deny their services to foreigners who are not in possession of a passport or other legal travel document or entry visa or residence permit or who, by and large, fail to prove that they are staying lawfully in Greece. This does not include foreigners and members of their families who need urgent treatment in hospitals, therapeutic centres or clinics.

Greece has concluded a number of bilateral agreements in the social security field in order to cover Greek emigrants who work in other countries (agreements with the United States, Canada, Argentina, Brazil, Venezuela, Uruguay, New Zealand, etc.) and, as a member State of the EU, Greece applies the EC Regulations Nos. 1408/71 and 572/72.

A means-tested benefit of Social Solidarity (EKAS) was introduced in 1996 for low-income pensioners above the age of 65. Starting from 1 January 1998, this benefit was made available to pensioners over the age of 60 (old age, survivors' pensioners), and also to certain categories without age limit (e.g. invalidity pensioners, children receiving survivors' benefit). The benefit is graduated according to the income. The payment of this benefit is totally covered by the State budget.

In the social security sector, an integrated policy of changes by means of principles, criteria, targets, plans and coherent interventions has been effected over the last few years. The following steps have been taken in this respect:

The first step concerns the solution of urgent problems, such as the extension of main insurance to farmers, controlling insurance contribution evasion, reduction of non-rational spending in this sector, the insurance of economic immigrants, the encouragement of those with more needs, i.e. with the granting of EKAS.

The second step concerns the organizational and functional modernization of the system (merging of social security funds, amelioration of quality of services, the formation of institutional flexibility for greater efficiency in the investment of social security funds, the creation of infrastructure and computer-based means such as computerized rolls, the unification of regulations for health and the establishment of the conditions leading to the creation of an operationally reliable system). According to Law No. 2676/2001, the number of social security funds which are supervised by the Ministry of Labour and Social Security have been reduced from 215 to 150.

A next, third, step will concern larger changes for a fundamental reform of the system, its financing and its benefits, so that it will be viable in the long term.

The increase of the P13 is due to the increase of the interim spending of the salaries and to the increase of the contributions. The increase of the GNP is due to the increase of the economy in general and to the increase of the investments, of the final consumption and of the imports and exports in particular.

In the following table, the data of the years 1990 to 1994 have been formed according to the mixed system of National Accounts/European System of Integrated Accounts (ESA) 79, while the data of the years 1995 onwards have been formed according to the revised system ESA 95.

Table 11

Social insurance organizations (SIO)

	P13 Other non-commercial product	G.N.P.	(in per cent)
1990	28 755	3 248 124	.97
1991	45 200	6 426 999	.88
1992	58 243	9 015 914	.83
1993	00 881	1 273 517	.94
1994	17 018	4 195 732	.90
1995	48 653	8 096 950	.88
1996	73 241	0 770 299	.89
1997	14 860	4 061 020	.92
1998	41 197	7 018 821	.92
1999*	62 366	9 148 348	.93
2000**	86 983	2 051 014	.92

* Expenses (medium expense, salaries, real employer contributions, presumed employer's social contributions, consolidated funds amortization minus the cost of offices and establishments letting of or installation in general).

** Provisional data.

The public social security schemes in Greece are not supplemented by private ones.

According to Greek legislation, a means-tested pension equal to farmers' basic pension is granted to persons who are not entitled to a pension from the social security organizations. It is granted if the person has an income lower than the basic farmers' pension. In the case of a couple, this amount is doubled.

Article 10

Greece is a Contracting Party to the following Conventions:

International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, ratified by Law No. 2462/97 (Official Gazette 25/97 vol. A');

International Convention on the Rights of the Child, ratified by Law No. 2101/92 (Official Gazette 192/92 vol. A');

International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, ratified by Law No. 1342/83 (Official Gazette 39/83 vol. A');

ILO Convention (No. 103) (1952) concerning international maternity protection, ratified by Law No. 1302/82 (Official Gazette 133/82 vol. A'); and

ILO Convention (No. 138) (1973) concerning the minimum age to work, ratified by Law No. 1182/81 (Official Gazette 193/81 vol. A').

According to the Greek civil law, family is considered to be a union between a man and a woman based on marriage (married persons). Children in Greece reach their full age at 18 years of age.

Marriage is permitted, even in case the full age is not attained, under parental consent.

Among the programmes for creating, maintaining, strengthening and protecting the family, are the following actions and services for the protection of children. The Ministry of Health and Welfare has established 1,036 State centres for children, financed by the State budget, which hospitalize 78,000 infants (from the age of 2½ to their attending primary school) and 132 State centres for infants, which accommodate 10,000 babies (from the 8th month until their attending primary school).

Priority is given to employed parents and poor families with emphasis on children who, owing to social problems, need special protection (e.g. children who have lost one or both parents, children of unmarried women, children of divorced or separated parents, children coming from families having many children, children of parents with physical or mental disability, etc.).

For the improvement of children's living standard and amelioration of the services, parents pay some kind of fee according to their family income. Both State centres for children and State centres for infants fall within the competence of municipalities, in accordance with article 12 of Law No. 2880/01 (Official Gazette 9/A/2001), and operate as municipal and communal legal entities (article 12 of Presidential Decree No. 410/95).

According to the Third European Support Framework, provisions have been made for creating new welfare schemes and new departments in the existing State centres for children and State centres for infants, even new centres (regional operational programmes). A provision has also been made for the expansion of the existing centres (European Programme for Employment and Vocational Training). The above-mentioned centres have been financed until now by the European Social Fund (Second European Support Framework.)

Creative recreation centres are established by municipalities with co-financing from the European Social Fund (Third European Support Framework), and give hospitality to children between 6 and 12 years old for a specific period in the day. Such centres occupy children after school time in team groups, handicraft workshops, etc. (Ministerial Decision PIB/GP OIK 14951/2001/Official Gazette 1397/2001, vol. A).

Summer camps for children, a State programme, offers hospitality to children, disabled persons and families with low incomes. There are 32 camps for children (10 of them run by supervised bodies of the National Organization of Social Care and 22 of them run by prefectural authorities).

Summer camp facilities are also offered by private bodies and the Church under decision of the prefectural authorities. In addition, the National Organization of Social Care applies a number of social and welfare measures aiming at the social protection of children and families which face socio-economic problems.

The Ministry of Health and Welfare attempts, through Law No. 2646/98 "Development of National Welfare System", to introduce a reform in the field of welfare, establishing a comprehensive and effective network for social protection, in conformity with the existing requirements and needs.

The Ministry of Health and Welfare intends to reduce gradually the number of day-care centres for children deprived of a family, with a view to overcoming institutional care and support. In this light, a big programme is being launched for the de-institutionalization of unprotected children by realizing alternative methods of social protection, such as adoption, foster families, pilot programmes in small apartments facilitating semi-autonomous living, helping children to participate, on equal basis with other fellow citizens, in social and economic life.

Maternity allowances are granted either to employed mothers who cannot claim such benefits from an insurance fund or even to uninsured mothers for a period of six weeks before birth and six weeks after birth, so that they may ensure a satisfactory standard of living, according to the following legislation: article 4, paragraph 5, of Law No. 1302/82, by which ILO Convention No. 103 (1952) "on maternity protection" (Official Gazette 133, vol. A') was ratified, and Ministerial Decisions Γ2β/10195/12.12.83 (Official Gazette 769, vol. B'), Γ2β/οικ.133/84 (Official Gazette 40 vol. B'), and Π2β/οικ.2331/96 (Official Gazette 467, vol. B').

The allowance is determined by Ministerial Decision and amounts today to 220.10 euros (110.5 euros before birth and 110.5 euros after birth). The number of beneficiaries, according to this programme, is as follows: 797 mothers in 2000 and 712 mothers in 2001 (source: Ministry of Health and Welfare/Division of Family Protection).

Unprotected children are helped by various institutional care schemes. These include institutional protection for children unprotected or deprived of family care through:

(a) Care centres for children (Law No. 2851/22, Official Gazette 114, vol. A, Presidential Decree No. 273/73, Official Gazette 81, vol. A, Law No. 1431/84, Official Gazette 46, vol. A, and Ministerial Decision F2B/OIK 8291/84, Official Gazette 860, vol. B). These centres offer hospitality to children between 6 to 16 years old with the alternative possibility to prolong their stay up to their finishing school. There are 13 centres of this type, financed by the State budget, that give protection to 600 children;

(b) Church institutions and various other private institutions: There are 47 in operation offering protection to 1,500 children. They operate as institutions or societies (Law No. 111/72, Official Gazette 23, vol. A and Law No. 2039/39, Official Gazette 455, vol. A). A number of them are subsidized by the State Budget.

(c) Children's villages of the National Organization of Social Care: There are seven, financed by the State budget, which hospitalize 264 children. There are also specific programmes for the protection of abandoned or battered children carried out by supervised bodies (e.g. PIKPA) of the National Organization of Social Care, financed also by the State budget. In addition, a programme is running for the economic support of unprotected children, living in families, up to the age of 16 years old.

(d) "Mitera" Baby Centre: This centre gives protection to 80 children.

Juvenile street children receive short accommodation, social care and protection, according to a programme entrusted by the Ministry of Health and Welfare to the National Organization of Social Care, in appropriate organizations, such as "Agia Barbara" in Athens and "Philoxenia" in Thessaloniki. These organizations offer shelter, clothing, counselling support and help using specialized personnel, and are financed by the State budget. The Ministry of Health and Welfare plans to introduce new programmes that will improve institutional care and upgrade qualitative services to abandoned children.

Both central and decentralized services (e.g. welfare divisions of prefectures) take advantage of any available information about abandoned children, integrating them into the existing welfare services for help by psychologists, social workers and doctors) counselling support, housing, feeding and clothing.

The services offered are upgraded and reformed in collaboration with the European Union: Second and Third European Support Frameworks, and Interreg II and III Programmes. A brief description of action plans based on them follows:

(a) Operational Programme "Health and Welfare" of the Second European Support

Framework 1994-1999:

Sub-project 2 "Welfare":

Infrastructure and equipment of 24 centres for social support and vocational training of the disabled;

Infrastructure and equipment of open and institutional care of the disabled (centres for physical and social rehabilitation) and centres for autistic persons;

Infrastructure to combat social exclusion (psychological and social support and temporary accommodation). These services are offered by the National Centre of Social Support to persons and families facing a crisis or social exclusion.

Sub-project 3 "Human Resources":

Programmes for uninterrupted vocational training for the personnel of welfare services.

(b) Operational Programme "Health and Welfare" of the Third European Support

Framework 1994-1999:

Sub-project 3 "Welfare":

Support to persons threatened to be excluded from labour market, in the field of a network of social services, operating locally (support against poverty and social exclusion from labour market);

Gradual integration of the disabled into socio-economic life and autonomous living promotion (deinstitutionalization through creation of guest and boarding houses, small apartments, etc.);

Sub-project 4 "Human Resources Development in the field of Welfare";

Sub-project 5 "Technical Support".

Article 11

In December 2000, Greece submitted to the European Union its 2000-2004 stability and growth programme, which is revised periodically, whenever it is required. In November 2000, Greece submitted to the European Union its progress report on structural reforms.

The contexts of the above programme and report are almost within the same framework, however the special subjects of the latter are determined each time by the European Union.

In the 2000-2004 stability and growth programme, the Greek Government's main objective is the continuous enhancement of economic performance and the improvement of citizens' standard of living. The economic policy strategy for attaining these objectives involves a two-handed approach; on the one hand, maintaining a stable macro-economic environment, and, on the other hand, ensuring the proper functioning of markets and addressing cases of market failure.

The "2000-2004 Stability and Growth Programme" (SGP) of Greece, the first of its kind elaborated in conformity with the framework outlined in the European Council declaration of 1 May 1998, outlines the national policies and targets up to 2004. The programme was prepared in conjunction with the annual budget proposal for 2001, submitted to the National Parliament in early November 2000, and is in compliance with the 2000 broad economic policy guidelines.

The Greek Government included in the 2000-2004 SGP important structural reforms in pursuing its goals. The Government's main policy priorities are the effective liberalization of markets, the safeguarding of competition, the establishment of the necessary institutional framework for the smooth operation of product and financial markets, and the use of new technology.

The progress on structural reforms in Greece report is part of the Cardiff Process and prepared according to the structure proposed by the Economic Policy Committee of the European Union. It outlines the reforms undertaken and planned in the product and capital markets. As this report indicates, the recommendations made in the 2000 broad economic policy guidelines have been largely incorporated into the context of the broader economic policy.

The right to adequate food

According to a study by the Ministry of Labour and Social Security, submitted to the European Union (www.europa.eu.int/comm/employmentsocial/news/2001) and describing the national plan of action against social exclusion, poverty in Greece - examined irrespective of income or expenditure - is disconnected from hunger or bad nutrition. This study highlights in particular the following:

In comparison with other European citizens, Greeks overcome some usual sources of uncertainty, because they live in owned houses and work, to a great extent, in primary sectors of economy or are self-employed in small and medium-range enterprises, without taking into consideration various State-support schemes for vulnerable groups (e.g. specific pensions, rent benefits, family allowances, etc.);

The situation of the elderly as a factor that contributes to poverty, but shows a decrease over the course of time;

Children reduce the danger of poverty, because in cases of families having many children, economic and social help provided through networks of solidarity (wider family, church, governmental organizations) diminishes the risk of poverty; and

Sex continues to be an aggravating factor for poverty, but the difference between men and women diminishes over the course of time.

This is not essentially relevant to Greece; being a developed country, a member State of the European Union, with high national income, it does not confront problems of chronic malnutrition or of food-supply insecurity that might relate either to specific groups of the population or to different geographic areas.

In Greece, as well as in other Mediterranean countries, the Mediterranean diet plays a leading role in relation to nutritional attitudes. This diet is low-fat, a characteristic which, combined with the increasing consumption of fruits and vegetables, constitutes the major cause of the low ischaemic heart disease incidence, as well as for some kinds of cancer.

Considerable changes have occurred in the last 30 years concerning nutritional attitudes of the Greek population. An increase in consumption of meat and products containing sugar has been observed, as well as a decrease in dry legumes and cereals consumption. This attitude constitutes probably one of the basic causes for the increase in the frequency of some diseases, such as ischaemic heart disease, breast cancer and diabetes.

An upward trend has also been observed in cholesterol rates of adults, as well as in the weight, blood pressure and lipid rates of children. On the other hand, the increase in vegetable consumption, as well as the increase in daily food calories seems to be encouraging for health.

According to a recent research including many European countries, carried out by the National Centre for Nutrition, Greece ranks in the first position, compared to other European countries, for the per capita consumption of fish and sea products, oil and fruits, while, at the same time, it ranks last for consumption of butter and other kinds of animal products.

Referring to the role of international assistance by Greece in the realization of the right to adequate food, the following points should be stressed:

Greece, as a member State of the European Union, is a signatory partner to the Food Aid Convention of 1999. This results in an annual commitment that has to be carried out, namely providing developing countries with certain volume of grains or products equivalent;

This multilateral conventional obligation runs parallel to food aid and food security projects undertaken on a bilateral basis.

Bilateral assistance covers mainly relief and rehabilitation schemes in response to natural or man-made disasters, as well as severe food crisis due to poor economic performance.

According to the requests received, food aid can consist either of intermediary products, which can relaunch agricultural production gradually decreasing dependence on food imports, or of aid in kind. Food aid is totally granted, while transport costs are also covered by national sources.

Food security projects result from technical assistance in the forms of: production diversification, processing, marketing, institutional training and capacity building. Targeted groups are smallholders, male and female, or grass-root associations, while young farmers always remain a priority group.

The right to adequate housing

According to the last decennial census (2001), Greece has a population of 10,940,000 persons - an increase of 6.6 per cent in comparison with 1991. With an average household of an estimated size around 2.9 persons, the total number of households is well

above 3,700,000. Out of these, more than two-thirds live in urban areas (settlements of 10,000 persons and above), the largest city being Athens with more than 3.5 million inhabitants, while the rest live in rural communities and "semi-urban" centres (2,000 to 10,000 persons).

Most of the population increase between 1991 and 2001 can be attributed to the influx, after 1990, of foreign economic immigrants and Greek repatriates from the former Eastern block. The local population shows nearly zero growth due to the decline in fertility rates since the 1980s; this fact, combined with limited rates of population growth in urban areas, has made for a relatively balanced relationship between housing supply and demand in Greek urban areas, and also permitted a steady improvement in the availability of housing space per person and the expansion of home ownership throughout the 1990s, despite modest rates of income growth.

By the mid-1990s (1994), the broad picture in terms of housing conditions was as follows:

The average dwelling in the country as a whole had 3.66 rooms covering 82.7 square metres while the average household had 2.94 members. Thus, the average ratio of rooms per person was 1.24 and the average housing floor space area per person was 28.1 square metres;

In urban areas, the ratio of rooms per person was 1.22 and the dwelling area per person was 28.4 for an average household of 2.87 members;

In terms of housing amenities, while the share of units lacking basic amenities (running water, electricity, sewage) was quite high in the first post-war decades, the current incidence of such problems is insignificant. With regard to amenities such as bathrooms, indoor toilets and adequate heating, the incidence of problems is currently limited to small shares (about 10 per cent) among the urban poor and less developed rural settlements;

In terms of tenure type, 76 per cent of households were owner-occupiers, 21 per cent renters in the private sector, and about 3 per cent used their dwelling free of charge. There is no social rented sector in Greece. The share of the rented sector is, of course, higher in urban areas (31 per cent in Athens), but still relatively limited in size and has been steadily declining throughout the last two decades; it is estimated that its share in Athens had been reduced to about 27 per cent by 2001;

The ratio between the overall supply of dwellings and the number of households shows, at first glance, conditions of excessive over-supply: it has been 1.45 in 1991 and was still equally high by 2001. This in small part is due to a tendency for housing over-supply in urban areas peculiar to the Greek housing market; normal market vacancy rates exceeding 7 per cent are quite common. For the greatest part, however, this phenomenal over-supply of dwellings in the country as a whole is due to three factors: first, abandoned houses in villages, especially in mountainous areas; secondly, the extensive building of housing units for rent by vacationers and tourists; thirdly, the relatively high demand for second and vacation homes by Greek households - more than 10 per cent for the country as a whole and more than 14 per cent for urban households (more than 17 per cent in the case of Athens);

In terms of new housing production, Greece showed in the first post-war decades quite high rates of house building coupled with high rates of urbanization and income growth and high propensities of household saving. During the 1980s and 1990s, however, these dynamic trends slowed down significantly. By the second half of the 1990s, the average annual number of housing starts did not exceed 85,000 units, while the household propensity to save has fallen after 1996 to levels below 12 per cent. Taking into account the share of starts for tourism and vacation homes, these levels of housing investment are modest by Greek standards - a fact that may account, in part at least, for relatively fast increases in housing rents and prices during the 1990s.

These facts about the overall housing situation of Greece during the 1990s show that, in broad terms at least, there is no serious housing problem for the greatest part of the Greek population, while there are positive trends of steady improvement in housing space conditions (by about 1 per cent per annum) and access to house ownership. Greece ranks among less developed member States of the European Union in terms of income per capita, and, its housing statistics reflect this fact: according to data for the beginning of the 1990s, Greece held one of the lowest positions among the 15 EU States, together with Austria and Portugal, in the average number of rooms per person. Given this comparative framework, it is only fair to say that Greek housing presents no major problems from the viewpoint of the world-wide effort towards a better fulfilment of the right to adequate housing.

On the other hand, each society sets its own standards according to its aspirations and its level of economic and social development. According to such standards appropriate for the Greek society, it is recognized by competent authorities that there are still groups, most notably the urban and rural poor and foreign economic immigrants, who in large part do not live in satisfactory conditions or face an unacceptable economic burden in order to be housed adequately. In fact, on the basis of reasonable modern European housing standards for particular household sizes and types of need, it could be argued that more than one-quarter of Greek households are lacking one or more essential rooms. Such space standards may be judged excessive and wasteful from the point of most less developed Member States of the United Nations. Nevertheless, these standards form the operative criteria by which the Greek society views, in essence, the issues raised by the concept of the right to housing, and these criteria form the background of the more detailed discussion that follows.

The homeless

There are two approaches to the concept of "homelessness" in the Greek context. First, the modern urban one, where a homeless person either "sleeps rough" in public spaces or in transient accommodation offered by various institutions. Secondly, the "traditional" one, where a homeless person or household is defined as such when living in an "inappropriate" accommodation according to the official definition of the minimal appropriate dwelling.

There is no such official definition in Greece aside from the one used by the National Statistical Service, which defines as "appropriate" dwelling any permanent structure having at least one room larger than 4 square metres with an opening for air and lighting and not intended by construction for other uses (e.g. industrial, agricultural). By this definition, in 1991, 5,744 households or

less than 0.2 per cent of all households lived in “inappropriate” dwellings. Most of these cases were probably Roma families in tent camps.

During the first post-war decades, cases of households sharing the same dwelling were viewed officially as an implicit problem of homelessness. However, by 1991 less than 2 per cent of households shared dwellings with others, and quite a few of these did not in fact constitute problem cases of extreme need (e.g. students, extended families).

In a wider sense, a condition of homelessness could be defined on the basis of criteria of overcrowding, lack of amenities, or major problems in structure, airing and lighting, or dampness of the dwelling. However, there is not any such official definition in Greece and, therefore, this matter is better approached as part of the wider issue of problems in housing conditions, to be examined in a following section.

With regard to the modern definition of “homelessness”, there are no systematic data, official or otherwise, on people “sleeping rough” in public spaces and transient accommodation. Various impressionistic estimates, however, indicate that this problem is quite limited in Greece: there is not any significant or concentrated incidence in Greek cities and the numbers involved do not exceed a few thousand persons in the country as a whole - though the influx of foreign economic immigrants and political refugees over the last decade has led to temporary intensifications of the problem. In a way, illegal immigrants or political refugees living in temporary camps under the care of institutions constitute a special case of homelessness. However, their numbers are rather limited and their particular problem goes well beyond the matters of housing considered here.

Nevertheless, these cases present the most visible and urgent problem of homelessness during the last years; it is indicative that the few Greek voluntary associations active in the provision of assistance to homeless persons, dedicate almost exclusively their limited human and financial resources to the care of illegal immigrants and political refugees.

An analogous, though more “fluid”, problem may also be present in recent years among illegal agricultural workers in the countryside. Given that the number of such workers amounts to hundreds of thousands, the problem of homelessness or completely inadequate accommodation may be rather extensive. On the other hand, the settlement of economic immigrants in the country side, and more generally their integration into the Greek society, is presently undergoing very rapid changes, thus it is both difficult and premature to form a valid picture. Moreover, there has been no official recording until now, nor other sources of data about the extent of this problem.

Inadequate housing and lack of amenities

According to a simple formula for measuring housing needs, each household requires at least one bedroom for each married couple, one bedroom for each adult, and one bedroom for one or two children depending on their age and sex. In addition, the household requires a sitting room and a minimum of basic amenities and utilities.

On the basis of this formula, about 27 per cent of households in Athens in 1999 lacked a basic room. If bedrooms only were counted, more than 37 per cent lacked one. As noted before, the standards used for measuring adequate housing space are a matter of controversy. Nevertheless, those figures show that there is, *prima facie*, a substantial segment of the population that experiences either a mild or a more serious problem of space deficiency. Given the relative homogeneity of the Greek society, the data for Athens should be considered more or less indicative for other cities, as well. Rural and “semi-urban” areas may show slightly better conditions in terms of space, due to higher concentration of older people, as a consequence of movement of younger people to bigger urban centres.

The extent of the problem of inadequate space is, of course, more pronounced among households of lower socio-economic status and among the poor. The share of households living in poverty, defined according to the standard EU practice as those households with less than half the average income per equivalent adult, is estimated for the late 1990s at 21 per cent of all households for the country as a whole and about 13-14 per cent for Athens and similar urban centres. Among the poor, the share of households lacking at least one basic room reaches 60 per cent, while in the case of foreign economic immigrants, who are mostly poor, 70 per cent.

In terms of basic amenities (connection with utility networks, bathroom, toilet, heating), only 4 per cent of households in Athens in 1999 presented one or more problems. Even in those households, the problem was often one of inadequate heating. Thus, for the city as a whole - and for other urban areas - the problem of amenities is not particularly significant. However, it is most probably still significant in less developed, especially mountainous, rural settlements. According to the 1991 census, the share of households lacking some basic amenities was as follows:

Table 11

Households without basic amenities (in percentage)

	Country Total	Urban Areas	Rural Areas
Indoor toilet	12.5	.4	32.0
Running water	3.5	.0	9.3
Bath	14.5	.6	35.0

The extent of housing problems in rural areas has certainly been reduced in the previous decade, but the high figures of 1991 indicate that serious deficiencies in amenities may still be present for, as a rough estimate, approximately 15 per cent of households.

“Illegal” settlements

While in the past, during the 1950s and the 1960s, the formation of illegal settlements for low-income housing was quite common in Greek cities, the activity of this sector for main residences has virtually been zero since the mid-1970s. Its importance continues to be quite extensive for the provision of secondary homes, especially in the more popular coastal vacation regions.

It should be noted that “illegal” building in Greece denotes building without a legal permit on owned plots of land. Such plots are rarely inside the official plan of cities, where land is more expensive, but on peripheral land “informally” planned and subdivided.

While illegal building for main homes may have essentially stopped for quite some time, there remains a legacy of haphazardly developed residential areas facing serious problems of planning and the provision of infrastructure, as well as problems of security of tenure and legal obstacles to further building or improvement. For the legacy of such cases, there has been since 1983 an extensive programme of urban reorganization supported by Housing Law No. 1337/83, and implemented throughout Greece under the control of the Ministry of the Environment, Town Planning and Public Works. It has the aim of incorporating these areas into official city plans, providing infrastructure and solving the legal problems that new construction or the improvement of housing presents. The programme is essentially in its final phase with regard to main housing settlements. It is still quite important and active in vacation areas, where the problem of illegal urban development persists.

The legislative framework and the programmes for the temporary “certification” of illegal structures and, at later stages, for their integration into a new official city plan, have been purposefully designed in such a manner that the negative impacts for those living in illegal housing are minimized. Thus, the actual cases of partial or total demolition or expropriation of property due to unsolvable planning problems have been kept to a minimum. Moreover, special exemptions have been provided in planning law in order to facilitate the expansion, improvement or further development of housing in illegal properties and expedite the process of “legalization”. Needless to say, this has often negative impact from the point of good planning and quality of the built environment, but is considered necessary due to the particular social composition of former illegal housing areas. In all, the regime for the “integration” and “legalization” of illegal housing can be reasonably considered rather beneficial for past illegal settlers both from the point of housing and from the point of property gains.

Arbitrary evictions and lack of protection of renters

As noted previously, the rental sector in Greece is private. Owners of rental housing property are almost exclusively households owning a few properties at most. There is no significant concentration of wealth in the sector and, aside from a few cases of institutional ownership, there are no investments in rental housing of a commercial business character. Thus, the sector shows a high degree of competition, as well as flexibility and informality in landlord-tenant relationships. This state of affairs has many positive aspects, yet it leaves room for frequent disputes, black economy practices, and arbitrary behaviour on both sides of the rent contract.

During the decade after 1985, the rental sector was under a regime of relatively strict controls with regard to both rents and evictions. Gradually, however, since the beginning of the 1990s and in full by 1996, the sector has undergone complete deregulation. Thus, aside from the protection and controls offered by Greek Civil Law, tenants enjoy essentially no legal protection against excessive rent increases and a rather limited protection against evictions. The current legal framework for rental contracts prescribes that these apply for a minimum time of three years, during which tenants cannot be evicted if they do not violate their obligations with regard to the use of property and the regular payment of rent and building management bills. The tenant may leave without any further obligation after completion of a minimum of two years. If there is violation of payment obligations, owners are free to evict. After the minimum period of three years, the owner may ask the tenant to leave or accept a renegotiation for a new contract with no restrictions as to the level of rent. It is a common practice among owners to avoid formal renewal of contracts and demand a de facto so-called “indefinite” continuation of the contract. This permits the frequent renegotiation of rent, as well as eviction at any time.

Tenants receiving a simple notice of eviction by a court clerk must move within a reasonable time of a few months. If they refuse or procrastinate, the owner must move proceedings for a court order, which, in turn, also takes a few months. The court, hearing both sides, decides on the time of eviction. The tenant may appeal, but the court decision is immediately enforceable.

While the applicability of the term “arbitrary” evictions or its significant incidence as a violation of basic rights is certainly questionable in the present Greek system, there is empirical evidence that tenants suffer from insecurity of tenure to a significant extent. For one, renters show, according to a recent survey in Athens (1999), a rather high degree of mobility by Greek standards. Only 18 per cent live in their present residence for more than two years, while the average number of housing moves within a decade is in the case of renters 2.47 compared to 1.38 for present owner-occupiers. However, those disparities are mitigated by the fact that renters tend to be younger than owners and, therefore, are expected in any case to show higher rates of mobility.

With regard to pressures for eviction and, more generally, pressures to move, the evidence for Athens shows a rather complex and ambivalent picture. On the one hand, only 2.7 per cent of renters have been directly asked by the landlord, during the last two years, to vacate the dwelling. On the other, 13 per cent of renters declare that they plan to move within a short time (two years), because the landlord “needs the dwelling for his/her own use”. An additional 5 per cent plan to leave because of “high rents or excessive demands for rent increase”. Thus, nearly one-fifth of renters are under some pressure to leave, though this pressure is often informal and long-term in character.

Those facts are consistent with the data on the motives of actual changes of residence among renters. Thus, present renters that changed residence during 1995-1999, declare that a basic reason for the move has been the fact that the owner asked for the use of the dwelling (14 per cent) or that the rent or its demanded increase were excessive (7 per cent).

Social rental housing

As was already noted, there is no social-rental sector in Greece both in the direct sense of public or municipal ownership and management and in the indirect, of private ownership coupled with public controls and subsidies. While there were in the past quite a

few political demands for the creation of such a sector; the dominant frame of opinion among policymakers and housing specialists is that, aside from the evident dislike of such housing forms among the public, the capital costs, as well as the administrative costs, given the complete lack of public experience in collective housing management, of building such a sector from scratch are prohibitive.

On the other hand, more market-based forms such as the provision of subsidies to landlords in order to achieve improvements in rents, supply and social allocation, are still on the agenda, but have received little interest up to the present.

Problems of housing affordability

The matter of housing affordability is a complex one requiring consideration of a multitude of factors that are often specific to each local housing system and the level of economic development of the country. Nevertheless, especially for purposes of international comparison, housing researchers usually adopt a rather simple approach that is based on the relationship between average household income and the average market value of dwellings or, in the case of renters, the average ratio of rent to income. When, as in the case of Greece, detailed and valid household income data are not available, the level of consumption expenditures is used instead. Regarding the criteria of affordability, it is customary to consider a housing value to annual income ratio of 2.5 as quite acceptable, whereas the same holds for rent to income shares of 25 per cent. Adjusting for the case of consumption data, the corresponding figures are roughly 2.8 and 27 per cent.

By the mid-1990s, for which valid economic data for Greek households are available, the ratio between the value of the average dwelling and the average annual level of household consumption was about 2.52 - thus within "normal" expectations of affordability. The respective figure for Athens, as representative of the most expensive urban markets, was 2.96 - slightly above "acceptable" levels.

These figures do not consider the extent to which the average dwelling values represent adequate housing conditions. Moreover, they may conceal extensive variations and inequalities in the parameters of affordability. In order to examine these aspects, one may use, as a benchmark for the cost of adequate housing, the minimum requirements for housing space of each household, based on the space standards mentioned above, multiplied by the average value per square metre observed in the total housing stock under market conditions. The ratio of this cost to annual consumption expenditure was, by 1994, higher than 4.0 (i.e. higher than 3.5 for incomes) for 21.5 per cent of households in the country as a whole. In the case of Athens, the share of the corresponding group, with such clearly unacceptable cost to income ratios, was 30.0 per cent.

Of course, these figures do not necessarily mean that there is a corresponding actual problem of affordability. For one, a large share of these households may already own a house. Therefore, their problem is most probably one of improvement rather than of acquisition from scratch. Furthermore, they may have other wealth assets that suffice for their housing needs. In fact, a major source for such assets, namely parental assistance and bequests, is very widespread in Greece. Lastly, a limited though significant number may be entitled to State assistance in the form of workers housing (see paragraph 336 below). Thus, one can only say that for a substantial share of the population (probably about one-third in larger cities), there is an extensive gap between incomes and housing costs and, therefore, a serious potential problem of affordability. Given that market prices have shown during the 1990s a steady increase well above the inflation rate and the rise of incomes, this problem may very well be more pronounced today.

With regard to renters, one should take into account that for most of the post-war period the average rent-to-income ratio was very low - typically below 15 per cent. In addition, renter households have had to save quite a lot for housing due to the limited role of mortgage credit. Thus, by Greek standards, a rent-to-income ratio exceeding 20 per cent certainly indicates a problem of affordability. This applies, a fortiori, for rent-to-consumption ratios exceeding 25 per cent.

By 1994, the average rent-to-consumption ratio in the country as a whole was 19 per cent. However, 23.4 per cent of renters spent at least 25 per cent of their total consumption resources for rent. The corresponding share of renters for Athens was 27.3 per cent, while the average rent-to-consumption ratio was 20.2 per cent. The share of households with such large gaps between spending capacity and rental payments on the basis of housing needs rather than actual present accommodation, was probably in the order of 20 per cent for all renters and 25 per cent for renters in large cities. In such cases, there is a real rather than a potential problem of affordability - in contrast to the general data above, where owner-occupiers were also included.

Participation in housing programmes - waiting lists

Housing policy in Greece offers assistance towards the reduction of the cost of a home acquisition (for first-time acquisition only) through a number of transfer tax deductions, tax relief on interest payments, and a general interest-rate subsidy. These general forms of assistance, however, by their very nature, offer more benefits to middle and higher-income households rather than to those with acute affordability problems. Thus, the burden of social housing assistance mainly falls on the programmes offered by the Workers' Housing Organization (OEK), which are addressed to employees in the private sector who are covered by the national Social Insurance Foundation (IKA). These programmes offer new housing units at low price, heavily subsidized loans and, lastly, rent allowance, to the beneficiaries of OEK, including legal foreign workers, employed in the private sector and covered by IKA.

The programme of rent allowances for middle and low-income wage and salary earners introduced in 1991 by OEK, currently assists roughly more than 30,000 recipients or about 5 per cent of renter households in the country as a whole, i.e. possibly more than 20 per cent of its potential target group.

The social housing programme, which consists of homes produced by OEK for owner-occupation, covers a very small share of total stock. The new units produced by OEK fluctuate between 1 per cent and 2 per cent of total residential construction on an annual basis (an average of 1,500 units for 1994-1998). The beneficiaries of this programme are, as already noted, property-less wage and salary earners covered by State social insurance. More important in terms of numbers, however, are the programmes for heavily subsidized loans for building or buying a home and for improvements in existing dwellings.

In all, these OEK programmes are, by far, the most important instruments of Greek social housing policy. Programmes for emergency housing or money assistance in cases of natural disaster victims (mainly by earthquakes which are endemic in Greece) or in cases of refugees (Greeks recently repatriating from countries of the former Soviet Union) are also of major social importance in the Greek context. They usually concern, however, small numbers for short periods, and the main role of the State in this field is to sustain the necessary machinery for preparedness when emergencies occur.

Aside from the programme for new dwellings built by OEK, which, being limited in number and offered on very favourable terms, are in great demand, there does not seem to be a serious problem of barriers to participation or unduly long waiting lists in State housing programmes. After all, participation in these programmes is limited by specific rules tied to certain social groups and conditions in ways that are in accord with available resources. Thus, the real problem is rather one of the limited coverage offered to the low-income population at large.

Tenure groups

The Greek housing system is composed of two major tenure groups: owner-occupiers and renters of the private sector. There is no social rented housing sector or rental housing provided by semi-public institutions (associations, cooperatives, etc.).

By 1994, 76 per cent of all households were owner-occupiers, in most cases outright owners without mortgage debt. To these one may add a 3 per cent that used the dwelling free of charge - usually cases of family support. Thus, only 21 per cent of households lived in rental housing. By 2001, this share has been further reduced to about 19 per cent. In larger cities, the share of rental housing has always been significantly higher: in Athens it was 31 per cent in 1994 and a bit over 27 per cent in 2001.

As already noted, Greek housing policy clearly favours the owner-occupier sector and the efforts of households to move into this sector away from rent. In this respect, renters can be considered a relatively disadvantaged group. However, in contrast to most European countries, the status of renter has not historically been associated with any particular social class. Mostly, it is associated with the stage in the life-cycle of the household. Given that mortgage financing has played a comparatively limited role throughout the post-war period, a lot of younger households without substantial parental assistance had to save for extended periods before moving into owner-occupation.

However, during the last decade of credit expansion and lower interest rates, the share of owner-occupation has been growing faster among middle and higher incomes, thus introducing a social class dimension into the tenure structure. The inflow of economic migrants, who almost exclusively reside in rented housing, has further reinforced this social imbalance in the tenure pattern and the association between rental status and socio-economic problems. Thus, in the future, policies towards a better fulfilment of the right to adequate housing will have to pay greater attention to the needs and problems of renters.

The right to adequate housing in Greek law

The Greek Constitution states in article 21, paragraph 4, that: the acquisition of housing by those that lack it or are inadequately housed, is the object of special attention by the State.

This general statement does not, obviously, institute a full right to adequate housing in the strict legal sense of the term. On the other hand, it can be argued that it offers a base for legitimate claims by those in need, though such claims may be disputable as to the extent and form of the "special care" the State is obliged to provide. Unfortunately, there are no specific laws or institutions that would further specify and implement this constitutional article in a legally rigorous way.

Moreover, this article leaves open a number of controversial issues as to the nature of public care for housing. First, the term "acquisition" predisposes housing policy in favour of owner-occupation and, therefore, may discriminate against support of other tenure forms. Second, the rest of the paragraphs in article 21 concern public care for the family, motherhood, childhood and the young, general health and the care of the invalid, the old and the poor. Thus, the housing paragraph is located amongst directives with a strong emphasis on social welfare and those most in need. In fact, the "Popular Housing" programme in the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare, introduced in the 1950s and active up to the early 1980s, operated essentially in this spirit: it catered to the very poor, the homeless, refugees, and victims of natural disasters. It is interesting to note, as a sort of legal precedent, that the legal and administrative framework for the programme stated quite clearly who was a beneficiary, therefore establishing a right, but it also stated that provision was dependent on the resources available as determined by medium-term planning and fiscal restrictions. This philosophy appears to be prevalent in the Greek housing policy context, with a case in point the OEK programmes.

Thus, the Greek Constitution and legal/political tradition form a rather flexible context that, on the one hand, obliges the State to assist Greek households in their efforts to acquire a decent house and, on the other, provides a political basis for demands by those in special housing need. This does not constitute clear-cut enforceable housing rights. As a result, there is a clear institutional gap in the Greek housing system in this respect even for individual cases of extreme need or homelessness: there are no legal avenues for demanding some form of shelter within a set time period or protection against eviction when rent payments cannot be met (though often judges substitute for social policy and give lenient rulings in case of extreme need).

The protection of property in Greek law

The Greek Constitution in article 17, paragraphs 1 and 2, states that property is protected by the State and that no one shall be deprived of his property except for the public benefit which must be duly proven and always following full compensation to the owner. By full compensation it is meant the value of the expropriated property, which would allow the possibility of acquisition of an equal value real estate. With regard to the determination of the unit value, article 17 refers to the civil courts. The compensation is usually pecuniary.

This article constitutes the major essential legal rule for the protection of property, and after the revision of paragraphs 2 and 4 new regulations to the institution of compulsory expropriation for the purpose of the protection of property against a long-term occupation in view of its approval or modification of the plan to an area of common or public benefit.

Thus, the first important provision that was introduced is the obligation of the administration to explicitly justify, in the act of expropriation, the possibility of covering the expense/compensation.

The second new provision refers to the crucial time for the calculation of the compensation. If, for example, the discussion of the temporary determination of the compensation takes more than one year, then it is the time for discussion of the final determination that is taken into consideration for the determination of the value of the property.

A third important provision introduced is the possibility of compensation in kind, from the point of view of the concession of the ownership of another real estate or the concession of rights on another real estate (e.g. transfer of the building ratio), if the beneficiary is in agreement.

Paragraph 4, in its revised form, includes new procedural, but also essential regulations concerning mainly the determination of the competent court. Competent courts for the determination of the compensation are the civil courts. Furthermore, the law provides for the possibility to proceed to the occupation of the property before compensation, only in the case where it concerns works of a general importance to the economy of the country and only by judgement of the court, under condition that a reasonable percentage of compensation is given.

All the above regulations have been codified and included in Law No. 2882/2001, "Codification of Compulsory Expropriation of Property", replacing the previous Presidential Decree No. 797/1971. In this law, the typical procedure of declaring an expropriation, the expectation and determination of the compensation, the manner in which an expropriation is implemented, as well as the procedure of the revocation of a non-implemented expropriation are determined in detail.

In the case of incorporating areas into official city plans, the necessary funds and land for providing social and technical infrastructure of the new area, are ensured by owners contribution in land and money. The contribution is proportional to land size. The contribution in land and money was introduced by the "Housing Law", No. 1337/1983, which was modified by the new Law No. 2508/1997 on "Sustainable Urban Development".

Special care is given for the minimization of the negative impacts to the housing and property rights, in the cases of incorporating areas into official city plans, of construction of major transport projects - such as the ring-road linking western Attika with the new airport in eastern Attika called "Attiki Odos", the construction of Attiko Metro, etc., as well as in the case of construction of the Olympic Games infrastructures.

The above-mentioned Law No. 2882/2001, as well as the special policy framework for re-housing shelters, are implemented when it is necessary. This special policy framework is implemented quite exclusively in the cases of "informal" housing of Greek Roma. Their rehousing in an appropriate place is effectuated into the framework of the "Integrated Action Programme for the Social Integration of Roma", exposed below.

Policies for increasing access to better housing

Housing policy in Greece is mainly active in the following areas:

Provision of financial assistance for first-time acquisition of housing through tax benefits and interest rate subsidies;

Direct provision of low-cost new owner-occupied housing to workers and money allowances to renters through the Workers Housing Organization;

Improvement of older and new residential areas through the machinery of town and regional planning, building control and selective environmental upgrade projects; and

Public support for the housing of natural disaster victims (e.g. earthquakes) and categories of special need (e.g. Greek repatriates, refugees, immigrants, Greek Roma etc.).

In all cases, the broader objectives of the housing policy is the facilitation of improved housing supply and the provision of owner-occupied housing. Rental housing, as noted previously, constitutes a sizeable though declining sector that provides an essential function for young individuals and households that have not yet the funds for acquiring a dwelling. Greek housing policy, however, aside from encouraging housing supply in general, and providing legal arrangements for the protection from unjust eviction or breach of contract, as described before, includes few resource-using programmes or instruments directed to this sector on the assumption that the main aspiration of renters is the movement to owner-occupation. More important, the rental sector is exclusively private, and there is no institutional provision in Greece for the supply of social rented housing. An exception to these general rules is the programme of rent allowances for middle and low-income wage and salary earners by the Workers Housing Organization referred to previously.

We have covered so far a number of the more relevant aspects of Greek housing policy from the point of the right to housing: protection against eviction and discrimination, assistance and improvement policies for former illegal settlements, and public policies for the direct assistance of low-income groups through OEK programmes. From the point of the wider picture, however, the main elements of Greek housing policy and, more broadly, urban policy that are aimed at increasing access to housing and improving housing conditions are, on the one hand, credit and tax subsidies assisting the supply of improved housing and the move into owner-occupation and, on the other, the set of building codes and planning instruments and policies having to do with urban land development and the improvement of buildings and the urban environment. These broad policies are complemented with a limited

number of case-specific programmes for social groups with particularly urgent housing needs.

Increasing access to improved owner-occupied housing

Tax and credit policies for increasing access to better owner-occupied housing are mainly based on restricted selective criteria, but constitute quite a substantial resource inflow into the sector. The rented sector covers in Greece less than 28 per cent of households in urban areas and a bit more than 5 per cent in non-urban ones. Thus, house owners constitute an overwhelming majority of more than 3 million households. On the basis of some rough approximations, one can surmise that, from the viewpoint of housing policy, relatively few of these owner-occupiers are currently recipients of significant tax and interest rate subsidies. First, less than 10 per cent of owner households have received some housing loan in the recent past and thus benefit from interest rate subsidies. Moreover, the subsidy, based on the deduction of interest payments from taxable income, mainly benefits those with substantial personal marginal tax rates (which can be as high as 40 per cent). Second, on an annual basis, the number of those buying a first home and not having other significant real assets probably does not exceed 25,000 households. These households benefit from the reduction of the property transfer tax which is quite steep in Greece - 11-13 per cent on the officially set prices, i.e. about 8 per cent on real prices. If one adds an annual figure of about 10,000 transfers due to inheritance and parental assistance, which also benefit in most cases from reductions in the transfer tax, one may reach a total of about 30|35,000 households, i.e. about 1 per cent of all owners on an annual basis. This, however, constitutes more than one-third of the number of households in the process of acquiring a house at any given year, hence, in the long-run, a very significant share of all owner households.

In addition, all existing owner-occupiers benefit from tax relief on the imputed income from the dwelling. These taxable income deductions again favour disproportionately those with larger and more valuable homes and higher marginal tax rates. They are considered, however, an important part of the policy of incentives encouraging the growth and improvement of the housing sector as a whole, which, it is hoped, will provide significant indirect benefits to all social groups.

Aside from the above, access to owner-occupation and better housing has benefited greatly during these years from improved credit conditions due to general economic policies. The policy of monetary stabilization and convergence with other European economies, as well as the policy for improving competition in the banking system, have brought about a dramatic decline in home loan interest rates and an over-all improvement in the terms and conditions on which such loans are made.

Improving the quality of housing, the urban environment, and provision of services

Since 1997, the new Law No. 2508/97 for Sustainable Urban Development, has introduced improved guiding principles, terms, forms, and procedures of urban planning for the balanced and sustainable development of cities and smaller settlements. Apart from the general improvement in planning procedures and institutions, the new legislation introduced, for the first time, a relatively comprehensive organizational framework for urban renewal of all kinds, especially for urban renewal projects of a social nature. It also introduced new provisions permitting organized housing development in the outskirts of cities and in areas of secondary and vacation home development. However, the inherent problems which are characteristic of the property ownership pattern in Greece and make the process of organized development or renewal both difficult and costly, as well as the more general lack of public funding due to a strict fiscal regime, have not so far allowed utilization of these new mechanisms and interventions by public, semi-public or local authority agencies which might contribute to the solving of social and housing problems.

The Ministry of the Environment, Town Planning and Public Works, in strict collaboration with the local authorities, realizes throughout Greece interventions of urban improvement, with the aim of upgrading the urban environment, revitalizing the urban areas, and promoting the cultural patrimony, in cases of interventions in significant urban centres, in regard to their building stock. This activity is based on the programme of "urban reorganization" implemented since 1983.

In addition, the improvement of infrastructure, equipment and the environment of urban centres of the country, characterized by high rates of de-industrialization, high rates of unemployment, and degradation of life quality and environmental degradation, is attempted through the incorporation of specific interventions by the European Commission Initiative, URBAN. Interventions in Keratsini-Drapetsona, Peristeri, Nea Ionia of Volos, Ermoupolis of Syros, the south-west sector of Patras and western Thessaloniki were included in the Greek operational programme URBAN I (1995-2001). Interventions in Perama, Komotini, and the quarters Agios Minas, Agia Triada and Kaminiia of Iraklion have been proposed in the Greek operational programme URBAN II (2001-2006), which has not been approved yet.

The Ministry of the Environment, recognizing the vital role which the local authorities are called to play in the implementation of a Habitat Agenda, has incorporated into his action plan a pilot programme to draw up and implement "integrated local projects for sustainable cities in implementation of the Habitat Agenda" in selected municipalities of the country. The basic targets of this programme are (a) understanding of need to adopt a policy of integrated strategic planning in order to confront the complex contemporary problems of cities and settlements, and (b) encouragement for the principles of participation and partnership, as the most democratic and effective approaches to the successful implementation of interventions at local level.

In order to improve the quality and safety of buildings, a series of extensive amendments have been introduced to the General Building Code (GOK), the new Seismic Design Code (EAKI2000) was approved, and amendments were made to the Reinforced Concrete Code (EKOSI2000), on the basis of experience from the 1999 earthquake in Athens. Also, a new

regulation for rational use and savings of energy is elaborated, which will replace the existing regulation of thermal insulation of buildings. The new regulation promotes the application of systems and measures for energy savings and renewable energy sources in buildings.

Besides, the existing legislation improved by the addition of new regulations aiming at reinforcing the possibility of free movement of persons with special needs, by the imposition or encouragement to construct parts of the buildings or of the public space, in order to

facilitate the access, the residence, the work, and the recreation of these persons. In 1999, the Ministry of the Environment, Town Planning and Public Works published a special volume of "Planning Instructions", comprising a total of 10 instructions on the design of open public spaces, large public and private buildings and private dwellings. These instructions constitute a new, integrated planning framework and include detailed specifications for areas of pedestrian movement, access to buildings, elevators, stairs, signing, etc. In line with this new framework, special provisions have been included in the GOC (Law No. 2831/2000), with specific terms on horizontal and vertical access to public and private buildings of any use (education buildings, health care facilities of all kinds, welfare offices and social services facilities, offices, commercial premises, etc.).

Provision is also made for accessible and appropriately laid out washroom facilities, parking places for disabled persons' vehicles, pedestrian movement for all users (ramps, special walkers' lane, guide system for the blind), the proper design and layout of street equipment (signs, telephone booths, bus stops, etc.), and the installation of audio-visual and visual equipment to assist the blind and deaf. These terms apply to new urban infrastructures, but also, as far as feasible, to those already existing. Similar requirements are laid down for the horizontal and vertical access to private residential buildings of more than three floors. This new planning framework has been adopted by a large number of ministries and public organizations, which are currently implementing programmes to improve the buildings in which they operate.

Lastly, the continuing programme for rapid integration into official land use plans of areas of unregulated or illegal development is intended to introduce proper regulation of land uses to these areas and to improve their infrastructures.

The city of Athens will host the Olympic Games of 2004. The successful organization of this major event constitutes one of the greatest challenges faced by modern Greece. Moreover, an equally important challenge will be the proper utilization of the preparation of the Olympic infrastructures to improve the quality of life in the wider region covered by the Athens conurbation. The Olympic Games represent a historic opportunity not only to tackle structural problems in the organization and function of the city, but also to raise it to that of a metropolitan centre of international importance. From this perspective, planning and implementation of the necessary Olympic projects and interventions are seen within the framework of the following objectives:

Improvement of existing urban infrastructures and addition of new that will upgrade the functioning of the city and the quality of life;

Efforts to ensure that the urban fabric is not burdened with infrastructures superfluous to its needs in the aftermath of the Games.
Possibility of removing or finding new uses for such infrastructures;

Minimization of the environmental impact of new Olympic infrastructures;

Improvement of the urban environment; and

Improvement of the city's image and of its historic and cultural profile.

Encouraging the regional balanced development, administrative reorganization and regional planning

The settlement network is characterized by the predominance of the two major conurbations of Athens and Thessaloniki, a relatively small number of medium-sized urban centres, and an extensive network of small rural settlements. The 1991 census recorded a total of 12,817 settlements, administratively organized into 5,921 primary level local authority units. The country's settlements network consists of 128 urban centres representing 57 per cent of the population, 352 semi-urban and 5,441 rural local authority units (representing 14.3 per cent and 28.7 per cent of the population respectively). It should be noted that 65 per cent of rural units have a population below 500 inhabitants. The network of semi-urban and, mainly, rural units is highly fragmented in geographical terms due to the special features of the Greek terrain (the extensive island and mountain areas), and is also characterized by an ageing, usually static or diminishing population and a limited economic and productive base. Over the period 1996-2000, a number of measures and policies have been introduced with both direct and indirect positive effects on the balance of the settlement structure.

The "Kapodistrias" National Programme has been the most significant attempt for administrative reorganization, aimed at the problems caused by the fragmented nature of local government. Its basic objective is to merge the existing primary level local authority units into broader geographical and administrative entities in line with regional planning, development and other economic and demographic criteria. The programme envisages the establishment of 1,033 new primary level local authorities across the country (900 municipalities and 133 communes). It was enacted with Law No. 2539/1997 and accepted by the local communities with relatively limited opposition. The new legislation provides for the operation of a special funding programme (EPTA, see chap. 5) for the period 1997-2001, providing resources to support the process of restructuring. The EPTA contains subprogrammes and policy measures to develop the administrative and operational infrastructures of the new authorities (material and technical infrastructure, human resources, technical assistance) and to finance the necessary technical and social infrastructures.

Law No. 2508/1997, maintains the master plan as the basic planning tool, which is now extended into both the urban (built-up) and the non-urban (non-built-up) space, within the administrative boundaries of the local authority unit. For small, non-urban local authorities, comprised of a number of small settlements (which is usually the case in rural communities, especially after the implementation of the "Kapodistrias" programme), it introduced the concept

of the "Open City". Under this concept, both built-up and non-built-up space within the administrative boundaries of the local authority unit is incorporated into a unified plan of spatial organization.

Significant improvements have been made in the legislative framework for regional planning, incorporating the principles of sustainability and balanced development of the national space and the network of settlements. In October 1999, the new framework came into effect regulating "Regional Planning and Sustainable Development" (Law No. 2742), by virtue of which development planning for the settlement network is now incorporated on contemporary terms into the broader process of regional planning. The

basic core of the regional planning process is the general framework, which lays down the basic principles of spatial organization and restructuring. These principles are given more specific definition in the specific planning frameworks, pertaining to specific areas or sectors of productive activities, the basic infrastructure networks and problematic regions of Greece, and the regional planning frameworks for the country's 12 regions (excepting Attica). The study for the general framework has been completed and forwarded for approval and ratification.

To promote the organization and restructuring of the weak settlement network, especially in the problematic rural, island and mountain areas, studies and research projects have been commissioned to establish the best way of implementing the policy of multi-centre development, one of the main axes of the European Spatial Development Plan. The studies will focus on the classification of settlements, the definition of the role of metropolitan centres and the elaboration of the specific planning frameworks envisaged by Law No. 2742/1999. To date, the following specific frameworks have been completed and forwarded for ratification:

The settlement structure for the whole of Greece;

Rural areas; and

Island areas.

The study of the mountain areas is approaching completion, and work is proceeding on the regional planning frameworks for the country's 12 regions (excepting Attica), which will establish the guidelines for the spatial organization of the key regions.

The non-governmental housing sector

The most important non-governmental organizations for the housing sector in Greece are the owners' and renters' federations, expressing their own interests. Their action consists of exercising pressure on the Government in order to undertake measures for housing policies aiming at:

The increase of the effectiveness of the credit and subsidies system for housing;

A more favourable taxation system for house owners;

Strengthening of renters by direct and indirect social grants and allowances; and

Development of the social housing sector.

The local authorities have lately become involved with vulnerable groups regarding programmes to face problems, such as food, clothing, housing, etc. From 1997 onwards, the town of Athens has started a housing programme, which covers nowadays the half of the homeless of Athens, and is expected to cover soon all the needs of the city.

Recently, small organizations aiming at facing problems, such as the shelter provision for the above-mentioned groups, have been created in Greece. The action of these organizations is very restricted, especially for the shelter provision, because this action demands important funds and a serious organizational structure, a fact that could only be achieved by legislated agents of the State.

Housing programmes for groups with urgent housing problems

The three main programmes of which consists the public support for the housing of categories of special need are the following:

Programme for housing rehabilitation of the Roma;

Programme for housing rehabilitation of the Greek repatriates; and

Programme to provide accommodation for the victims of the recent earthquake in Athens.

Programme for housing rehabilitation of the Roma

Since 1996, a policy framework has been implemented to encounter the serious problems that Greek Roma face regarding health, education, vocational training, social insurance, and housing. A great number of services from the central administration and local authorities have been involved in the implementation of the measures of this framework. In the housing sector, this framework has been implemented through actions for living conditions improvement and for immediate relief of residents of existing tent-camps and for creation of temporary stay-spaces in passage areas.

Recognition of the need for further specific actions in order to encounter the problems faced by Roma, led the State, in April 2001, in processing the integrated action programme (IAP) for the social integration of Roma. The IAP aims at the application of a national policy through preventive and remedy interventions in the Greek social reality in order to mitigate social differences, enhance social justice and achieve the social integration of Roma.

The IAP is structured into 2 priority axes: Priority Axe 1 refers to housing (new settlements, residence improvements, settlement improvements, urban and physical planning, etc.), and the Priority Axe 2 refers to services (employment, education, training, welfare, culture, and adult education).

The IAP recognizes the great importance that reassurance of an appropriate house and housing environment has on the attempt to eliminate social exclusion of Roma citizens. It gives priorities in solving the housing and settlement problems of Roma that live in camps either through improvement in existing camps, in case they are in an appropriate housing area, or through development of new

settlements, according to contemporary principles and socially acceptable housing and settlement standards.

The aim of the Priority Axe 1 is the solution of the housing problem of Roma with a set of measures and actions that cover the different housing rehabilitation needs and settlement. The main objectives of the Priority Axe 1 are the following:

Realization of the national policy for sustainable urban development of cities and smaller settlements, in order for the country to fulfil the relevant European Commission and international commitments;

Elimination of some of the factual considerations of marginalization;

Supply of minimum housing units and hygienic living conditions;

Improvement of the human and natural environment for amelioration of the living conditions of the target population and the surrounding society; and

Social and spatial connection of new and existing settlements with the urban tissue and reassurance of covering the immediate living needs.

The objectives of Priority Axe 1 are being achieved through interventions that are organized in the following measures and sub-measures:

Measure 1: Development of new settlements;

Sub-measure 1.1: land acquisition;

Sub-measure 1.2: Urban and spatial planning;

Sub-measure 1.3: Infrastructure networks - landscape works;

Sub-measure 1.4: Infrastructure construction for supplementary services;

Sub-measure 1.5: Residences construction;

Measure 2: Improvement of Existing Residences;

Measure 3: Improvement of Existing Settlements;

Sub-measure 3.1: Land acquisition/supply;

Sub-measure 3.2: Urban and spatial planning;

Sub-measure 3.3: Infrastructure networks - landscape works

Sub-measure 3.4: Infrastructure construction for housing social supplementary services;

Sub-measure 3.5: Construction of supplementary residences;

Measure 4: Organization of infrastructures for temporary housing for moving populations;

Sub-measure 4.1: Land acquisition/supply;

Sub-measure 4.2: Infrastructure networks - landscape works; and

Sub-measure 4.3: Infrastructure construction for communal services.

Programme for housing rehabilitation of the Greek repatriates

Since the end of the 1980s, the Greek State faced one more serious problem that was initiated by the great immigration wave of the Greek repatriates from countries of the former Soviet Union. During this wave, that is still in progress, about 148,000 Greek repatriates have come into the country for permanent settlement.

In order to tackle this problem, the National Foundation for the Admission and Rehabilitation of Greek Repatriates (EIYAPOE) was established in 1990. Its aim is the reception, accommodation and support of the Greek repatriates in order to assist them in their smooth adaptation and social integration into the labour market and economic life of the country. The integration programme consisted of three phases: reception, provisional accommodation, and immediate welfare (first phase), preparation and social integration (second phase), and permanent settlement (third phase).

Following the first transitional period, Law No. 2790/2000 "Rehabilitation of the Greek repatriates from the former Soviet Union" was enacted in February 2000. It sets the conditions and the procedure to obtain Greek nationality and regulates educational, employment rehabilitation and permanent housing issues of these people.

Recently, with decision of the Special Committee for the coordination and supervision of the actions for the social integration of the repatriates, which was established in the frame of Law No. 2790/2000, the State has elaborated, in accordance with this Law, an integrated action programme (IAP) for the rehabilitation of the repatriates from the former Soviet Union, one part of which refers to their housing rehabilitation. More specifically, Chapter C' of the said Law refers to housing rehabilitation policy with free offer of

plots, issue, free of fee, of the construction permit, supply of loans and subsidies and supply of studies of housing units.

A draft of the IAP is available, which sets the qualitative and quantitative objectives of the policy for the six years 2002-2008, and determines the strategy to be followed for their implementation, by investigating also all the other parameters that, together with housing, ensure the necessary preconditions for the repatriates' social integration.

The IAP is structured into two priority axes. Priority Axe 1 refers to housing and Priority Axe 2 to services (employment, education, culture and sports).

The aim of Priority Axe 1 is the solution of the housing problem of the repatriates with a set of measures and actions that cover the different housing rehabilitation needs and settlement. The main objectives of Priority Axe 1 are the following:

Realization of the national policy for the sustainable urban development of cities and smaller settlements, in order for the country to fulfil the relevant European Commission and international commitments;

Smooth integration of the target group into existing social-urban structures avoiding exclusion and marginalization;

Supply of minimum housing units and hygienic living conditions;

Improvement of the human and natural environment for amelioration of the living conditions of the target population and the surrounding society;

Social and spatial connection of the new and existing settlements with the urban tissue and reassurance of covering the immediate living needs.

The objectives of Priority Axe 1 are planned to be achieved through interventions that are organized in the following measures and sub-measures:

Measure 1: Improvement of existing settlements:

Sub-measure 1.1: Studies for recording the existing condition and specifying the required works;

Sub-measure 1.2: Improvement of existing residences;

Sub-measure 1.3: Improvement/completion of existing communal infrastructures (sewage and water network, road infrastructure);

Sub-measure 1.4: Urban and spatial planning arrangements;

Measure 2: Support for housing supply;

Measure 2.1: Urban and physical planning;

Measure 2.2: Development of new settlements;

Measure 2.3: Purchase of residence in existing housing settlements;

Measure 3: Supportive actions;

Measure 3.1: Creation of land banks;

Measure 3.2: Expertise.

Programmes to provide accommodation for victims of the 1999 earthquake in Athens

The consequences of the earthquake that struck the Athens area on 7 September 1999 were disastrous for a number of municipalities within the Athens urban complex, those within or very close to the centre of the afflicted area, while serious damages were also reported from other areas in Attica and border areas in Viotia. The final toll was 90,000 made homeless in the total of 100 municipalities and communes declared as earthquake disaster areas.

There was serious and extensive damage to the housing stock. As many as 32 buildings collapsed, among them large industrial plants, in which most of the deaths (143 in total) occurred. Serious and irreparable damage was sustained by 4,682 buildings, declared unsafe for habitation and subject to demolition orders. Another 38,165 buildings suffered serious but not irreparable damage, and were declared temporarily unsafe (until repairs have been carried out). A large number of the latter buildings belong to the productive and social infrastructure of the region. Finally, a large number of buildings sustained slight damage that may not have rendered them unsafe for habitation, but has added significantly to the overall cost of restoration.

The Athens earthquake has been the most disastrous of all from the economic perspective. Estimates put the overall cost at 2.9 billion euros, or 2.4 per cent of GNP.

The most important measures taken immediately in the housing sector in the wake of the earthquake were as follows:

Immediate accommodation in camps of those rendered homeless, distribution of essential goods, provision of catering and sanitary facilities;

Immediate financial aid to the homeless;

Immediate first degree inspection of buildings to access safety for habitation, posting of special signs and provision of instructions to the inhabitants; and

Temporary propping-up of seriously damaged buildings.

Following the immediate measures of the first few days, a series of medium-term measures and arrangements were put into effect:

Provisional accommodation of the homeless, either in temporary settlements in prefabricated houses or in private rented accommodation, or families offering to take in earthquake victims, with special rent subsidies;

Second-degree inspection and damage assessment of building and definitive classification into three categories:

seriously damaged/dangerous; serious but reparable damage; light damage; or demolition of irreparable dangerous buildings.

The following measures were put into effect as part of the programme for the definitive restoration of the earthquake damage:

Rehousing of those rendered homeless through special grants for the repair or reconstruction of their homes;

Redesign of land uses in the affected areas on the basis of special geological - geotechnical studies; and

Modernization of the building construction industry and further improvements to the Seismic Design Code of 1995.

For the implementation of the reconstruction measures, the Earthquake Rehabilitation Service of the Ministry for the Environment set up a network of 33 earthquake rehabilitation sections (TAS) and earthquake rehabilitation offices (GAS) covering the municipalities affected. These services are responsible for compiling a register of those entitled to financial aid, approving repair and reconstruction studies, approving budgets for restoring buildings, approving loans and overseeing construction work.

Until early April 2002, progress has been made in the following areas:

Building repairs: 11,250 repair studies have been approved, and another 1,533 currently await approval. Some of the affected buildings were repaired by the owners who made no application for subsidy. The Worker's Housing Organization (OEK) is carrying out a programme of repairs on the houses of its former beneficiaries; and

Building reconstruction: 3,554 reconstruction studies have been approved and another 803 await approval.

Article 12

Physical and mental health in Greece - epidemiological situation*

Demographic situation

In 1999, the population of Greece was 10,521,669 persons, out of which 49.5 per cent were men and 50.5 per cent women. Between the census of 1981 and the census of 1991, the Greek population increased by 5.42 per cent, while the increase from 1960 to 1990 was 21.1 per cent. Despite the increase in population, the overall fertility rate shows a decreasing tendency in the last decades. The number of children per couple fell from 2.39 in 1970 to 1.32 in 1997. The parallel decrease of birth and death rates has as a result the demographic ageing of the Greek population. This phenomenon is expected to continue in the coming years. The percentage of the population over 65 years old increased from 11.1 per cent in 1970 to 16.8 in 1997 and is expected to be 19.3 per cent in 2021. On the other hand, the proportion of children between 0 and 14 years old diminished from 24.9 per cent in 1970 to 16.1 per cent in 1997. The ageing of the Greek population follows the general trend existing among member States of the European Union, where Greece holds the fourth place after Ireland, Portugal, and Spain.

Life expectancy rate at birth augmented between 1960 and 1997 from 67.5 years

to 75.3 years for men and from 70.7 to 80.6 for women. This increase is mainly due to the major decrease of infant mortality during that period. Life expectancy also for people over 65 years old increased between 1960 and 1997 from 13.5 to 16.2 years for men and from 15.1 to 18.7 for women, owing to a decrease of the corresponding specific mortality by age.

Infant mortality rate was 6.4 deaths of infants per 1,000 live births in 1997. This indicator has improved considerably since 1970, when it was 29.6 per cent. The prenatal mortality rate has dropped from 26.8 in 1970 to 9.5 in 1997. Late infant mortality has also shown a diminishing trend (from 20.6 in 1960 to 1.6 in 1997), as well as the mortality rate of newborn babies (from 19 in 1960 to 4.8 in 1997).

The major elimination of late infant mortality is due to the fact that it is mainly influenced by social and economic factors, which have been improved considerably in the last 30 years, while the mortality of newborn children depends mainly on the level of the offered medical services.

The major causes of infant mortality in Greece in 1995 were complicated prenatal period (50 per cent), kindred anomalies (37 per cent) and accidents (3 per cent).

Considerable differentiation has been noticed among various geographical departments. The infant mortality rate in geographical departments with lower income per capita is higher, in comparison with geographical departments with higher income per capita; Thrace region shows one of the highest rates. General mortality of the Greek population (from 1970 to 1996) in any case shows, in the course of time, a clear diminishing trend.

The major causes of death of the Greek population in the 1990s were circulatory system diseases, malignant cancer, and respiratory system diseases. Cardiovascular diseases and strokes constitute the main cause of deaths representing 51.2 per cent of deaths in 1996. Cancer incidents follow with 22.2 per cent, respiratory system diseases with 5.7 per cent, and accidents with 4.5 per cent. This kind of mortality corresponds to the existing mortality model of developed countries, although similar indicators for the aforementioned diseases in Greece are lower with the exception of accidents.

Other causes of mortality show remarkable decrease. Deaths, in absolute numbers, due to cerebrovascular diseases dropped from 120.28 per 100,000 in 1970 to 11.37 in 1996; deaths due to respiratory system diseases from 90 in 1970 to 36 in 1996; deaths due to endocrinopathies and metabolic diseases as well as nutritional and immunological disorders from 24 in 1970 to 9 in 1996; deaths due to communicable and parasitic diseases from 22 in 1970 to 5 in 1996; deaths due to peptic system diseases from 40 in 1970 to 17 in 1996; with the exception of deaths due to accidents, which increased from 11.63 in 1970 to 2.3 in 1996. Deaths owing to suicide/homicide present a stability image for women (1.79 in 1970 compared to 1.32 in 1990 and 0.95 in 1996).

As for the mortality by population group, health rates show considerable differentiation among urban, semi-urban and rural population. Semi-urban population has lower mortality rates in comparison with urban and rural population, although these differences between urban and rural population were reduced (period 1981-1991).

The highest mortality by geographical department emerges in Thrace (894.79 deaths per 100,000 annually) and Macedonia (798.91), while the lowest mortality emerges in Crete (645.12). The mortality, in the course of time, in each geographical department between 1981-1991 reveals a reducing trend in all departments. Geographical areas with low socioeconomic differences, such as Thrace (-4.7 per cent) and Macedonia (-7.9 per cent), show lower reduction. Similar phenomena have been observed for the infant mortality.

Crude mortality

In Greece, the three main causes of early deaths between 1 and 69 years for both sexes are accidents, circulatory system diseases, and malignant neoplasms. Especially for men, accidents constitute the major cause of crude mortality (31 per cent) of a life's last years in total, mainly through car accidents (19 per cent). Among other causes, there follow circulatory system diseases (21 per cent), ischaemic heart diseases (12 per cent), cerebrovascular diseases (4 per cent), and malignant neoplasms (20 per cent, lung cancer 7 per cent). As for women, the main causes are malignant neoplasms (28 per cent) of a life's last years in total, and mainly

breast cancer (7 per cent), accidents (17.5 per cent, car accidents 11 per cent), circulatory system diseases (ischaemic heart diseases (5 per cent), and cerebrovascular diseases (4.5 per cent)). The difference in life expectancy (lost years) between men and women is lower for women, hence women get a higher life expectancy rate.

Morbidity

In Greece, there is not sufficient statistical evidence for the precise estimation of morbidity indicators. The only trustworthy figures are connected with the records of patients, who receive hospital treatment. These figures depict the use of medical services rather than the real needs of a population.

The major causes of hospital treatment in relation to Greek population in 1995 were respiratory system diseases, peptic system diseases, neoplasms, accidents and poisoning. In comparison with the causes of hospital treatment in 1985, what makes the difference is that circulatory system diseases, augmenting considerably (from 139,507 entries to 213,725), hold first place. There is also a remarkable increase in neoplasm diseases (from 75,958 to 140,505), in neural and sensory organs diseases (from 56,083 to 92,217) and in urinary system diseases (from 96,212 to 125,469), with the exception of a decrease in blood and haematopoietic diseases (from 43,203 to 26,111).

Increase of life expectancy, modern way of life and ageing of the population have increased the percentage of chronic diseases, diabetes and sensory organs diseases. To a great extent, the above-mentioned cases do not need hospital treatment, which justifies the fact that it makes them difficult to record. Regarding the frequency of chronic diseases in European Union member States, Greece keeps, in comparison with the other members, an intermediate position with 7 Greeks out of 100 suffering from a chronic disease.

As regards the modern plague of AIDS, the first cases in Greece diagnosed amounted to 1,964 persons, out of which 1,707 were men (86.9 per cent) and 257 women (13 per cent). In the total number of cases, 31 were children (1.6 per cent). Eighteen of them were boys (58 per cent) and 13 girls (41.9 per cent).

Mental health

In Greece, there are few epidemiological research studies regarding the mental health of the Greek population. The two most important among them were carried out by the National Centre of Social Research in 1970-1980, as well as by the Psychiatric Hospital of the Athens National University in 1984.

According to the findings of the first research, from 4,083 adults who were examined, the conclusion drawn is that 24 per cent of women examined and 11 per cent of men could be regarded as persons suffering from serious mental disorders. In comparison with the place of residence, Athenians are characterized by a higher percentage of psychopathology.

As for the conclusions of the second research, including 4,292 persons, it was found out that men between 18-64 years suffer, to a percentage of 18.7 per cent, from serious mental disorders, while women with the same symptoms at a percentage of 34 per cent.

The highest percentage of people suffering from mental disorders recorded by the second study in comparison with the first, can be

attributed to considerable socio-economic changes (e.g. income decrease, unemployment increase, high inflation) happening in the last five years. These percentages do not refer to clinical cases, but to high-risk target groups. With regard to the hospital treatment of psychiatric patients, 25 per cent of them, visiting primary health care services, suffer from psychiatric disorders, while more are men than women (106 men and 75.7 women per 100,000 inhabitants).

The geographical distribution of persons receiving medical treatment revealed that the following prefectures showed the highest mental morbidity rates: Grevena, Rethymno, Florina, Kastoria and Karditsa. Most cases in need of hospital treatment concern schizophrenic psychosis, sentimental psychosis, alcoholism and organic psycho-syndrome.

The University Research Institute for Mental Health carried out a study in 1998, including a sample of 3,752 persons between 12 and 64 years from all over Greece. This study was based on the specific methodology (CES-D climax - over 16). According to the findings, the percentage of people between 12 and 64 years old of this category (at CES-D climax - over 16) was 16.8 per cent. The percentage of women suffering from depressive disorders at this category was more than double in comparison with that of men.

Tobacco consumption

Greece has the biggest proportion of smokers in Europe (45 per cent of men and 32 per cent of women in 1998). These rates are much higher with regard to specific age groups. In conformity with epidemiological researches conducted during recent years, the conclusion drawn is that 6 out of 10 men and almost 4 out of 10 women between 25-35 years old are involved in systematic tobacco consumption.

Tobacco consumption on a permanent basis is attributed to one-third of pupils between 17 and 18 years of age. Besides, Greeks have the highest tobacco consumption per capita. The annual per head tobacco consumption in the mid-1990s was in Greece 2,920 cigarettes, while Spain followed with 2,100 cigarettes.

Tobacco consumption, in the course of time, especially during the last 30 years, shows an upward trend with the exception of a period between 1979-1981, during which it was reduced to zero owing to a successful anti-tobacco campaign.

Lung cancer is the most frequent cancer for men and third in frequency for women. Relating to that kind of cancer, Greece is at a lower position compared to other European countries. The remarkable increase in lung cancer, over the course of time follows an increasing trend of tobacco consumption. It has been estimated that during the 1990s 20 per cent of deaths for men of every age and 3 per cent of deaths for women were attributed to tobacco consumption. The rates of early deaths ascribed to tobacco consumption for adults, men and women over 25 years old, is estimated to be equal to 18 per cent of the total number of deaths. Both Greece and the Netherlands rank second, after Denmark, in relation to early deaths because of tobacco consumption.

In an effort to cope with this problem, the following measures have been taken:

Smoking is banned in public premises, in crowded places such as airports, airline flights, Metro etc., as well as in hospitals;

Labelling of tobacco products reflect their harmful influence to health;

Measures for tobacco-repulsive products;

Banning of tobacco advertisement on TV;

Regulation for allowed maximum percentage of tar in tobacco contents; and

Imposition of taxation on tobacco and alcohol products.

As well, Greece participates actively in the negotiations within the competent bodies of the European Union with a view to adopting a directive on the total ban of advertising tobacco products, as well as in World Health Organization Conferences regarding the elaboration of an international convention on tobacco control (protective measures for health, public and environmental health, programmes for prevention and treatment, integrated in the primary health policy, establishment of national systems of tobacco products epidemiological surveillance based on health, economic indicators etc.).

Alcoholic drinks

In accordance with an epidemiological study carried out by the National Institute for Mental Health, it seems that almost every day one-third of men between 12 and 64 years old turn to alcoholic drinks. Half of men between 18 and 24 years old and more than half of men over 35 drink alcohol frequently. Sixteen per cent of students drink alcohol about 10 times a month, while 8.6 per cent of girls admit to the same.

In Greece between 1975-1980, an abrupt increase of alcohol consumption was observed (from 5.3 litres per capita to 10.2 litres). In 1997, such consumption declined to 8.7 litres. Beer consumption is recorded to have risen to 40 litres per capita, which means an increase by 700 per cent for the period between 1961-1990, while the same upward trend was also prevailing during the 1990s.

Greece has the highest consumption as regards drinks containing a high percentage of alcohol. The use of imported drinks containing a high percentage of alcohol shows an upward trend, mainly among young people with similar attitudes to those in Western Europe.

These changes are likely to lead in the future to an increase in diseases connected with alcohol consumption, such as liver cirrhosis, some kinds of malignant neoplasm, alcoholism, alcoholic psychosis, as well as car accidents.

Narcotics

According to available data by the Organization against Drugs (OKANA), the number of addicts using illegal drugs in 1999 was between 50,000 and 70,000 persons in absolute figures. In its annual report, the National Research Centre for Narcotics and Drug Addiction refers to a remarkable increase in the use of illegal substances, including 1984 and later on, and especially the last five years. The most widely known illegal narcotic substance in Greece is cannabis. Its use among students has doubled between 1993-1998. Nevertheless, Greece, Finland, Sweden, Luxembourg, and Portugal have the lowest percentage of cannabis users.

An upward trend is also observed among young persons related to the use of synthetic drugs, such as ecstasy, hallucinogen substances, and amphetamines, with Greece following, in any case, other European countries. On the contrary, the use of cocaine in Greece is nearer to that in most European countries, while the use of heroine has low incidence.

Drug addicts in Greece infected by hepatitis B virus rank in the first place with Germany ranking second, in comparison with hepatitis C, where Greece ranks tenth. The percentage of AIDS among drug addicts is also considered to be low, while, generally speaking, deaths from narcotics in Greece are in decline. Among European countries, Greece holds second position for the increasing trend of deaths from drugs (deaths among the total population increased, from 10 in 1985 to 66 in 1990, to 176 in 1995 and to 239 in 1998). These figures are regarded as an underestimation of the actual problem, because a number of such deaths is not recorded, while deaths due to the use of illegal narcotics leading to hepatitis, AIDS, etc., are not finally calculated.

In absolute numbers, among 239 deaths in 1998, the majority represents men (88.3 per cent), 45 per cent of whom were between 21-30 years old, 42 per cent over 30 years old and a 13 per cent under 21 years old. The corresponding rate for people under 21 years old in 1995 was 4 per cent. The most frequently used substance concerning deaths in 1998 was heroine (99.6 per cent), while the relevant percentage in 1995 was 89.2 per cent.

National Health Policy/health services in Greece

The National Health Policy in Greece is based on the following principles:

- (a) Health is a social resource and does not depend on market laws;
- (b) Every citizen, irrespective of his/her socio-economic situation, is entitled to qualitative medical treatment and social care; and
- (c) Health policy lies within the purview of the State and is implemented in a unified, decentralized, and democratic National Health System.

Primary, secondary and tertiary health services in Greece are offered by the National Health System.

Provision of primary health care services

There exists a variety of settings, both public and private, for primary health care (PHC). PHC provided through the National Health System (NHS): This includes health centres and the regional clinics in rural areas, as well as public hospital out-patient departments. These services are financed mainly through the State budget, and to a smaller extent by insurance funds.

There are 201 regional health centres situated in rural and semi-urban areas, which provide free primary medical care to all inhabitants. These centres have been beneficial for all citizens, since they were primarily targeted to them. The health centres have been established in rural areas with the objective of providing preventive, curative and rehabilitation services to their competent areas (14,000-15,000 population on average). They were also intended to act as gatekeepers to the health care system. The health centres are staffed by doctors (general practitioners, pathologists, paediatricians, and dentists), nurses, paramedical, and administrative staff, all of whom are full-time salaried employees of the State. On average, there are seven beds per centre, which are mainly used for day care. The number of doctors employed in each health centre depends on the size of its area competence.

Health centres have to a great extent fulfilled their objective to increase access to PHC in rural areas, and constitute an excellent organizational structure, upon which an effective PHC service can be built. However, due to certain personnel, financial and organizational problems, their actual performance has fallen short of expectations (for example, health centres are still financed via hospital budgets, and are still administratively attached to district hospitals).

Health centres, therefore, have to compete for resources with the hospitals clinical departments, and, given their lack of financial autonomy, they are not in a position to formulate their own priorities.

Attached to the health centres, there are about 1,500 regional surgeries, or clinics which are connected with health centres (regional surgeries) and staffed by publicly employed rural doctors and medical graduates (general practitioners), who are required to spend at least one year in a rural area upon graduation. Their lack of clinical experience raises concern about the quality of the services they deliver, and this is why they are connected to and operate within the network health services of the health centres and the local hospital.

The out-patient departments of hospitals also fall under the category of NHS provided PHC. These are very significant providers of PHC services for urban populations, but also for the rural population. They work on an appointment basis, but there is no mechanism to restrain access. All persons, irrespective of insurance coverage (or lack of coverage), are entitled to use these services.

PHC provided through social insurance funds: this includes polyclinics owned and operated by specific insurance funds (mainly IKA in urban areas) or contracted physicians for the provision of primary health care to their members, who are reimbursed by the insurance funds on a fee-for-service basis;

PHC offered through local authority services: this includes few clinics and welfare services. These services are financed by the State

Budget through the Ministry of the Interior, Public Administration and Decentralization; and

PHC provided by the private sector: this includes physicians in private practice who are contracted by one or more insurance funds (funded by the respective insurance fund), physicians in private practice who are not contracted by any insurance fund (funded by out-of-pocket patient payments or voluntary health insurance), and private hospital outpatient departments (funded mainly by out-of-pocket payments or voluntary health insurance).

The Ministry of Health and Welfare plans a short time reform of primary health system

(a)By integrating into the health schemes and infrastructure of other insurance funds in the NHS, in an effort to unify offered medical services and to upgrade the quality of medical care;

(b)By creating urban health centres to improve accessibility in a unified health system;

(c)By establishing the institution of family doctor; and

(d)By taking advantage of human and financial resources on a rational basis.

Provision of hospital services

Hospital care plays a leading role in the NHS. In Greece, health care expenditure is steadily increasing.

Insured patients have free access to all public hospitals and to a large number of private hospitals contracted by each fund. The number of private contracted hospitals differs among the funds, depending mainly on the number of insured members and their distribution across the country. Certain funds, like IKA, provide some hospital care in their own hospitals, but the majority of the population relies on the services of the public hospital system.

Uninsured and indigent patients have access to public hospitals free of charge, in case of emergency. The same possibility is also offered to immigrants (legally or illegally residing in Greece).

There are three main categories of hospitals: NHS public hospitals; public hospitals under the operational responsibility of the Ministry of Defence, IKA network hospitals, Ministry

of National Education and Ministry of Justice hospitals (i.e. military hospitals and hospitals for prisoners respectively); and private hospitals, the overwhelming majority of which are private, for-profit institutions.

The NHS owns almost 34 per cent of the total number of hospitals, private hospitals constitute about 60 per cent of the total, while the remaining roughly 6 per cent are non-NHS public hospitals. However, these percentages are misleading with respect to hospital bed numbers, as the privately owned hospitals tend for the most part to be quite small. In terms of bed numbers, NHS hospitals account for almost two-thirds (70 per cent) of the total number of beds, whereas private sector beds account for less than one-third (26.3 per cent) of the total and other public hospitals account for 3.5 per cent.

In terms of total number of beds, Greece has a relatively low bed-to-population ratio among EU countries (8.1 per 1,000 inhabitants). Between 1994 and 1999, there were 5 beds per 1,000 inhabitants. The number of beds per 1,000 inhabitants will be satisfactory after the completion of investments financed by the Third European Community Support Framework.

Performance and prospects for the NHS hospital development

There has been a constant effort to evaluate and assess the performance of NHS hospitals and their development over the years, on issues including utilization performance, regional distribution of beds and tertiary development, cross-boundary flows of patients, hospital management, and quality assurance.

The table below shows patient utilization and performance data for the period 1990-1996. Admissions show a continuously increasing trend from 1990 to 1996, which is a reflection of improving patient access to hospital services over this period. The average length of stay, by contrast, shows a continuously declining trend. This reflects more intensive treatments, increasing patient flows towards large regional hospitals after a brief admission in a district hospital (this factor may also be partially responsible for increases in admissions), psychiatric reform and to a lesser extent alternative therapies, such as one-day care and day-case surgery. The occupancy rate shows some fluctuations, but for the most part it is stable over this period of time.

Table 12

Hospital utilization and performance, 1990-1996

In-patient	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996
Admissions per year	12.8	13.1	13.4	13.9	1-1.2	1-1.5	14.7
Average length of stay in days	9.9	9.9	9.8	9.4	9.1	8.6	8.4
Occupancy rate (in percentage)	68.0	71.0	70.0	71.0	70.0	71.0	69.0

Source: WHO Regional Office for Europe (health for all database) and Ministry of Health and Welfare.

The regional distribution of secondary level hospital beds tends to be uneven, with the urban areas of Athens and Thessaloniki being better served. This is also the case in Crete, Epirus and western Greece, which in 1990 incorporated large university hospitals. The

construction, in more recent years, of new hospitals and the renovation of public hospitals in areas distant from the major urban areas, represent an effort to address this problem.

In the case of tertiary care, 7 out of the 17 regions are covered by at least one large NHS highly specialized hospital, while the remaining regions are covered by the hospitals of the neighbouring regions of Athens and Thessaloniki. The regional university hospitals have become centres of reference providing highly specialized care in each region. Those are the hospitals in Western Greece (Patras), Crete (Heraklion), Epirus (Ioannina), Thrace (Alexandroupolis) and Thessalia (Larisa).

Regarding cross-regional patient flows, there exist broad discrepancies among regions. Crete, Epirus and western Greece, with newly incorporated specialized services, show some autonomy with regard to serving the needs of their residents, and attracting patients from surrounding districts. By contrast, districts which are close to the major urban areas of Athens and Thessaloniki show the largest patient flows towards hospitals of these urban centres. In part, this is due to the prevailing inability of some district general hospitals to readily fulfil specialized needs. In addition, the absence of a referral system and the freedom of patients to refer themselves to virtually any NHS hospital draws patients to the major urban centres, which have a concentration of hospitals with relatively higher standards.

The hospitals' biomedical technology infrastructure is very advanced, especially that of the latest generation. The number of MRI and CT units in the NHS hospitals per 1 million inhabitants approaches the corresponding average value of the European Union countries.

However, the regional distribution is uneven, with the urban areas being better equipped. To overcome this problem, the Ministry of Health and Welfare actually develops a medical devices evaluation and assessment system, which will lead to a more effective process for the biomedical technology management. In addition, telemedicine systems are used to provide advisory services and specialized instructions to the medical staff of the health centres in rural areas and particularly islands. For the time being, 14 health centres at Greek islands are connected via a telemedicine network to an NHS hospital in the region of Athens, and the Ministry of Health and Welfare plans to connect another 50 islands and isolated areas to this system.

Administration in the NHS hospitals comprises a seven-member board of directors, composed of four members appointed by the Government (the president and vice-president by the Minister of Health and Welfare and two members by both the Minister of Health and Welfare and district mayors), and three elected members (one doctor and one nurse or administrator from the hospital staff and one representative from the municipality), with two years' tenure. Nursing and administrative personnel have their own respective managing directors, and medical services are run by a five-member scientific committee. It is generally recognized that there is a gap in the management structure and performance in hospitals, and a plan is forwarded to introduce

organizational and administrative changes, including the position of an executive manager, in order to add flexibility to the system and limit, as much as possible the rigid bureaucracy, malfunctions and weaknesses.

Law No. 2889/2001 transforms the legal entities of hospitals to decentralized units submitted to regional health systems introducing functional and administrative changes by appointing managers as directors in hospitals, in an effort to deal with the above-mentioned problems and make the whole system more effective.

According to new legislation and to the five-year plan for 1995-1999, which has been undertaken within the EU support programmes, 4 new regional hospitals and 12 new district-level hospitals are added to the NHS, in order to improve building facilities and to renovate the technology infrastructure. This is accompanied by the closure of old beds. In addition, plans to computerize hospital services, educate staff, upgrade the emergency ambulatory services, and establish a national institution for clinical audit and quality assurance are in progress.

Additional issues on the agenda include improvement of the referral system in order to regulate the cross-regional patient flows, computerization of hospital procedures, development of staff managerial roles, and the establishment of quality assurance systems. The plan to fill the position of hospital managers who will automatically become chairpersons or members of the board of directors, will help to overcome the formerly political nature of managerial positions. At the same time, the new position of a medical director will allow for more effective management of all medical services. Finally, a new hospital-oriented financial accounting system will improve cash-flow management, and provide economic efficiency indicators for monitoring financial performance and assessing the efficiency of resource allocation management.

In 1999, two laws were enacted with a view to reform hospital mental health treatment (Law No. 2716/99) and hospital units for transplants of tissues and organs (Law No. 2737/99). Moreover, Law No. 2889/2001 introduces new institutions, such as: afternoon medical services, expansion of the National Centre for Emergency Health Care, staffing of health services and intensive care units, upgrading of specific health services and especially of intensive care services and a doctors assessment scheme.

Mental health

A. Policy and legislation

1. Mental health policy

Mental health policy, formulated in 1983 and aiming at the support, advancement, prevention, treatment and rehabilitation, is included after 1997 in a 10-year programme ("Psychargos") and revised every five years. The first part of this programme, at the cost of 35 million euros, was implemented during 2000-2001 by the establishment of 55 guest and boarding houses, with a view to the deinstitutionalization of mentally ill patients. The second part of the programme has already been approved, and is going to be implemented in 2002-2006 at a cost of 217 million euros.

The main characteristics of this programme remain:

Deinstitutionalization and destigmatization (an estimate was that 60 per cent of patients, residing now at psychiatric hospitals, can be transferred to houses built in municipalities and communities);

Fragmentation of psychiatric services all over the country;

Development of primary mental health units (Mental Health Centres, Medical Care Centres for Children and Day Care Hospitals) and of psychiatric, paedo-psychiatric, and psycho-geriatric departments in hospitals;

Creation of new rehabilitation units and patients cooperatives, with a view to advancing social, economic and professional integration in society of psychiatric patients; and

Strengthening the process for the protection of patients' rights.

The planning for 2000-2006 is depicted in the following tables:

Table 13

Deinstitutionalization	2002	2003	2004-2006
Guest houses	35	4	1
Boarding houses	55	39	
Apartments	75	14	
Total	165	57	1

Table 14

Community mental health units

	2002	2003	2004-2006
Psychiatric departments in general hospitals	9	24	8
Paedo-psychiatric departments in general hospitals	1	3	2
Mental health centres	16	7	15
Medical and pedagogical centres	7	10	6
Day-care centres	2		6
Guest houses for short treatment	10	13	20
Centres for autistic persons	5		11
Centres for drug addicts		6	14
Centres for alcoholics		6	1
Centres for dementia	4		1
Moving units		4	17
Total	54	73	101

2. Mental health legislation

Law No. 2716/1999 refers to the development and modernization of mental health services and is an institutional initiative on which the aforementioned national planning is based. This law includes the fragmentation of mental services and community psychiatric care, the protection of mentally ill patients' rights, out-patient treatment, deinstitutionalization, psychosocial rehabilitation and social integration, an increase in efforts for mental care, as well as awareness and voluntary community help for improvement of mental health.

B. Financing

The exact mental health budget is not known, taking into account that a considerable part of it is related to the expenditure of central hospitals (psychiatric departments in general hospitals, mental health centres, medical centre for children/young people, etc.), with the result that relevant expenditure is not easily disaggregated by department or unit. The major financial sources for mental health are the National Investments Programme, the co-financed European programmes, social insurance, private income of patients and their families, and private insurance.

C. Mental health services

There is a provision for benefits for disabled, especially suffering from mental disorders. Special pensions, tax-exemption measures, free of charge treatment exist. Mental health is a component of primary health care. Treatment for serious mental disorders is offered, but not yet all over the country. There are, at a community level, services specialized in helping people suffering from mental disorders, through mental health care centres, guest houses, psychiatric, and other services. Bearing that in mind, the whole situation has been considerably changed during the period 1981-2001. In 1981, there was only one psychiatric department in a general hospital (16 beds) and 6 centres for mental health. In 2001, 20 departments operate in general hospitals (365 beds) and 28 mental health centres. In addition, there are another 10 psychiatric departments in general hospitals for out-patient and counselling care. These measures altered to a considerable extent the way mental health services are offered. One-third of the total number of

psychiatric entries per year is observed in general hospitals and the majority of out-patient mental health cases is being served by out-patient mental health centres and psychiatric departments in general hospitals. Another 15 mental health centres were built and going to operate in the biennium 2000-2002.

Table 15

Distribution of psychiatric beds and of mental health professionals

Psychiatric beds per 10,000 inhabitants (in total)	8.7
Psychiatric beds in psychiatric hospitals per 10,000 inhabitants	4.3
Psychiatric beds in General Hospitals per 10,000 inhabitants	0.3
Psychiatric beds in other schemes per 10,000 inhabitants	4.1

Table 15 (continued)

Psychiatrists per 100,000 inhabitants	6
Neurologists/psychiatrists per 100,000 inhabitants	5
Psychiatrists per 100,000 inhabitants	2
Neurosurgeons per 100,000 inhabitants	2
Psychiatric nursing staff per 100,000 inhabitants	3
Neurologists/psychiatrists per 100,000 inhabitants	4
Psychologists per 100,000 inhabitants	14
Social workers per 100,000 inhabitants	56

The Ministry of Health and Welfare and the Ministry of the Interior, Public Administration and Decentralization are in close cooperation about new personnel to be appointed, concerning generally the health sector and especially the mental health sector. For the year 2002, 700 jobs have been approved concerning personnel specialized in mental health. Numerous efforts have also been made for the improvement of cooperation on a local level between mental health departments and prefectural authorities.

Commitment to the WHO primary health-care approach

Greece's attitude towards the principles of the World Health Organization on primary health care is focused on the following efforts:

Tracing and preventing morbidity, mortality and health threats, such as malaria, AIDS, cancer, cardiovascular diseases, mental health etc.;

Promoting any necessary information and education on healthy living;

Developing and improving health system and safeguarding equal access to it for the whole population; and

Developing, in a systematic way, the health sector and advancing environmental health policies.

The ways to implement these commitments are information campaigns on topics associated with health education and public awareness, as well as with training of health sector professionals, the imminent reform of primary health-care system, and the implementation of pilot health programmes. During the 1990s, according to specific declarations of the World Health Organization, there have been established:

The National Healthy Cities Network;

The National Schools Network on Health Information and Education; and

The National Hospitals Network on Health Information and Education.

Percentage of GNP and State budget spent on health and on primary health care

Table 16

Expenditure for social care 1996-2000 (in euros)

(Regular State budget expenditure and social insurance organizations expenditure)

Year	Health and welfare	Pensions	Total	Health and welfare	Pensions	Total	Total expenditure
1996	4 522 247	7 993 860	12 516 108	2 386 987	2 010 271	4 397 258	16 913 367
1997	5 021 305	9 023 536	14 044 842	2 527 883	477 549	4 652 607	18 697 449
1998	5 407 553	9 747 351	15 154 905	2 898 117	2 259 721	3 157 898	20 312 804
1999	6 040 745	10 558 033	16 592 909	2 815 883	2 538 517	5 354 400	21 953 179
2000	6 503 818	11 759 788	18 263 606	3 100 986	2 743 947	5 844 933	24 108 593

Source: 1. Social Budget, Ministry of Labour and Social Security.

2. "Health in Greece", Ministry of Health and Welfare;

3. National Statistical Service.

State budget expenditure for health is divided into the following categories:

64 per cent is dedicated to public health;

22 per cent corresponds to pharmaceutical care; and

14 per cent is associated with primary health care.

Health expenditure includes:

Consumption of public health services;

Consumption of private health services by families;

Health benefits from insurance funds; and

Investments in public and private health.

For the first five years (1988-1992), the GNP percentage for expenditure allocated to health fluctuated from 6.24 to 7.31 per cent, while for the next five years (1993-1997) it moved up from 8.17 to 8.99 per cent, which constitutes an increase of 2 per cent.

The infant mortality rate has declined considerably during recent years in Greece. According to OECD figures, it was 9.7 per cent in 1990 and descended gradually to 6.4 per cent in 1997. It moves up or down according to geographical area: Thrace has the highest infant mortality rate in Greece (10.76 per cent) exceeding the average rate, followed by Thessalia (8.8 per cent) and Crete (8.36 per cent).

In Macedonia and Peloponnese, infant mortality rate is 7.59 per cent and 7.22 per cent respectively, whereas in Athens it is 6.91 per cent and in Central Greece and Evia 6.87 per cent, with the Aegean and Ionian islands having the lowest rate 4.21 per cent and 3.8 per cent. This diversification could be ascribed to socio-economic differences in those areas.

Comparing GNP and employment rate in those areas, a conclusion cannot be drawn that these two indicators are not associated with infant mortality rate. Therefore, other causes must be found out justifying the percentage of infant mortality rate. In some areas, there exist other parameters, such as educational level, accessibility to health services, distribution of population (urban, semi-urban, rural) by geographical area etc.

Scrutinizing the variations in the infant mortality rate by population groups and by geographical area, it is concluded that the rural population presents everywhere the lowest infant mortality rate (8.54 per cent) in comparison with urban population (6.97 per cent) and semi-urban population (6.75 per cent), except for Thessalia and the Aegean islands. As a result, infant mortality rate in Greece is estimated to be 7.3 per cent and prenatal mortality 9.6 per cent.

During the 1990s, the improvement of the infant mortality rate was higher than that of prenatal mortality. It can be attributed to the fact that infant mortality is closely connected with the improvement of the socio-economic level of the Greek population in comparison with the decrease in prenatal mortality, which is linked not only to the socio-economic progress, but also to the establishment of more specialized prenatal care departments and to the preventive control of high risk pregnancies, as well as to the improvement of transfer system concerning parturients and newborn children.

It should be noted that from 1981 till 1992, the infant mortality rate had a considerable decrease over 50 per cent. This decrease was one of the highest occurred in any European country during that period.

With reference to the previous census, the Greek population amounts to 10,500,000 (6,000,000 urban, 2,910,466 rural and the rest semi-urban). One hundred per cent of the urban population and 62 per cent of the rest is served, as regards access to safe water, through access to a piping system, while the rest has similar access to other ways, such as aqueduct etc.

Table 17

Access to adequate excreta disposal facilities

Toilet	Homes total	Regular homes owned	Regular home owned	Total	Persons in owned homes	Persons not in owned homes
With hydraulic installation inside the house	2 773 085	2 042 815	730 270	8 425 396	6 394 806	2 030 590
With hydraulic installation outside the house but in the premises	193 536	172 340	21 196	547 532	487 488	60 044

Table 17 (continued)

Homes Regular homes Regular home Persons in owned Persons not in owned

Toilet	HOUSES total	REGULAR HOUSES owned	REGULAR HOME owned	Total	PERSONS IN OWNED homes	PERSONS NOT IN OWNED homes
Without hydraulic installation inside the house	22 863	20 008	2 855	59 986	52 603	7 383
Without hydraulic installation outside the house	177 688	162 108	15 560	474 312	431 192	43 120

Source: Institute for Child Health.

Preventive medicine in Greece is applied as a means of watching the progress of health. In harmony with the available data, the percentage of immunized children is as follows:

Table 18

Percentage of fully immunized children

	At one year of age	6 years	15 years
Diphtheria	84	81	76.8
Tetanus	84	81	76.8
Pertussis	82	82.4	72.1
Polio-myelitis	81	80	72.1
Measles	71	93	76.6
Hepatitis B (BCG)		58	45.5
		39	67.9

In the field of immunization, the measures taken include the following, reports the Institute for Child Health:

Informative material under the title "National Immunization Programme in Greece" (1997) distributed to all paediatricians and health centres;

The decision for children to be immunized against measles for a second time, at 4½ years old instead of at 11-12th year;

Immunization against Hepatitis B is embodied in the National Immunization Programme for newborn children and children between 11 and 12 years old (Law APY1/OIK 5844, 19 November 1997).

Life expectancy rate at birth increased between 1960 and 1997 from 67.5 years to 75.3 years for men and from 70.7 to 80.6 for women. This increase is mainly due to the major increase of infant mortality during that period. Life expectancy also for people over 65 years old augmented between 1960 and 1997 from 13.5 years to 16.2 years for men and from 15.1 to 18.7

for women, owing to a decrease of the corresponding specific mortality by age. General mortality of the Greek population (from 1970 to 1996) shows a clear diminishing trend over the course of time.

The entire population has access, in a short time (from half an hour to one hour by car), to trained personnel for the treatment of common diseases and injuries, bearing in mind that the National Health System, contrary to its own problems, is developed and decentralized all over the country, especially the health centres and the services of primary health care in public hospitals.

In addition, the National Centre for Emergency Care, which completes gradually its own development all over the country, possesses a large number of ambulances, appropriately equipped for the rapid transport of patients, while at the same time it uses its own helicopters for the air transfer of serious incidents from remote and insular areas. During the year 2000, 27 babies born prematurely, 155 newborn babies, 138 children from 3 to 10 years old, and 278 children and adults from 11 to 20 years old were transported to hospitals by air.

The percentage of pregnant women who have access to trained personnel amounts to 99 per cent and the percentage of those who receive, during delivery, counselling help by trained personnel rises to 99.8 per cent. Care during childbirth was available in 1983 to 99 per cent of women, and in 1988 to 99.8 per cent. The maternal mortality rate in 1990 was 0.98 per cent, and in 1998 it was 0.697 per cent.

The fact that 99.8 per cent of deliveries take place in organized midwifery and obstetrics clinics (public and private) in parallel with paediatric support, the paediatric control of newborn children has been generally used. The entire number of babies has access to trained personnel (out-patient paediatric help, hospitals, health centres, maternity centre, medical units of the social insurance fund (IKA) and welfare organization (PIKPA), private doctors, etc.).

In Greece, there are groups of individuals, whose health is worse than that of the overall population. These groups consist of refugees and immigrants coming from the former Soviet Union, the former Yugoslavia, Albania, and East and Central Asia. The health situation of these groups is ascribed, generally speaking, to the low health situation of the countries of origin. The Greek State has made numerous efforts, using various ways, with a view to improving the health situation of those groups.

Indigent foreigners are allowed access to Greek hospitals freely and under no requirement, receiving free medical treatment in case of emergency, irrespective of their status of residence (legal or illegal). In the event of regular cases, they are treated in the same way as Greek citizens.

There has been a systematic effort until now by the health professionals in Greece to reach moving populations within the limits of an immunization programme (1996-1997) and a new one now in progress, as well as in the field of a family planning programme.

Health professionals visit refugee camps in an effort to inform and make these people aware of the need to use medical services, not only as a means for medical care and treatment, but mainly as a means for prevention and health education. Despite the efforts made until now, there are no accurate data concerning morbidity rates of the above-mentioned groups, because of recording difficulties.

Greece has participated also in European programmes against AIDS and other communicable and parasitic diseases related to vulnerable groups under immigration in its northern frontier (e.g., "Europe against AIDS", "AIDS and Mobility", "Umbrella-SPI Berlin", "Eurobdn", "Eurodouble de Neige", "Methodological Evaluation of HIV prevention in schools", "Passport", "Youthstart Istos", etc.).

The Ministry of Health and Welfare, apart from medical treatment, offers economic and social help to persons, who are either officially recognized by the Greek authorities as refugees or are allowed to reside temporarily in Greece on humanitarian grounds with a view to tackling their urgent needs. The Ministry operates and supports refugee camps, offering food and medical treatment. It participates in parallel in European programmes (e.g. "Compass", "Tel. No. for Refugee Information and Support, etc.") aiming at their integration into the Greek society offering child day-care, housing and vocational training (sources: Ministry of Health and Welfare, Division of Public Health, Development of Health Units Division, Social Solidarity Division and the Centre for the Control of Special Infections).

Greece, in an effort to cope with stillbirth and infant mortality, has taken the following measures:

Better organization and improved quality of prenatal care services,

Staffing health centres and creating paediatric and midwifery medical specializations in hospitals and other institutes;

Implementing specific programmes developed by the Child Health Institute, supporting breastfeeding programmes; and

Issuing a leaflet for Child Health through which parents are widely informed on the growth and health of their child.

In the field of public health, necessary protective measures are taken to facilitate pollution control, especially in big cities where photochemical pollution is regarded as the main cause of the problem owing to car and industrial gases. The major measures taken are the following:

Use of unleaded petrol;

Restrictions to car circulation;

Intense control of car gases, especially in Athens;

Improvement of public transport; and

Restrictions imposed on the operation of central heating in the event of deteriorating meteorological conditions.

Some of those measures are connected directly with the health of population (protection of vulnerable groups). In case of increasing atmospheric pollution due to ozone, the Ministry of Health and Welfare puts into effect protective measures in conformity with the European Directive No. 92/72.

Potable water is appropriately controlled at its origin and undergoes a systematic chlorinating in every water supply system, adopting European Directive No. 80/778 accordingly. For the protection of the quality of potable water, including table bottled and mineral water, European Directive No. 98/83 has been integrated into the national legislation.

Relating to the quality of swimming (sea) water, Greece is classified among the top three European countries with the cleanest swimming water: 98 per cent of the Greek seas are appropriate for swimming. It is prohibited for waste waters to end in the sea, even in a biological process.

Before and after swimming periods, samples of water are carefully tested (microbiological, physico-chemical quality control), and there follows a relevant official certification and informative campaign through press/TV, etc. City and industrial liquid waste, especially near the sea, is carefully processed before ending to the sea, according to European Directive No. 91/271.

The Ministry of Health and Welfare's Environmental Health Division reports that other measures being taken include:

Operation of new CTS units (computed tomography scanning), with the exception of hospitals, is allowed only by a Ministerial Decision, according to specific requirements (e.g. feasibility study), with a view to protecting health threatened by ionizing radiation;

Competent prefecture health inspectors act for the protection of public health due to noisy music, and places for night entertainment are effectively controlled;

Close inspection is carried out on healthy housing conditions by controlling housing environment and taking preventive measures against pollution. The management of solid waste takes place in harmony with European Directives; especially for infectious hospital waste, there are guidelines for hospitals and Prefecture Health Division. Informative workshops are also held for administrative, nursing, and technical hospital staff;

Radioactivity is carefully controlled and counted according to the existing anti-radioactive Regulation in collaboration with the Hellenic

Commission of Atomic Energy. There are also fixed requirements relating to content and the use of substances, equipment, and premises where various radioactive activity takes place;

European Directive No. 82/217 is applied in case of health dangers due to exposure to asbestos; and

Environmental health is also protected by the integration of European Directives into national legislation.

Regarding malaria, all reported cases, during the last 10 years (1987-1997) were imported, while no indigenous case was reported. As for meningitis: as in other European countries, it has become more frequent since 1990. This increase can be explained, if we consider the spread of this disease as a result of the increased immigration from other countries, as well as the increased sensitivity of the reporting systems.

Regarding poliomyelitis, diphtheria and tetanus, a steady decline (1981-1998) is observed, mainly due to the active immunization programmes. Hepatitis A has declined considerably since 1984 as a result of the socio-economic development of the country. The same is observed for Hepatitis B, with a higher incidence in the districts of northern Greece close to the borders.

To improve the surveillance and intervention activities in controlling communicable diseases (e.g. outbreak investigation), the Ministry of Health and Welfare established the National Centre for Surveillance and Intervention in 1998.

As regards the modern plague of AIDS, the first incidents diagnosed in Greece amounted to 1,964 persons, out of which 1,707 were men (86.9 per cent) and 257 women (13 per cent). In the total number of cases, 31 were children (1.6 per cent). Eighteen of them were boys (58 per cent) and 13 girls (41.9 per cent). Until the end of June 1999, 1,134 deaths were declared representing 57.7 per cent of the total number of patients.

In accordance with the international situation, comparing seropositives to HIV carriers, there is an estimation that HIV carriers in Greece have risen to 15,000. Ten per cent of them are due to heterosexual transmission. The spread of this disease in Greece is lower than that of other European countries, and the epidemic seems to develop gradually.

The Centre for Special Infections Control has adopted the following measures in an effort to face the problem:

Control of blood transfusions;

Free-of-charge medical treatment to seropositives;

Epidemiological surveillance of moving populations in the North of Greece close to the border;

Establishment of a network of epidemiological recording and surveillance concerning vulnerable groups;

Inspection of anti-retroviral therapy in specific departments (2,500 patients);

Social and psychological support;

Launching campaigns for public awareness;

Training medical and nursing staff; and

Promoting clinical and laboratory research.

For further information, see article 12, paragraphs 47 and 48, of "Health in Greece and National Health Policy", and article 12, paragraphs e-h, with a comprehensive analysis of the epidemiological situation in Greece, the measures taken, and the evaluation of their effectiveness.

Health care is offered by the National Health System to all groups in need, including the elderly. The cost of medical treatment for indigents amounted to 73 million and 88 million euros in 1999 and 2000, respectively.

Additional support to elderly is offered by open care centres for the elderly. This is a successful institution with widespread acceptance that helps the elderly to be active and to develop their interests. Today, there are 360 open care centres for the elderly in operation run by various municipalities.

Institutional care units for the elderly are founded and run by non-profit-making organizations. They accommodate the elderly deprived of family or facing difficulties in cohabitation with their families. These units operate under the auspices of prefectural authorities (welfare divisions). The Ministry of Health and Welfare finances similar units founded and run by various associations, municipalities, and the church that offer treatment free of charge to indigents.

There are also hospitals for both open and institutional treatment to old-age people suffering from chronic diseases.

Summer camps and social tourism, run by the Ministry of Health and Welfare, last from June to October and accommodate for 10 days old-age persons in summer country resorts all over the country. Priority is given to participants (a) with low income, (b) who are widow(er)s, and (c) who cannot afford summer vacations.

A housing benefit for the single elderly or couples with low pensions, without a house, provides a sum for monthly rent.

For the protection and financial support of the individuals aged 65 years and over, without any social insurance coverage, a means-tested flat benefit is granted by OGA (the social security fund for the rural population), which is equal to the pension granted to those insured by the OGA Fund, while they are entitled to free medical care in the National Health System Services.

The introduction and development of the programme “Help at Home for the Elderly” shows a positive response by the responsible authorities to dealing with contemporary needs of the elderly. The aim of the programme is to provide to the elderly - mainly the frail and lonely ones - care at home in order to improve their quality of life, to maintain their autonomy and independence and to keep them active in their family and social environment, reducing institutional/hospital care. The programme is supervised by the Ministry of Health and Welfare (Family Protection Division) and is financed by the same Ministry and the Ministry of the Interior, Public Administration and Decentralization.

It is coordinated and evaluated by a monitoring committee, while its implementation is entrusted through the Open Care Centres for the Elderly (“KAPI”), which are obliged to recruit additional specialized personnel. That is, at least a social worker, a nurse and a home helper, who pay visits on a regular basis to old persons at their homes. An important role can also be played by volunteer work, through the involvement and active participation of non-governmental organizations, non-profit voluntary agencies, and the local community.

Currently the programme is being implemented in 96 municipalities. Another 190 Open Care Centres for the Elderly (“KAPI”) will be established and financed under the Third European Support Framework. Government policy is aimed at reinforcing and extending the home help programme by encouraging wider participation of municipalities, so that gradually all the single elderly receive appropriate home care, while the connection of the programme with the primary health care services is planned.

Tele-help at Home, a pilot programme carried out by the Ministry of Health and Welfare in various municipalities, aims to help single elderly people keep in touch with their families and relatives, in case of an emergency.

Day-care centres for the elderly are centres for the daily care of seniors with difficulties in walking, dementia, etc. This programme aims at improving the quality of life of the elderly and helping their family members to focus on their own occupations.

Those centres are established and operate at the approval of prefectural authorities and the whole programme is supervised by municipalities and non-profit organizations. It is going to be subsidized by the European Social Fund (Third European Support Framework).

Municipalities in general offer welfare services. In addition, bigger municipalities offer preventive medical services and help to elderly suffering from chronic diseases. Those services are free of charge and easily accessible, although their importance has not yet been estimated due to lack of sufficient information. According to available data, in the municipality of Athens there are five consultative health centres staffed with 167 doctors, 102 persons of additional nursing staff, as well as five microbiological laboratories.

Various insurance funds collaborate with local medical services. They make contracts with rural doctors in municipalities. There is also additional medical help for the rural population at health centres and out-patient services of the regional hospitals. Tele-medicine services are also gradually used for the improvement of primary health care services, with a view to covering medical needs in remote and insular areas.

The Ministry of Health and Welfare formulates the health education and information policy in harmony with the guidelines of the World Health Organization and of the European Union as follows:

(a) Health education and information

The Ministry of Health and Welfare:

Informs central and regional services (prefectures, hospitals, health centres and other supervised bodies);

Finances such programmes and conferences;

Produces and distributes to various competent services and bodies written and audio-visual material (books, pamphlets, leaflets, stickers, posters, radio, and TV material on themes such as AIDS, tobacco consumption, alcohol, oral health, cancer and thalassaemia prevention, family planning, blood donation, perceptibility problems, mental health, elderly, etc.);

Implements similar informative programmes for the public (with the collaboration of other bodies on the occasion of International Days celebrated by World Health Organization);

Trains officials on health education and information matters so that they can change, according to guidelines of the World Health Organization and of the European Union, prevailing trends on public health practices;

Plans to finance (within the Third European Support Framework), on a systematic basis, new training programmes for more trainees;

Organizes seminars, issues specific written and audio-visual publications concerning necessary occupational arrangements in public services for disabled (this action is included in the European Operational Programme “Combating Social Exclusion in Labour Market”);

Supervises programmes on health education and information carried out by public and private organizations. In the Ministry of Health, a “Health Education Planning Committee” is implemented as a consultative body on similar matters. Similar committees operate also in prefectures;

Makes arrangements for exhibitions (photo, poster, written competitions, awarding prizes) accumulating useful informative material for public awareness; and

Participates in gatherings and exhibitions;

(b) Primary health care

The Ministry of Health and Welfare implements uninterrupted educational information programmes concerning family planning, psycho-prophylaxis during pregnancy, breastfeeding, diabetes, etc;

(c) Research and education

In the field of the operational programme "Health and Welfare" (Third European Support Framework), the Ministry of Health and Welfare plans training activities of the personnel in selected hospitals (in 32 hospital centres for vocational training), especially:

For administrative staff: health services management;

For medical staff: training on necessary specific fields/medical specializations in demand, high priority matters, patients rights;

For nursing staff: training on matters upgrading hospital services;

For unemployed health professionals: getting up of intersectoral training programmes;

For the personnel of the National Centre for Emergency Care: specialization in matters of emergency pre-hospital practices; and

For the personnel of every group to be familiar with the use of computers;

(d) Mental health

The Ministry of Health and Welfare implements training programmes in medical units (e.g. mental health centres). Apart from those programmes, it addresses teachers, paediatricians, nursing staff and midwives about effective diagnosis and treatment.

The services offered are upgraded and their reform is advanced through support by, and in collaboration with, the European Union (Second and Third European Support Frameworks and Interreg II and III programmes). The role of the World Health Organization, offering technical knowledge and guidelines on coping with health problems, is also considered essential.

A brief description of action plans based on the above-mentioned programmes follows, starting with the operational programme "Health and Welfare" of the Second European Support Framework 1994-1999:

Sub-project 1 "Health":

Infrastructure and medical equipment for hospitals and other Public Health Services;

Improvement of research infrastructure in public health;

Emergency medicine and infrastructure of the National Centre for Emergency Care;

Sub-project 3 "Human Resources":

Programmes on life-long training concerning the personnel of the National Health System;

Sub-project 4 "Technical Support":

Development of informative system on health services (hospitals, information on medical matters, tele-medicine);

Infrastructure for the operation of the National Blood Centre.

The operational programme "Health and Welfare" of the Third European Support Framework 1994-1999 includes:

Sub-project 1 "Health":

Development of primary health care;

Functional modernization of hospitals;

Development and completion of the emergency pre-hospital care services; and

Development of public health;

Sub-project 2 "Mental Health":

Deinstitutionalization and socio-economic integration for patients suffering from mental disorders;

Development/completion/expansion of services offered in communities with a view to facilitating the entire implementation of mental health reform;

Mental health problems prevention, strengthening of social solidarity and socioeconomic integration; and

Personnel training on deinstitutionalization, socio-economic integration and uninterrupted help to mentally ill;

Sub-project 4 "Human Resources Development in the field of health":

Sub-project 5 "Technical support" (Interreg Programme II)

The establishment and operation of cross-border public health centres according to this programme is a systematic multi-peripheral action in border areas of Greece (Greek-Albanian and Greek-Bulgarian frontiers), with a view to:

Improving health situation of population in the frontier; and

Preventing diseases and educating and informing (health control of moving population).

These Centres are built in the following areas: Ioannina (Kalpaki, Konitsa), Florina (Paea Nomarchia, Niki, Kristallopigi), Serres (Sidirocastro, Provatas, Promachonas), Evros (Dikea).

Article 13

Education has traditionally been a "good" that was offered widely and throughout the different aspects of life in Greece. Thousands of years ago, young and older people used to be educated in schools, at their homes, in gyms, during cultural festivities of artistic or athletic character, etc. From the Greek philosophers, who would publicly debate on moral issues at the ancient market (agora), to today's Youth Parliament, education has always been at the centre of the society's interest. Nowadays, the main concern is to ensure high quality educational services that are accessible to all.

Education in Greece is free of charge and indeed accessible to all. It is not only courses, but also books and educational materials that are provided free on site by the State. Primary education is offered at six grade levels, and so is secondary education. Nine years of schooling are compulsory, six thereof pertaining to primary education and three to secondary. Those first three years of secondary education constitute the Gymnasium (Gymnasio), whereas the three years that follow are those of Lyceum (Lykeio). Parents or legal guardians have the liberty to choose to place their children in a private school. Curricula, teaching methods, and materials, as well as staff competencies at the private schools are monitored by the State. In order to ensure accessibility to education, the State applies a series of provisions to accommodate the needs of different groups. These provisions are mentioned in detail under paragraphs 567-592 below.

Secondary education, including technical and vocational education, is available and accessible to all, and is offered free of charge. In 2001-2002, the State operated at the secondary level of education 2,068 technical and vocational training classes with 2 to 14 students attending each. The right to choose between State and private education applies both to primary and to secondary education, and so do policies to reinforce accessibility.

Higher education is public and is offered free of charge. The proportion of students in tertiary education as a percentage of all pupils and students is 18.4 per cent. Several universities are spread all over the country. To reinforce accessibility, the Hellenic Open University provides distance education at undergraduate and graduate levels. Distance education programmes are also offered by the other universities.

The so-called "Second Chance Schools" provide education (free of charge) to persons that have exceeded their 18th year of age and have not completed compulsory education. In addition to those schools, the Secretariat-General for Adult Education offers free of charge basic skills and key skills programmes and seminars to adults.

There are no difficulties in ensuring accessibility to education. However, there are factors associated to the sociocultural identity of certain population groups, which influence school dropouts and/or limited interest in higher level education. The State takes measures and implements policies described under paragraphs 567-592 below that enhance participation of such groups in the educational procedures.

The drop-out rate in primary education in the school year 2001-2002 is 0.66 per cent. Collecting such data in secondary education is not that easy. There are, however, data which clearly indicate increase of attendance and decrease of dropouts: the number of students attending all different types of secondary education in Greece remains stable. Over the last decade (1991-2000), the picture of the gymnasium student body evolved as follows: in 1991-1992 the number of students was 438,762, whereas in 2000-2001 this number was 361,112. This equals to an average 2.1 per cent annual proportional reduction of the respective student population. In the same way, the number of lyceum students in 1991-1992 was 398,307, and in 2000-2001 that number was 381,198, which suggests an average 0.5 per cent annual reduction for that same period. This demonstrates an important increase of the number of students who continue their education beyond the compulsory nine years.

Furthermore, an examination of the age cohort over the above-mentioned decade also leads to the conclusion that attendance increases progressively. The number of first graders (1st gymnasium) in 1991-1992 was 160,809; out of those, 123,530 students made it up to the 3rd grade of lyceum (i.e. fully completed schooling), which indicates an average annual student population reduction rate of 4.9 per cent for that specific period in time. That same rate for the four directly following school years was 4.8, 4.5, 9.1 and 6.2 per cent respectively. These rates are exceptional at the European level. According to OECD data (OECD 2000, Education at a Glance, OECD Indicators, p. 135), student enrolment and attendance for the age group of 5-14 years is very good. The relevant rate for Greece is 97.8 per cent, whereas the average rate for the OECD countries is 97.2 per cent. The picture is similar with regard to the older students,

the 15-19 years age group, who attend secondary education. Their attendance rate is 77.6 per cent, while the OECD countries' respective average rate is 76.3 per cent. Even numbers in pre-school education are encouraging: pre-school attendance for 5-year-olds rates more than 82 per cent (OECD 2000, p. 125).

The OECD report indicates that there is a general increase of the educational level of the Greek population: 11.3 per cent of the 25-64 age group in Greece are holders of a university degree, while that rate is much lower in other countries. It should be pointed out that those in the 25-34 age group in Greece who earn a higher education degree add up to nearly three times the number of the respective population in the age group of 55-64 years (22 v. 8 per cent, respectively) (OECD 2000, pp. 33, 36). A similar picture results from a European Union study which demonstrates that over the period 1976-1977 to 1996-1997, the number of persons holding a higher education degree in Greece had doubled. The increase in the educational level of the Greek population is deemed significant, since it positively relates to the rapidly progressing economic development of the country. Persons in the 25-59 age group, who have studied beyond secondary education, are faced with much less insecurity at their workplace than those working with qualifications that do not exceed compulsory education (6 v. 13.5 per cent, respectively) (European Commission, 2000, Key Data on Education in Europe, p. 14).

Additional data on literacy below and over 18 years can be found in the document submitted by Greece on the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (additional and updated information in connection with the consideration of the initial report CRC/C/28/Add.17 (p. 28)). Information on measures and policies implemented to enhance literacy, enrolment, attendance, etc. is provided under paragraphs 567-592.

Greece spends 3.5 per cent of per capita income on education. However, this number is larger in reality. The way this rate is calculated by the OECD does not allow for regional budgets (e.g. allocations for transportation, etc.) or supplementary budgets from ministries other than that of National Education to be included.

Over the last years, great emphasis has been put on upgrading the existing schools and building new ones. Due to the limited number of school buildings in many cases in metropolitan areas, two schools used to share the same building by switching their operating hours from morning to afternoon every week. This scheme, which does not allow for effective pedagogical work, is gradually being abolished by building new schools. An obstacle that the competent authorities are faced with is the lack of land to build on in urban areas. Nevertheless, it is a priority for the State to master this issue, and its performance so far has been amazing. In order for teaching to take place only during morning hours in public schools, the need in classrooms is evolving as a result of the building activity as follows in Table 19.

Table 19

Year	Classrooms needed
1994	8 956
1998	5 697
2001	3 529
2004	0

The overall building activity, though intensive, has not been measured. However, there are some data available regarding the evolution of school-building plans in 15 major municipalities:

Table 20

Classrooms: Total numbers

Year	State-owned	Rented	Classes	Students	Students per class
1994	4 181	706	7 437	183 158	25
1998	4 997	721	7 274	166 707	23
2001	6 160	371	6 940	151 850	22
2004	7 206	30	6 940	142 274	20

Table 21

Classroom construction

Years	1998-2001	2001-2004
Primary education	585	381
Secondary education	578	665
Total	1 163	1 046

The school year starts during the second week of September and goes up to mid-June. Pupils are given three months of summer vacation and two 2-week breaks during Christmas and Easter. Apart from those holidays, pupils have no time off school, except for weekends, legal holidays, and national or local holidays.

The number of days and hours of teaching time per year, the number of teaching hours per subject are set by the competent authorities. In elementary school, teaching hours are distributed through the grade levels as follows: 1st, 2nd grade level - 25 hours per week; 3rd grade - 28 hours; 4th, 5th, 6th grades - 30 hours per week. In high school, teaching hours are distributed through the grade levels as follows: 1st, 2nd and 3rd grade of gymnasium - 35 hours per week; 1st grade lyceum (4th high school) - 32 hours per week; 2nd grade lyceum - 33 hours; and 3rd grade lyceum - 30 hours per week. In evening schools, the lyceum studies (the three last high school grade levels) are distributed over a four-year-period in order to fit the busy schedules of working youth. Schedules in

evening schools are as follows: 1st and 2nd grade levels - 22 hours per week; 3rd grade level - 24 hours per week; 4th grade - 23 hours per week. All three grade levels of technical and vocational schools have a schedule of 34 teaching hours per week. At all levels of schooling, an instructional hour lasts 45 minutes. Schools have autonomy, when it comes to timetabling periods in schools over the week or over the day.

Teaching is a profession that attracts a mainly female population, probably due to the fact that it involves close contact with children and, of course, due to the vacation schedule which allows for adequate family time.

Data on the distribution of teachers and students by gender in primary and secondary education are included in the document submitted by Greece on the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (additional and updated information in connection with the consideration of the initial report CRC/C/28/Add.17 (pp. 29-30)). There are no comprehensive data on the ratio of men and women making use of the different levels of education available.

However, the State does take action to reinforce women's participation in education and in the labour market by conducting pilot programmes which include implementation of innovative educational schemes, counselling, individualized vocational education, teacher awareness and training programmes, evaluation and reconsideration or modification of educational materials in terms of eliminating negative implications relating to gender and promoting equal participation of women. In addition, emphasis is placed on developing undergraduate and graduate women studies programmes in the universities and promoting relevant research.

The extent to which children belonging to disadvantaged groups enjoy the right to education cannot in all cases be depicted in numbers. Considerable data are included in the document submitted by Greece on the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (additional and updated information in connection with the consideration of the initial report CRC/C/28/Add.17 (pp. 30-31)). To enhance participation in schooling and to fight dropouts, the State implements a series of practices, which are described below:

Whole day school (WDS) and extended-schedule elementary school (ESES)

There are currently 1,226 whole day kindergartens all over the country. From 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., children participate in multiple activities that contribute to the acquisition of skills and knowledge and to their socialization. The following table depicts the evolution of whole day kindergarten over the last three years:

Table 22

Whole day kindergarten

School year	Number of kindergartens	Number of classes
1999-2000	647	692
2000-2001	965	992
2001-2002	1 226	1 323

Whole day elementary school is a pilot programme, which is being implemented in 28 schools with the participation of all their student body (6,000 children) in selected areas of the country, where education needs to be further developed. The programme aims at the improvement of the educational procedure through:

Creating an appropriate pedagogical atmosphere;

Reorganizing the school site; and

Enriching the curriculum and extending the timetable by adding new lessons and activities in order to reinforce the educational, cultural, and social role of the school.

The Ministry of National Education plans to have an additional 172 schools by the year 2003, and another 128 (for a total of 328) by 2006.

The extended schedule elementary school meets both pedagogical and social needs, since it addresses the children whose both parents work, and allows them to participate in creative activities until 4 p.m. Children have the chance to do their homework and to get in contact with curricular areas such as arts, music, theatre, athletics, environmental education, etc. During 2000-2001, there were 1,841 extended schedule elementary schools with 2,521 classes. The following table depicts the evolution of the ESES over the last three school years:

Table 23

Extended schedule elementary school

School year	Number of schools	Number of classes
1999-2000	969	1 521
2000-2001	1 417	2 021
2001-2002	1 841	2 521

Additional instructional support and supplementary instruction

Additional instructional support (AIS) courses are offered at the Lyceum and at the technical and vocational schools at extra hours on site. AIS is aimed at offering instructional, psychological, and pedagogical support and, thus, at reducing school failure. Each student may attend, depending on his/her needs up to 14 hours of AIS per week. These hours are distributed from Monday through Saturday. Classes are small (5-10 students), in order to allow for the use of alternative teaching methods. The operation of the AIS courses is monitored by a committee of teachers, students, and parents formed at the school-unit level. At least 30 per cent of the teaching staff at the AIS are unemployed teachers. This year (2001-02) 99,748 students attend 33,012 AIS courses. Since 1998, when the AIS programme was first implemented, it has been very successful, with student participation having almost doubled. The following diagram shows the rising participation of students:

Figure 1

Total number of students attending AIS 55795451667798399748020 00040 00060 00080 000100 000120 0001st, 2nd and 3rd grade lyceum YEAR 1998-99 YEAR 1999-00 YEAR 2000-01 YEAR 2001-02

Supplementary instruction addresses Gymnasium students. Courses are offered on-site at extra-curricular hours, and are mainly focused on teaching language, mathematics, science, and foreign languages in order to enhance school performance. The SI programme is based on the same philosophy as that of AIS.

Monitoring of attendance

School attendance is monitored with a procedure, through which students who interrupt school attendance or are absent for a longer period are searched for with the assistance of the police authorities if necessary.

Education for Health

“Education for Health” is aimed at raising self-esteem and self-confidence, reinforcing responsibility, and forming a personality that adopts positive ways of living. In other words, it is concerned with both the mental and corporate health of the students from a preventive perspective. Education for Health is not offered as a lesson, because it could not be successful as such. It is rather implemented in the form of hands-on activities.

In order to better plan and implement the health education programmes, a National Network on Education for Health is in place; it consists of the teachers who apply the programmes in the schools, the health education officers (at the regional level), the Youth Counselling Stations (16 all over the country), the Pedagogical Institute (consulting agent to the Ministry of National Education) and the Central Administration (Ministry of National Education).

Education for Health programmes cover thematic areas such as: prevention of drugs/smoking/alcohol use, eating habits, interpersonal relations, sex education, AIDS, hepatitis B, drivers education and prevention of road accidents, child accident prevention, stress control, exposure to toxic substances, excessive exposure to sun, home and work conditions, environment and health, voluntary blood/organ donation, violence, xenophobia, racism, social exclusion, cardiovascular diseases, exercise, and other issues related to the healthy way of living.

Counselling and vocational guidance

Over the last four years, the Ministry of National Education has founded 68 Centres for Counselling and Vocational Guidance (ΚεΣυΠ) at the regional level, covering the whole country and 200 Counselling and Vocational Guidance Bureaux (ΓραΣΕΠ) at school level. The latter provide on-site counselling and vocational guidance services in the school unit. The regional centres plan for and support the implementation of programmes of career training in schools. During the school year 2001-2002, 750 such programmes are running in schools.

Early and systematic scanning and diagnosis of students with learning disabilities

Children who are not diagnosed soon enough as having a learning disability and, consequently, are not treated the appropriate way, often constitute a large proportion of the student population that is led to school failure or drop-out. Early diagnosis and intervention play a key role in the child’s educational development. The Ministry of National Education places nowadays great emphasis on setting up a mechanism that will facilitate early scanning and assessment, and has planned a long series of teacher training seminars, which started in June 2002.

In addition, 22 centres for diagnosis, assessment and support of children with disabilities and their families, which are spread throughout the country, are responsible for supporting teachers to diagnose and properly instruct the students with disabilities.

Environmental education

Environmental education aims at creating conditions which allow students to develop positive attitudes and participative behaviours for the protection of ecological balance and the high quality of living.

The environmental education officers who work at the regional level plan and support the implementation of environmental education programmes in schools. In the school year 2001|2002, there are 800 such programmes running. In addition to them, students attend one-to-four-day seminars at one of the 18 centres for environmental education, which are situated in different regions of the country. By the year 2006, the Ministry of National Education plans to create an additional 16 centres for environmental education, in order to cover the needs of the whole country.

The State takes substantive action to ensure equal access to education for all children. The relevant policies and educational practice vary, and, for this reason, they are described here below by target groups:

Repatriated or foreign students (migrants/refugees)

Foreign and repatriated students enjoy the right to free education exactly as natives do. Every child living in Greece is entitled to education regardless of his/her parent's or guardian's legal status in the country. Because of the special conditions of migration, etc., administrative adaptations have been made to facilitate registering of foreign students who at the time of registration do not possess the official documents that are otherwise required. If, upon completion of the school year, those documents have not been submitted, the student is given a certificate of attendance instead of a graduation degree. That certificate provides for the promotion of the child to the next grade level.

In order to accommodate the foreign and repatriated students' specific educational needs, an instructional scheme is established by law, which allows for flexibility. This scheme includes:

Induction classes (classes for foreign students, operating during regular school hours, where emphasis is placed on the instruction of Greek as a second language with gradual orientation to the school curriculum);

Support classes (classes for foreign students, operating in the school building before or after school hours, where support is provided in the students' curricular areas of growth);

Cooperative teaching with the presence of a second bilingual instructor in the classroom;

Use of specialized educational materials (including bilingual);

Specialized assessment accommodations; and

Psychosocial support programmes for students and their families.

The teacher body decides how to combine and implement the above-mentioned educational practices, depending on the on-site conditions and the students' needs.

In addition to those measures, which apply to any public school that enrolls high numbers of foreign students, there are actually (year 2002) 26 schools of multicultural education spread all over the country, where students follow an enriched educational programme, which allows for emphasis on their cultural background and instruction of their mother tongue.

Multicultural education is included in the school curriculum. School books at both primary and secondary education have been and continue to be revised to reinforce understanding and respect for the different, to enhance interest in other people's beliefs, religion, way of living, thinking, etc.

Furthermore, the Secretariat-General for Adult Education conducts programmes and operates classes to teach Greek as a second language, as well as Greek for specific work settings, to foreign adults.

The Institute for the Education of the Greek Diaspora and for Inter-cultural Education, that was established in 2000, works with the Ministry of National Education to plan, implement, assess, and supervise all relevant educational practice.

Roma

A major challenge that the State is faced with is mastering the issue of high drop-out rates among the Roma population. To succeed in this direction, a series of policies/measures are being activated:

The "Student Transit Card" was established to fit the needs of students who follow their family's moving habits. This card allows the competent authorities to enrol the student in the school anytime during the year and to keep track of his/her transcripts and record; more importantly, it encourages the student to continue attending school at his/her new place of settlement;

Induction classes (classes that operate during school hours, where Roma students are taught for the whole day or for part of the day if they can attend in the regular classroom). The educational goal here, as in the case of foreign students, is to integrate those students into mainstream education. During the year 2001-2002, in primary education there are 110 such classes with 1,972 attending. The total number of Roma students in primary education in 2001-2002 is 6,304, while it was 5,060 in 1997;

Psychosocial support programmes and reinforcement of the students' cultural identity (approach through emphasis on music and dance, personal hygiene programmes, education for health programmes, family counselling etc.);

Specialized educational materials (in language, reading, writing, mathematics, new technologies, geography, history, nature, environment etc.); and

Counselling to local authorities (about how to reach out to the Roma society, how to integrate them etc.).

As a result of the implementation of the above-mentioned policies, the number of Roma students attending school has risen by 40 per cent in the period 1996-2000!

Muslim minority of Thrace

Most of the Greek Muslims of Thrace attend minority schools, which operate in accordance with the provisions of the Lausanne Treaty and of relevant bilateral protocols. Over the last years, the Greek State has put in place a series of practices and provisions to support and enhance education of the Muslim minority in Thrace, such as:

Increase of the number of instructors and assisting staff in minority schools;

Ongoing training of the minority school teachers: in the school year 2001-2002, 397 Christian and 412 Muslim teachers taught 6,873 Muslim students in 231 minority schools;

Upgrading and subsequent accreditation of the Muslim religious schools (until 1998, they offered five years of education, and thus could not be considered equal to secondary education schools). Students graduate nowadays after six years of attendance, and have the right to participate in the national exams to enter universities;

Realization of an enormous construction plan (Dr 2 billion), which included building of new schools and renovation/improvement of the existing ones;

Equipment of all minority schools with PCs and other multimedia materials;

Adoption of positive discrimination policy with the establishment of a 0.5 per cent guaranteed access to tertiary education for the Muslim minority;

New books for the Turkish-language programme (since March 2000);

New specialized books (adapted to the students' identity) for school curricula (language, geography, environment, history, social, and political science);

Support courses for Muslim students of secondary education, through which pupils are assisted in those curricular areas where they mostly need it (e.g. mathematics, history, etc.);

Support courses at the primary education level, where instruction is given in two languages: the Greek language and certain terminologies are taught in Greek, and the rest is taught in Turkish;

In 2001-2002, three new kindergarten programmes were established for the education of Muslims;

The Muslim Religious School in Komotini has dormitories, where both food and accommodation are provided to students free of charge. Similarly, at the minority school in Ehinós free food is offered to its students, as well as to other Muslim students who attend the public school;

Free vacation for Muslim students in summer camps where Christian students pay fees;

Psychosocial support programmes for students and their families (reinforcement of cultural identity, family counselling etc.);

Financial incentives for teachers who work in Muslim minority schools; and

Teacher training on how to meet the educational needs of Muslim minority students. The State is now considering upgrading the Special Pedagogical Academy of Thessaloniki, where Muslim teachers for minority schools are trained (the attendance period will increase from 3 to 4 years, and the Academy will become part of a university).

The implementation of the above-mentioned policies resulted in the increase of the number of Muslim students attending public secondary education by 89 per cent within the period 1996-2000. In 1996-1997, the respective number of students was 1,397, and in 2000 it rose to 2,511.

Disabled children

According to recent legislation (P.D. No. 2817/2000), the majority of children with disabilities should be integrated into mainstream education. Education should take place in the least restrictive environment. Because of the great variety of educational needs, even among students who share the same disability, education of the disabled calls for flexibility and, of course, for an individualized educational plan for each student.

To implement this legislation, the Ministry of National Education has established integrated programmes at all levels of education. These programmes consist of the following types: (a) full inclusion programmes within the regular classroom with the support of specialists, and (b) integrated resource classrooms within the regular school with the support of a special education teacher.

Some students, however, cannot be integrated; and, depending on their age and disability, they can choose among: special kindergarten, special primary schools, special gymnasium-lyceum technical schools, or teaching at home.

In the school year 2001-2002, the picture of Special Education in Greece is as follows:

96 special kindergartens;

146 special primary schools;

13 special gymnasias, lycea, and technical vocational schools;

10 special laboratories for technical and vocational training;

723 special classes (in general education schools);

155 programmes of individualized education in general education schools, which include the operation of inclusion classes and/or collaborative education practices (with the assistance of an extra teacher in the general classroom); and

50 programmes of education at home for those students who are grounded at their home for health reasons.

The centres for the diagnosis, assessment and support of children with disabilities and their families (mentioned in paragraphs 563-564 above under "Early and systematic scanning and diagnosis of students with learning disabilities") are responsible for coordinating and supporting the education of the children with disabilities. This involves diagnosis, supply of specialized educational materials to teachers, teacher training/support, monitoring, and evaluation of student's progress, counselling to parents etc. There are 22 such centres operating in different areas of the country. The staff working there are teachers of kindergarten, primary and secondary education, psychologists, social workers, speech therapists, physical therapists, psychiatrists, etc. The Ministry of National Education plans to have set up an additional number of 36 centres by 2004, in order to cover geographically all the country.

Children in rural areas and children of low-income families

Schools, as mentioned above, are spread all over the country to ensure accessibility of education to all. Because of the limited number of young people in certain remote areas, schools may not be as close to the child's domicile as they would otherwise be. In such cases, the State provides for transportation of the student to and from the school. This provision may be in the form either of a bus that transports students, or of a taxi that is paid by the State, or of money that is given to the parents to privately transport their child, if they choose to do so. In order for transportation to be provided, students of primary education must live at least 1,200 metres away from the school, gymnasium students must live at least 2,500 metres away, and for lyceum students that distance must be at least 4,000 metres.

Students who live away from school in remote areas, as well as students from families of low income may reside during the week free of charge in State hostels. The State owns 32 hostels for students of primary and secondary education, which are located in different areas of the country. Students who live in them are chosen on the basis of socio-economic criteria. In the school year 2001-2002, 1,246 students live in hostels, where food is provided also free of charge.

Similarly, there are 16 hostels for students of higher education, who are chosen in the same way. In 2001-2002, 7,940 such students are offered free food and accommodation in the hostels. Except for the live-in students, free food is offered to an additional 4,772 students at all levels of education on the basis of socio-economic criteria. There are also other hostels at the tertiary education level, which are operated within the university budgets, and, therefore, no relevant data are available.

When siblings are admitted to tertiary education institutions in different cities, they are transferred to the same institution which is that closer to their family's place of domicile. The purpose of this policy is to save for the family budget. The Institute for State Scholarships offers every year scholarships for undergraduate and graduate studies. Candidates are chosen on the basis of their academic performance (either by taking an exam or by considering their grades).

The rapid development of distance education programmes and educational technologies in Greece makes education accessible to literally every part of the country.

Teaching in the mother tongue takes place in multicultural education schools for groups that are proportionally highly represented (in terms of numbers) in the school population. In regular schools, the collaborative teaching scheme described above includes use of the mother tongue by the bilingual teacher. In addition, there are private schools for foreign children, where most of the teaching is done in a foreign language, which is determined by the school's identity.

The conditions of teaching staff at all levels generally comply with the UNESCO Recommendation concerning the status of teachers. Teachers are trained in universities. To get a position in public education, teachers have to take an exam, and they are chosen afterwards on the basis of their performance. Teachers receive induction training, as well as ongoing in-service training. They are entitled to a leave of absence, in order to achieve a graduate degree. Teacher salaries have risen during recent years. The ratio of teachers to students in 1999-2000 was in primary education, 1:18, in public schools and 1:22 in private schools. In secondary education (public schools), the ratio was 1:12.

The total number of schools - public and private - (including kindergarten, elementary, high school, technical and vocational, evening schools) is 15,811; 715 thereof are private (2000/2001 data). This indicates that 4.52 per cent of the total number of schools are private sector schools. No problems or difficulties are encountered by those wishing to establish or gain access to those schools. Additional data on the number of private schools and the number of students attending them are included in the document submitted by Greece on the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (additional and updated information in connection with the consideration of the initial report CRC/C/28/Add.17 (pp. 29/30)).

There have been no changes negatively affecting the right enshrined in article 13. Whatever changes have been made over the last years have improved the situation.

Greece receives considerable financial support from the European Union; both the Second and the currently running Third European Community Support Frameworks constitute a major contribution that has been vital to the implementation of the educational policy.

Article 14

This article is not relevant to Greece. However, it is worthwhile noting that a National Observatory on the Rights of Children (NORC) was established by Legislative Decree No. 2909/2001 (art. 4) as a public agency within the Secretariat-General for

Youth/Ministry of National Education and Religious Affairs. NORC was launched in March 2002, and is expected to contribute to the State's fight against social exclusion and for equal access and high quality of life for all children. The purpose of NORC is monitoring and implementation of the International Convention on the Rights of the Child. This will be accomplished through: (a) the development of a documentation centre; (b) the cooperation with international organizations and NGOs; (c) the awareness of public opinion; (d) interventions in educational curricula; (e) the publication of a guide for civil servants; and (f) the preparation of an annual report and corresponding action plan regarding the implementation of the Convention.

Article 15

The Greek State has adopted a series of legislative and other measures, in order to realize the right of everyone to participate in a cultural life which he/she considers pertinent, as well as to manifest his/her own culture. In particular:

Availability of funds

The funds made available during 1998-2001 for the development of culture and the participation of citizens in the cultural life, including aid to the private sector, concern the following actions of the Ministry of Culture:

- (a) Development, support, and presentation in Greece and abroad of modern cultural and artistic creations;
- (b) Protection and support of art and culture professionals, creators, and artists;
- (c) Encouragement for cooperation and dialogue with other cultures;
- (d) Support to all citizens in order to participate actively in the cultural life of the country; and
- (e) Protection, preservation, maintenance, propagation, and management of material and immaterial heritage of Greece, which determines the cultural identity of the Greeks, substantiates the "timelessness" of Greek culture, and documents historically the cultural diversity of the citizens of the country.

The following tables(24-27) present the expenditure of the Ministry of Culture for the development and support of the above sectors, originating from the revenues of the annual ordinary budgets of 1998, 1999, 2000, and 2001, the respective credits of the same years from the public investments programme, the revenues of the Ministry of Culture from lottery, the European Union, and the Archaeological Resources and Expropriations Fund.

Table 24

Cultural sector

general government expenditure

Year 1998

By sector of activities	Ordinary public budget	Public investment budget	Public lotteries etc.	European Union Fund	Archaeological Resources Fund	Total	Percentage
I. Contemporary culture	32 497	15 423	25 607			73 527	28.24
Fine arts	98	176	2 130			2 404	
Theatre and dance	6 202	3 537	9 286			19 025	
Music	16 436	1 203	1 030			18 669	
Literature and books	67	675	2 352			3 094	
Folk art	672	733	1 665			3 070	
Festivals etc.	922	58	1 275			2 255	
Cinema	7 107		4 418			11 525	
Others	993	9 041	3 451			13 485	
II. Payments for services (wages and salaries etc.)	86 573					86 573	33.25
III. Cultural heritage		9 275	22 350	61 325	7 330	100 280	38.51
Excavations		724				724	
Museums		3 864				3 864	
Monuments		877				877	
Other archaeological		3 810				3 810	
General total	119 070	24 698	47 957	61 325	7 330	260 380	100

Table 25**Cultural sector****general government expenditure****Year 1999**

By sector of activities	Ordinary public budget	Public investment budget	Public lotteries etc.	European Union Fund	Archaeological Resources Fund	Total	Percentage
I. Contemporary culture	43 030	13 030	30 303			86 363	21.7
Fine arts	1 606	651	1 333			3 590	
Theatre and dance	6 667	2 480	6 060			15 207	
Music	22 728	2 060	3 030			27 818	
Literature and books	151	364	1 970			2 485	
Folk art	606	952	1 425			2 983	
Festivals etc.	666	6 242	1 637			8 545	
Cinema	7 576	36	788			8 400	
Others	3 030	245	14 060			17 335	
II. Payments for services (wages and salaries etc.)	93 334					93 334	23.5
III. Cultural heritage		18 182	12 121	157 576	30 303	218 182	54.8
Excavations		2 122					
Museums		3 636					
Monuments		2 000					
Other archaeological		2 303					
General total	136 364	31 212	42 424	157 576	30 303	397 879	100

Table 26**Cultural sector****general government expenditure****Year 2000**

By sector of activities	Ordinary public budget	Public investment budget	Public lotteries etc.	European Union Fund	Archaeological Resources Fund	Total	Percentage
I. Contemporary culture	56 795	18 474	31 342			96 611	29.09
Fine arts	1 658		1 741			3 399	
Theatre and dance	13 364	895	7 574			21 833	
Music	27 654	1 555	7 467			36 676	
Literature and books	382	733	2 898			4 013	
Folk art	38	110	1 754			1 902	
Festivals etc.	1 640					1 640	
Cinema	7 366		5 205			12 571	
Others	4 693	5 181	4 703			14 577	
II. Payments for services (wages and salaries etc.)	91 178					91 178	27.45
III. Cultural heritage		17 363	37 346	83 407	5 312	143 428	43.18
Excavations		2 726					

Museums		2 840					
Monuments		2 617					
Other archaeological		9 180					
Contemporary							
monuments and the				909		909	0.2
Acropolis							
General total	147 973	35 837	68 688	84 316	5 312	342 126	100

Table 27

Cultural sector

general government expenditure

Year 2001

By sector of activities	Ordinary public budget	Public investment budget	Public lotteries etc.	European Union Fund	Archaeological Resources Fund	Total	Percentage
I. Contemporary culture	66 898	3 355	48 886			119 139	28.93
Fine arts	2 824		2 550			5 374	
Theatre and dance	17 077	117	4 395			21 589	
Music	31 859	294	2 891			35 044	
Literature and books	3 776		2 618			6 394	
Folk art	874	294	1 506			2 674	
Festivals etc.	2 385		7 589			11 392	
Cinema	3 803		7 589			11 392	
Others	4 300	2 650	23 514			30 464	
II. Payments for services (wages and salaries etc.)	94 700					94 700	22.99
III. Cultural heritage		30 375	36 683	119 500	11 460	198 018	48.08
Excavations		2 093					
Museums		3 105					
Monuments		3 320					
Other archaeological		21 027		111 019			
Contemporary							
monuments and the				8 481		8 481	
Acropolis							
General total	161 598	33 730	85 569	119 500	11 460	411 857	100

Figure 2

Cultural sector

general government expenditure

Years 1998-2001

Institutional infrastructure

0100 000200 000300 0001998199920002001Payments for ServicesCultural HeritageContemporary CultureThe National Book Centre was established in 1994 by the Ministry of Culture and is active to date as a public benefit legal entity expressing the modern perception of the book by providing systematic updating technical and scientific information on book production factors always having in mind the readers their needs and the increase of their number. The policy of the National Book Centre subsidized by the Ministry of Culture presents the multifarious dynamics of the book as a medium for conveying ideas and dialogue as a cultural core

that can cater for the cognitive educational and communication needs of the citizens.

The Stone Centre was established in 1997 by the Ministry of Culture and aims at investigating the causes of damage to historical monuments and discovering methods of preservation and protection of the structural material of the monuments. The results of the Centre's investigations are forwarded to international preservation centres and international scientific journals and editions such as Studies of the International Institute of Conservation in England. The Stone Centre cooperates with respective centres in France, England, Germany, Sweden, Spain, Bulgaria, Italy, the United States and other countries both for exchange and dissemination of the discovered know-how and technology and for perfecting the monument conservation methods with the use of new technologies and relevant updating of the sector's professionals as well as awareness of the public and the project financing bodies.

The Methoni Sea Antiquities Centre and Archaeological Park is a centre of studies with continuous educational and communication activity aiming at training specialists and promoting underwater archaeology in Greece and presenting sea antiquities.

The European Centre of Delphi was established in 1977 under the auspices of the Council of Europe for the promotion of Greek and European culture.

Museums

In the last five years, the Ministry of Culture has inaugurated 13 new archaeological museums, such as in Thira, Astypalea, Lefkada and Megara. Quality System

ELOT EN ISO 9001 has been used for their construction since April 2000.

During 1995-2000, 20 re-exhibitions were implemented in museums and archaeological collections (Piraeus Museum, archaeological collection of Potamia, Kymi, EAM, etc.),

and 11 archaeological exhibitions were organized in domestic museums and 6 abroad, while there was participation in 30 exhibitions abroad.

Archaeological Sites Unification Body: by virtue of Presidential Decree (PD) No. 414/93, the Ministry of Culture established an Office for the project of Unification of the Archaeological Sites of Athens, which is responsible for the coordination and monitoring of the project for the overall presentation of the following archaeological sites: Olympia, North and South Acropolis, Philopappou, Roman market and Andrianos Alexandria Library, Ancient Market, and Keramikos.

The project aims at presenting the monuments and unifying them in a historical and intercultural walk through the historical centre of Athens, at the easy access of the visitors by creating pedestrian streets between monuments, reformation, and preservation of the archaeological sites, at integrating them into the everyday life of the city, and at improving the city of Athens.

The Melina Merkouri Foundation was established for promoting the creation of the Acropolis Museum and the return of the Parthenon Marbles. It organizes activities to this end.

With the "Culture Territory" project, the Ministry of Culture created a core of bodies, called Culture Territory Networks, which aim at creating a communication and dialogue network of the centre with the periphery, and promote the regional cultural and artistic creation, as well as the infrastructure in monuments, architecture, and buildings of the region:

Theatrical network: its main bodies are the National Theatre, the Hellenic Centre of International Theatre Institute, the Centre for Research and Practical Applications of Ancient Greek Drama "Desmi", the Interbalkan Student Theatre Festival, theatre science university faculties, dramatic art schools, the State Theatre of Northern Greece, the National Opera, the Municipal Regional Theatres, subsidized theatre companies, the Theatrical Museum, the Hellenic Theatre Centre for Children, the Hellenic Centre of International Theatre Institute, the Chamber Opera of Thessaloniki, etc.;

Music network: mainly composed of the State Orchestra of Athens, the State Orchestra of Thessaloniki, the Music Palace Organization of Athens, the Music Palace Organization of Thessaloniki, the Opera Orchestra, the State Greek Music Orchestra, the Colours Orchestra, the "Kamerata" Orchestra, the Chorus Centre of Kefallonia, the Music Theatre Centre of Volos, Soloists of Patra, Athenaeum, Association of Greek Composers, Chamber Opera of Thessaloniki, Mediterranean Music Centre of Lamia, Music Acoustics Research Institute, etc.;

Artistic network: mainly composed of the National Gallery, the National Modern Art Museum of Athens, the National Modern Art Museum of Thessaloniki, the Municipal Plastic Art Workshops, the Chamber of Plastic Arts, the Macedonian Modern Art Museum, the Centre for International Meetings of Artists of Didymoticho, the Modern Art Centre of Larissa, the Chorus Centre of Kefallonia, the Modern Artistic Creation Centre of Rethymno, etc.;

Dance network: mainly composed of the State Orchestral Art School, the International Dance Centre of Kalamata, the National Opera Ballet, the Dance Theatre of the Northern Greece State Theatre, subsidized dance groups, the Greek Section of the International Dance Council, etc.;

Cinema network: mainly composed of the Greek Cinema Centre, the Film Festival of Thessaloniki, the Cinema Museum of Thessaloniki, the Short Film Festival of Drama, the Hellenic Film Gallery, the Municipal Cinema Network, the Federation of Cinema Clubs, etc.;

Photographic network: mainly composed of the Photography Museum of Thessaloniki, the Photography Centre of Skopelos, the Photography Centre of Athens, the Hellenic Photography Centre, the Photography Centre of Thessaloniki, the Photographic Society of Mytilene, the Photographic Cycle, "ELIA", the Benakis Museum (photographic section), etc.;

Folklore network: mainly composed of the Greek Folk Art Museum, the Museum of Greek Folk Music Instruments, the Centre for the Study of Music Tradition of Thrace-Alexandroupolis, the Centre for the Study of Music Tradition of Hesperus/Balkans at Ioannina, the Centre of Folk Activities of Komotini, the Folklore Museum of Macedonia-Thrace, supervised Folklore Museums, etc.;

Book network: mainly composed of the National Book Centre, the Book and Reading Institute of Kozani, the Literary Archives of Thessaloniki, the Greek Language Centre, "ELIA", etc.;

Cultural organization and management network: mainly composed of the European Cultural Centre of Delphi, the Intercultural Initiatives and Communication Centre of Veria, the Mediterranean and Balkan Festival of Art-Technology, the Artistic Action Centre of Tripoli, the Mediterranean Architecture Centre of Chania, the Greek Festival S.A., etc.;

Architectural network: apart from the competent directorates of the Ministry of Culture, the Mediterranean Architecture Centre of Chania, the Association of Architects, and the Hellenic Architecture Institute participate in this Network. However, its objective is to activate and include bodies from all over Greece and cooperate with international and national bodies of other countries.

All the services and bodies of the Ministry of Culture, all supervised organizations subsidized by or contracting with the Ministry, the first and second instance local authorities with their own cultural bodies, cultural institutes, and all bodies of cultural volunteers, amateur creation and folk culture participate in the "Culture Territory".

For the promotion of the cultural identity of Greek citizens, the Ministry of Culture supports bodies and foundations which undertake actions for the promotion of the Greek language in Greece and abroad and present the Greek cultural heritage. In particular, the Ministry:

Organizes exhibitions in Greece and abroad on the immaterial and material diachronic cultural heritage of Greece;

Supports all professional cultural groups and associations of artists, promotes the artistic creation, and supports the creative expression of all groups of society, aiming at the cohesion of citizens and the strengthening of the connective elements of their cultural identity; and

Provides annual subsidy to seats or departments of foreign universities which offer undergraduate or postgraduate courses in modern Greek studies, often finances the establishment of new seats in different universities and grants scholarships to foreign students for learning the Greek language, in cooperation with the Ministry of National Education and Religious Affairs and the Institute for Balkan Studies, which organizes 15-day summer seminars for scholars at Thessaloniki.

It has also adopted and supports a policy for Greeks abroad, consisting of:

Supporting the cultural identity and cultural bonds of Greeks abroad, especially the younger generations, with the metropolis;

Supporting the cultural, economic, and political presence of Greeks abroad in the societies where they live and work;

Presenting the dynamic work of Greek artists and intellectuals living abroad and promoting their work in the host country, among other national entities; and

Rallying the associations of Greeks abroad and supporting the cooperation between them through improved qualitative cultural programmes.

Projects implemented for the attainment of such goals - support of cultural cores of

Greeks abroad

The Secretariat-General for Greeks Abroad (GGAE) supports Greek artists and artistic groups of Greeks abroad in their creative work, sends traditional dance instructors and other special associates who help Greeks abroad to present their work, and trains traditional dance instructors in Greece. It also supports worthwhile cultural events and projects of Greek organizations abroad, such as Greek children chorus, painting exhibitions, traditional dance festivals, symposiums with historical and cultural themes, theatrical groups, etc.

Cultural months

In 1997, GGAE established for the first time the institution of "cultural months", organized in cooperation with competent ministries and agencies in Greece, the Federations of Greek Communities at the host countries and the local embassies and consulates. The first cultural month was organized in April 1997 in south Russia, in seven cities of the Black Sea and Caucasus (Novorossiisk, Anapa, Crasnodar, Sochi, Stavropoli, Eseduki, Vladikavcaz). In 1998 and 1999, Greek cultural months were held in Georgia, Ukraine, south Russia, South Africa, and Australia. Cultural months aim at:

A dynamic multicultural present: they attempt to build bridges of communication between as many Greeks abroad as possible, bringing together even those who do not have close contacts with Greek consulates or foreign organizations. Through cultural exchanges and other events, they aim at presenting the common features of different cultures and supporting the brotherhood of people for their common well-being and happy coexistence;

A promising future: they draw the attention of the new generation of Greeks, support its bonds with the motherland, and thus reinforce the foundations for the preservation and dissemination of the Greek language, the Greek culture, and the new dynamic developments of Greece worldwide;

Philhellenism: for the dissemination of timeless values, they aim at supporting and developing philhellenism to all countries hosting Greeks and to all areas in the world.

The Greek State has established also, through the revised Constitution of 2000, equal rights (social, economic, and cultural) and obligations for all Greek citizens. However, with special measures and actions, the Greek State tries to sensitize civil society and help social and minority groups to integrate themselves into Greek society, present their culture, realize their cultural heritage, and express their creative skills. Such measures and actions concern:

Matters of protection of the Greek Roma (Prime Minister's Decision No. Y20, Official Gazette 24/18.1.2000)

The Greek Federation of Associations of Greek Roma, as well as local organizations and associations, have repeatedly stated that the Greek Roma are above all Greek citizens, unlike European Roma who are separated from the nationality of their country of residence (see related Internet sites and public statements of representatives of the Greek Roma). This differentiation clearly arises from the different historical relation developed by the above groups with the other populations of the European countries and mainly from the unprecedented prosecution that they suffered almost throughout Europe from the fifteenth to the twentieth centuries. In Greece, despite its difficulties, this relation was smooth and often enabled cooperation and fraternity, because of the skills developed by many among the above groups in music, handicraft, and trade.

It was considered necessary to officialize the special Interministerial Committee, in which the Ministry of Culture participates, with a view to creating a National Action Plan for the complete integration of Greek Roma into the modern Greek society. The Directorate of Folk Culture participates in the Central Monitoring Committee, which was established to coordinate the actions of the national project for Greek Roma. The complete Action Project for the social integration of Greek Roma has been included for the financing of infrastructures in the Third Community Support Framework, and its implementation bodies are the local authorities, the Roma network, the Greek Federation of Associations of Greek Roma, universities, etc. The main feature of the programme is global and coordinated action aiming at the complete social integration of Greek Roma, mutual acquaintance with the broader population, presentation of their culture, and expression of their creative skills. The suggestions of the Ministry of Culture include Greece-wide actions to be implemented in cooperation with the local authorities, and are divided into three categories: educational workshops, vocational training workshops and research projects.

For the protection and presentation of local cultures and cultural multiformity, the Ministry of Culture has been implementing and coordinating research and educational projects since 1999 for the Greek Roma social group. These projects aim at studying and presenting the rich Roma cultural heritage, as well as the acquaintance and approach of Roma with the broader society. In summary, the following activities have been implemented from 1999 to 2001:

Operation of a creative pastime workshop for schoolchildren at Ilion, Attica, in cooperation with the Greek Folk Art Museum;

Operation of a music workshop for children and teenagers at Ilion, Attica, in cooperation with the Greek Folk Music Instruments Museum "Fivos Anogianakis";

Operation of a photography workshop for young people at Aghia Varvara, Attica, in cooperation with the Directorate of Fine Arts of the Ministry of Culture. The purpose of these workshops (six-month long) is the education and training of Roma in a useful craft, while its success is proved through the increasing number of participation of young people (boys and girls) and the exhibitions organized by the Ministry of Culture on an annual basis with works of the participating students. The Ministry of Culture has enacted informal prizes for the best works;

Research project in cooperation with a special scientist focusing on the forms of Roma artistic traditions and folklore; and

Research project in cooperation with the department of photography of the Technical Educational Institute (TEI) of Athens entitled "Photographic recording of Roma from 1840 to date".

Further, the Ministry of Culture is planning the following actions:

Extending the above projects for Roma in other areas outside Attica;

Enriching the existing actions with new ones, e.g. creation of a Music Library at Aspropyrgos, Attica; and

Creating educational programmes for Roma culture, etc.

Cycle of intercultural educational activities (1994 to 1998) addressed to children of Muslim families living in degraded areas of the historical centre of Athens, Keramikos and Gazi

Sixty to eighty children, aged 6-13 years, participated every year, divided into groups according to their age and mother tongue. The activities were carried out in museums, archaeological sites, and monuments in the neighbourhood and surroundings of the establishment. Thematic units of intercultural character were elaborated, such as shadow theatre, music, dance, costume, embellishment, religion, time perception and organization, writing, ceramics. In the framework of these activities, children participated in theatrical games, creative workshops, and experience games. The programme attempted to contribute to the social integration of the children by cultivating team spirit, expanding their reading and writing skills, strengthening their self-sentiment and accepting their cultural peculiarities. This programme was very successful and is used as a pilot for the next phase of intercultural-approach educational programme. It is noted that the Ministry of Culture published informative material in Greek and English for these educational programmes.

Special educational programmes organized and addressed to young people with special needs (vision, hearing, mobility)

The Department of Educational Programmes of the Ministry of Culture adapts existing actions or plans new ones according to the special needs of the public. Special educational programmes have been designed for archaeological-educational exhibitions (“At the tracks of writing”, “Homer’s Iliad, from myth to reality”, “To Dionysos” and “From the Mesogaia port to the Mediterranean ports”).

The Ministry of Culture, in the framework of protecting cultural heritage and cultural multiformity, as components of the cultural identity of the people, sees to the protection and presentation of monuments of all historical periods throughout Greece, as well as of more recent monuments, from 1830 to date, at a central level (Directorate of Prehistorical-Classical Antiquities, Directorate of Byzantine and Post-Byzantine Monuments) and the respective directorates of restoration and modern monuments at regional level (local organizations in relation to the above historical periods). Local organizations cooperate with local authorities.

It is to be noted that certain municipalities have concluded 10-year policy contracts with the Ministry of Culture, in the framework of the project “National Cultural Cities Network”, whose form turned into the “Culture Territory”. Using funds from such contracts and from other agencies, these municipalities study, plan and implement restoration and other works at monuments of all periods, aiming at integrating them into the cultural tissue of the city, securing the easier access of the public thereat, and seeing to the best possible cultural use and development thereof for the development of cultural tourism.

Moreover, recent Law No. 3028/28.7.2002 (Official Gazette 153) of the Ministry of Culture for the Protection of Antiquities and in general of the Cultural Heritage of Greece embodies the principles and rules of international law relating to the treatment of cultural assets, as well as the modern concepts concerning the awareness of citizens for cultural heritage, easy access, and communication of the public therewith.

Protection is extended to a degree equally covering the multiform creation of all persons who left their traces on Greek territory from ancient to recent times.

At the same time, citizens’ right of access to cultural assets is secured on equal terms and their communication with the elements making up their cultural heritage is facilitated. This institutional framework lays down the foundations for respect of the cultural heritage and safeguards the protection, presentation, and promotion thereof as a whole, which is evidence of the timeless character of Greek civilization.

In general, the Ministry of Culture’s policy for monuments and specific interventions is reflected in its annual action plan, which includes its educational programmes referred to, which aim at familiarizing citizens with their cultural heritage.

OIKOS II Project - Culture and minority communities

This project is completed and implemented in the framework of the European Cultural Programme RAPHAEL 1998. Greece participates therein as a partner, with the Directorate of Byzantine and Post-Byzantine Monuments of the Ministry of Culture, the Hebrew Museum of Greece and Prisma Research Company. The municipal museums of Cetubal (Portugal) and the Oxfordshire Museum (England) also participate in the project, which focuses on the issue of cultural contribution of minority groups in the host society in areas of everyday life, food, clothing, and household equipment for the period from the sixteenth to the twentieth centuries. The project aims at:

Contributing to the strengthening of public appreciation and understanding of tradition and cultural heritage;

Minimizing social exclusion phenomena; and

Fostering good relations between minority groups and the host society by making use of museum collections of collaborating agencies and modern know-how.

It is anticipated that the final product will be a trilingual CD-ROM incorporating the research results, the creation of a Web page on the Internet, and the presentation of a relevant photography exhibition in the three countries. The preparation of the CD-ROM will be completed at the end of 2002, when it will be accessible over the Internet. It will refer to approximately 10 different groups and its main message will be a quote from Nelson Mandela, “Culture cures”, which will be used for the promotion of the museums themselves, as well as for educational purposes.

Activities of the Ministry of Culture for the protection of refugees

The Ministry of Culture participates in the Superior Council for Refugees. In 2001, the Ministry placed under its auspices, in cooperation with the municipality of Athens, the celebration of the International Day for Refugees, instituted by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees for 20 June each year. It organized educational programmes in museums, in cooperation with the Greek Folk Art Museum, the Benakis Museum, and the Greek Child Art Museum.

It also organized two events at Syntagma Square in cooperation with the Greek Folk Art Museum: a figure workshop, and a performance of the theatre of shadows.

Making children aware of culture and arts - the “Melina” Project (theatre, music, dance, motion, artistic, and audio-visual expression)

The study and planning of this project began in January 1994, in the framework of the then-Greek Presidency of the European Union, and has continued to date, owing to the love and support of the political leaderships of the Ministry of National Education and

Religious Affairs and of the Ministry of Culture, with the support of an inter-scientific central project coordination committee. The experimental application of the Project began in September 1995 from the first grade of elementary school, at 46 elementary schools of the country. Today, 90 elementary schools from all over the country and 2 elementary schools from Cyprus participate in the project, which has a 10-year schedule and includes: training seminars for educators, production of educational material, model visits to cultural reference sites and groups of artists visiting schools.

The project introduces art to schools using original methods and brings children to contact with culture from the beginning of elementary education. Apart from children, it aims at forming a positive attitude of educators towards art and culture and at acknowledging their pedagogic importance.

Care and protection of persons with special needs and disabilities

The Ministry of Culture has elaborated a detailed plan of guidelines and projects to secure access of persons with special needs and disabilities to cultural sites and museums.

Actions of the National Book Centre (EKEBI) for the promotion of the book to socially sensitive or minority groups

Project for the creation of library at the juvenile prisons of Kassavetia: From 1994 to 1998, EKEBI has applied a project of organized cultural intervention at the juvenile prison of Kassavetia, Volos, based on the creation of a library at a specially formed site of the prison, staffed with a librarian. The project also included painting and computer lessons, updating young prisoners on legal matters of their interest, Greek lessons (the majority of young prisoners were children of immigrants), organization of events, etc. The project continues under the care of the Ministry of Justice.

Policy contract 1997-2006 for the promotion of reading and modernization of libraries at the Prefecture of Evros: Between 1996 and 1998, EKEBI implemented a pilot project for the "Promotion of reading and modernization of libraries at the Prefecture of Evros". The purpose of the Project, which was applied at 14 popular libraries throughout the prefecture, including minority areas, was to show the major role of the library for fostering contact with books and reading, and its role as information management and public awareness pole. The project included a series of actions such as reading behaviour research, research on the state of libraries, measures to support their infrastructures, seminars for librarians, as well as actions for the promotion of reading, such as educational programmes, creation of reading groups, programmes for mass media, events, and campaigns (With a book I can fly, etc.)

In 1997, a 10-year policy contract was signed between the Ministry of Culture and the prefectural authorities of Evros, which has assured the funding of the project until 2006. After the completion of the pilot phase 1996-1998, the project is being implemented by the local authorities of the prefecture of Evros, and EKEBI's function is merely advisory-supervisory.

Reading-relay race: EKEBI implemented this project, jointly with the Ministry of National Education and the Ministry of Culture. Its pilot application began at Evros during the school year 1997-1998, and now continues very successfully in more than 1,000 schools throughout the country, including many schools or departments of minority groups. It is a project for the promotion of reading addressed to primary education students (from fourth to sixth grade), and aims at reinforcing the relation of students with books and reading.

In the framework of the project, central and regional seminars for updating the educators and school counsellors who participate in the project are planned. The participation of educators is strong, since the workshop form of the seminars draws their interest. For the success of the reading-relay race project, a key role is played by the accompanying pedagogic material created by a group of experts.

The following material is forwarded to participating schools:

An informative leaflet of instructions for the application of the project;

Literature guide for students, including more than 100 proposed literary books for students of any reading experience;

Literature for educators;

Presentation leaflet for each book read by students;

Commendation for participation in the project for the participating students;

Participation commendation for students who worked in groups; and

Posters of reading-relay race.

The contest project is implemented throughout the school year and students who were distinguished as great readers are presented during special events in the form of games (with the presence of authors, etc.). The aim of the National Book Centre is to extend the application of the project to all schools of the country.

Role of mass media and communications media in promoting participation in cultural life

A series of legislative and administrative measures initiated by the Ministry of Press and Mass Media have been in force to support the role of mass and communications media towards promoting participation in social and cultural life. In particular:

(a) Law No. 1866/1989, article 7, paragraph 3, and Presidential Decree (PD) No. 2121/1995 provide for a national information and

training programme for Greek blind people the financing of the necessary infrastructure for the said programme through the transfer of 0.3 per cent of the annual gross revenue of private television, as well as the means, procedure, and implementing agencies of the programme. According to Law No. 2644/1998, article 9, paragraph 10, the holders of licence to provide subscription radio and television services also participate in the programme with respective contributions;

(b)According to PD No. 149/1994 relating to the establishment of the Macedonian News Agency, especially article 3, paragraph 1, item (b), the purposes of the company include also the updating of foreigners residing in Greece or abroad and the transmission of news on the main political, economic, cultural, and sports events taking place in Greece, mainly in Macedonia and Thrace;

(c)According to PD No. 150/1994 relating to the establishment of the Athens News Agency, especially article 3, paragraph 1, item (b), the purposes of the Company include also, as in the case of the Macedonian News Agency, the updating of foreigners and the transmission of news on the events taking place in Greece.

(d)Law No. 2328/95, especially articles 3, 4 and 8, stipulates, inter alia, rules for television advertising that should ensure respect for human dignity and the obligation of the television and radio shows to keep archives and forward recordings on request in order for the right of response or the right of judicial protection to be exercised. This law provides also for the conversion of the viewers into consumers and, therefore, the granting of all rights stipulated by the legislation concerning consumers, specific care for deaf people with the obligation of transmission of daily or fortnightly informative or entertaining or educational programmes, and finally the mandatory gratis transmission of messages of social content of specific length on matters of health, welfare, and care for persons with special needs. KYA No. 24/I/1997 was issued specifically for the gratis transmission of messages of social content. The same obligation is applicable to the holders of licences to provide subscription radio and television services, according to Law No. 2644/1998, article 9, paragraph 1. A provision respective to that of Law No. 2328/95 on deaf people is stipulated in Law No. 2644/1998, article 9, paragraph 12, on subscription services;

(e)PD No. 100/2000, which harmonized the radio-television legislation with the provisions of Directive No. 97/36/EC of the European Parliament and Council, particularly articles 4, 5, 8 and 9, provides for the possibility, through a specific procedure, to prohibit the transmission of programmes if their content encourages hatred among the population because of different race, religion, citizenship or sex. Moreover, television advertising should not override the respect for human dignity, introduce discrimination because of race, sex, religion or citizenship, nor offend religious or political convictions. Television stations should not transmit programmes encouraging the development of hatred among citizens because of different race, religion, citizenship or sex. Finally, every person regardless of citizenship, whose rights such as personality, honour or esteem, private and family life or professional, social, scientific, artistic, political or similar activity are offended, the spouse and relatives up to fourth degree are entitled to request reparation from the station within specific time limits and under specific procedures;

(f)Ministerial Decision No. 6138/E/2000 on classification and marking of television programmes aims mainly at protecting minors from watching television programmes, whose content may adversely affect the smooth mental and moral development of their personality;

(g)Radio and Television Board (ESR) Regulations Nos. 1/1991 "on the journalism code of ethics in radio and television" and 2/1991 "on radio and television programmes" include provisions for the protection of the personality and private and family life, professional activity, protection of honour and esteem of people. Private life should be respected, while the examination or transmission of private information is allowed only for reasons of public benefit.

Administrative practice: Apart from the general principles of freedom, respect for human rights and personality govern the operation of mass media in Greece. In particular:

(a)ERA 1 transmits:

On a weekly basis, an hourly programme entitled "I Exercise my Rights", concerning the presentation, analysis, and procedures of exercise of individual rights, including social and cultural rights; and

On a weekly basis, an informative programme entitled "Notebook of the Week", addressed to Albanian immigrants in Greece, prepared and presented by the chairman of the Forum of Albanians residing in Greece.

(b)Eastern Macedonia and Thrace ERA, in particular the regional radio station of Komotini, transmits:

On a weekly basis, an hourly informative programme in Turkish entitled "Helicon", prepared and presented by a minority journalist;

On a daily basis, a half-hourly news bulletin in Turkish, prepared by a minority journalist; and

On a weekly basis, a music and cultural information programme entitled "We, the Others", prepared by a Christian and a Muslim journalist.

(c)ERA 5, in particular its section "The Voice of Greece", transmits:

On a daily basis and in 12 foreign languages, news, reporting, and comments aiming at updating the foreign audience in Greece and abroad. It covers all programmes and activities relating to political refugees and economic immigrants of the Ministries of the Interior, Public Administration and Decentralisation, Labour and Social Security, Health and Welfare, and Culture, as well as the Social Security Foundation (IKA), the Labour Force Employment Organization (OAED), Local Administration, and other bodies. It updates daily the foreign audience on the activities of non-governmental anti-racist organizations and cooperates with the immigrants' communities in Greece, while it maintains open communication with the foreign audience; and

During the weekend, a music programme accompanied with cultural comments and reporting, with special tribute to the ethnic music

of the immigrant groups residing in Greece.

By 2001, the "National Information and Education Programme for the Greek Blind" gathered 1,275,000,000 drachmas from debts of radio and television stations for the years 1995-1999. Out of this amount, 495 million drachmas have been given to the Training and Rehabilitation Centre for the Blind and the Greek Association of the Blind, while 780 million were to be paid in instalments up to the first semester of 2002.

On its side, the Ministry of Culture, recognizing the special importance of the mass and communications media for encouraging citizens to participate in the country's cultural life, has established and updates, in continuous cooperation with the University of Patra, the international cultural updating link (www.culture.gr) entitled "Ulysses" in Greek and English. The daily visits to the link are 10,000 to 15,000, 80 per cent of which come from abroad. Through this link, the Ministry of Culture safeguards and facilitates the mass updating and communication of citizens in order for them to participate in cultural life. The link includes detailed information and data on:

The identity and work of the Ministry of Culture: Presentation of the political leadership, the structure of the Ministry of Culture, its work and activities (projects), the legislation on cultural heritage and cultural development;

Museums, Monuments and Archaeological Sites of Greece: Promotion and presentation of a large part of the cultural stock in Greece with texts and pictures. Presentation of the archaeological activity of the Ministry of Culture's curators. Presentation of educational programmes taking place in Museums, Monuments, and Archaeological Sites. Presentation of present and previous archaeological exhibitions in the different Museums of the country;

Modern and recent cultural creation: Promotion of the modern and recent cultural life of the country. Presentation of the policy in different sectors of the respective units and organizations, their activities, and events on similar topics;

Cultural organizations: Presentation of scientific-cultural foundations, institutes, agencies and organizations directly related to the Ministry of Culture (as subsidized, supervised or governed by the status of policy contracts);

Cultural events: presentation and promotion of all cultural events in the country relating to the Ministry of Culture. Navigation in the events pages through multiple (thematic) search;

Selected cultural events: presentation and promotion of significant cultural milestone events in the country (cultural events, exhibitions, programmes etc.);

Tributes: presentation and promotion of significant cultural topics (Olympic Games, Parthenon Marbles etc.);

Notices, press releases and declarations: presentation to the visitors of the link of the press releases, notices (concerning positions announced by the Ministry of Culture), and announcements;

Internet Guide: presentation of other cultural links of the Internet (Greece and abroad) and links of other Ministries of Culture worldwide, of international cultural organizations etc.

The Ministry of Culture also supports the following links: the "Alexandros" link (providing information on the cultural activity in Macedonia), the National Book Centre (EKEBI) link, and the Greek Cinema Centre link.

"Ulysses", the link of the Ministry of Culture, is the Internet cultural portal of Greece to the world; it began operating at the end of 1995. The Ministry of Culture (responsible for almost the entire Greek cultural heritage) enables thousands of Internet users throughout the world to have direct and documented information on Greek culture.

The upgrading of the link and its new form are under implementation. The upgrading of the link is a necessary priority for the Ministry of Culture, because, through the society of information, Greek culture can become a pole of attraction for a large part of the society using the Internet. The development of technology has enabled the presentation and promotion of the Greek culture directly, effectively, and with greater impact worldwide.

Through its press office, the Ministry of Culture sends special informative bulletins to all mass media and organizes regular interviews of the leadership of the Ministry its amphitheatre, through which it informs the public and the mass media about its policy and strategy on cultural matters, about the progress or problems concerning the projects in the field of cultural heritage, and generally about the major projects of the Ministry, such as: Culture Territory, unification of archaeological sites of Athens, conservation of the Acropolis monuments, the "Melina" Project, and seats of Modern Greek Studies abroad.

Preservation and presentation of mankind's cultural heritage

The Ministry of Culture, in the framework of its care for the protection of the cultural heritage of humanity, saw to the declaration of Greek monuments as Monuments of World Heritage by UNESCO and had them included in the World Heritage list of UNESCO. A documented file has been kept on such monuments by the Directorate of Monument Archives since the establishment of the Greek State. The Archives operate under modern standards using new technologies and media: Delphi (archaeological site), Epidavros (archaeological site), Aghion Oros, Acropolis of Athens, Meteora, Olympia, Mystras, Delos, Daphni monastery, Osios Loukas monastery, New Chios monastery, Epikourios Apollo temple at Vasses, Paleochristian and Byzantine Monuments of Thessaloniki, medieval city of Podos, Pythagorio and Ireo of Samos, archaeological Site of Vergina and Saint John Monastery at Chora, Patmos and John's Apocalypse Cave.

Inter-scientific committees have been established for the above monuments, which are responsible for the protection, preservation, and presentation of the monuments. They are financed by the Credit Management Fund. The Archaeological Resources and

Expropriations Fund also finances works for the maintenance and presentation of all monuments of the cultural heritage of Greece with funds from publications and museum tickets.

Moreover, from 1997 to date, the effectiveness of the legislative and other measures taken for the protection, management, and presentation of the above monuments as monuments of world cultural heritage, as well as the whole national cultural heritage of Greece is evaluated on an annual basis. The extent of implementation of the actions of the annual programme of the Ministry of Culture is evaluated by its competent agencies. The evaluation reports for 1997, 1998, and 1999 of the said work in the field of cultural heritage have already been published in three elegant volumes by the Archaeological Resources Fund, with detailed reference to:

(a) The results of the annual objectives of each field, actions, works, and priorities of each directorate separately, with documentation of the activity of the agencies for cultural heritage at central and regional level;

(b) The results of the work of independent inter-scientific committees of the Ministry of Culture for the maintenance and restoration of very important historical monuments and sites, especially those included in the of World Heritage list of UNESCO;

(c) The results of research and studies of the Stone Centre, which was created in 1997 by the Ministry of Culture at historical monuments and sites, in order to identify the cause of damages to monuments and discover methods of preservation and protection of the monuments' structural material. Those results are notified and forwarded to International Preservation Centres and international scientific journals and editions, such as Studies of the International Institute of Conservation of England. The Stone Centre cooperates with respective centres in France, the United Kingdom, Germany, Sweden, Spain, Bulgaria, Italy, the United States of America and other countries, both for the exchange and dissemination of know-how and technology that it discovers and uses and for perfecting the monument preservation media with the use of new technologies, updating the sector's professionals and making the public and financing bodies aware thereof;

(d) The results of the cooperation of the European Centre for Byzantine and Post-Byzantine Culture of Thessaloniki, operating under the auspices of UNESCO, with the agencies of countries with Byzantine culture monuments, such as Italy, the Balkan countries, the Caucasian countries, Jordan and Syria.

These evaluations, scheduled by the General Directorates of the Ministry of Culture, examine in detail the actions and activities of each directorate and curatorship, assess the ability and percentage of absorption of the credits granted, and, above all, examine the impact of the works to society and the social benefit.

The productive dialogue that ensues directs the taking of future measures or the improvement of existing measures and the taking of decisions for scheduling new actions for next year.

At the regional level, with the presence of the minister and the hierarchy of the Ministry of Culture, of regional authorities (regional manager, prefects, mayors, presidents of communities) and directors of cultural agencies of the province, meetings are held twice a year, which examine the measures and actions taken for the development of modern culture in the region, especially concerning the agencies that have concluded policy agreements with the Ministry of Culture and made up the National Cultural City Network (EPDP), now "Culture Territory".

Municipal regional theatres, artistic workshops, cinema networks, professionals of the cultural field and presidents of local and regional professional associations are entitled to judge and evaluate the measures taken by the State and the Minister of Culture for the presentation and protection of diversity of the cultural heritage, the protection of folk art and tradition, the promotion of modern artistic creation, and the creative participation of all citizens in the cultural life of the country.

Legislation protecting the freedom of artistic creation and performance

For the protection of the freedom of artistic creation and performance, namely the freedom to disseminate the results of such activities, the Ministry of Culture:

(a) Has enacted by Law No. 2557/97 measures and actions for cultural development, freedom of expression, artistic, intellectual, cinema, theatre, and music production, and the protection of the works and intellectual property of the creators and their related rights. The Ministry enacted annual awards for creators and artists, regulated matters of strategy and policy in this field, as well as matters of artists education, while it regulated matters of promotion and development of the artistic and cultural production of the creators in Greece and abroad.

(b) Morally and financially supports the Greek Chamber of Plastic Arts (EETE), established in 1944 as a collective agency of artists, and the National Committee of the International Association of Plastic Arts/UNESCO (Law No. 1218/1981). EETE has now approximately 3,300 members (2,250 painters, 400 sculptors, 150 engravers, and 500 artists of different specialities, such as icon painters, stage designers, mosaic artists, graphic artists, decorators, ceramic artists, etc.). The objectives of EETE are:

To promote artistic creation in Greece and abroad;

To protect artistic interests;

To organize artistic events;

To cooperate with artistic organizations and associations in Greece and abroad; and

To develop artistic education and cultural information.

During 1995-2000, for the purpose of promoting the interests of its members, EETE proceeded to:

Open notice for expression of interest;

Cooperation with municipalities for presentation of exhibitions;

Participation in international biennales and cooperation with foreign agencies;

Symposia for work on communication regarding artists;

Dissemination of information through the EETE newspaper;

Organization of one-day meetings, congresses;

Publishing activity; and

Establishment of the Organization for the Collective Management of Works of Plastic Arts and Applications thereof.

The Ministry of Culture morally and financially supports the International Theatre Institute/National Committee of the International Theatre Association of UNESCO, which protects the freedom of theatrical expression and creation, as well as the dissemination of theatre in Greece. It also morally and financially supports the International Dance Institute/UNESCO, which promotes the freedom of artistic expression and the dissemination of dance. Finally, it supports the associations of writers, authors, and poets, which aim at the protection of the relevant rights of creators.

Professional education in the field of culture and art

For the professional training in the field of culture and art, PD No. 187/1991 adapts Greek legislation on artistic training to the provisions of the European Community legislation. On the basis of those provisions, licences are granted for the establishment and operation of artistic training schools (music, drama, and dance), and the respective licences to practice the profession are given.

The Ministry of Culture is responsible for music training provided today by the State, municipal, and mainly private music establishment (conservatories and music schools). The total number of that establishment is about 600, and the total number of students is almost 80,000.

All music educational establishments are supervised and controlled by the Ministry of Culture, and provide specialized education both in the fields of instrumental music and in the fields of theoretical studies.

New Law No. 2557/97 of the Ministry of Culture attempts a deep section to the educational system: music education is distinguished into basic and higher. The purpose of basic music education is to provide basic music knowledge and preparation for admission to higher music education schools; the purpose of higher music education is to provide broader music knowledge and may also lead to professional careers.

Theatrical education

Law No. 1158/81 provides for higher drama schools, which may operate departments of acting, ancient Greek drama and poetry, directing, and dramatology.

Other measures for the conservation, development and diffusion of culture

For the further maintenance, development, and diffusion of culture, the Ministry of Culture supports the intellectual and artistic movement of the country originating from the activities of cultural centres and scientific associations, which organize publications of cultural works, exhibitions, etc. in cooperation with local authorities. At the same time, it subsidizes congresses of high scientific interest, using credits from the regular budget of the Ministry, as well as revenues from Lotto.

The Ministry of Culture, for the diffusion of culture and in the framework of its social policy on matters relating to vulnerable population groups (the aged, former drug addicts, groups of repatriated persons), as well as pupils, students, and Greeks abroad, always deals positively with requests for free passes to archaeological sites and museums. The following persons are exempt from payment of an entry ticket:

All young people under 18 years of age;

Students of universities or technical schools and students of equivalent schools in the EU;

Students of classical studies or schools of fine arts from countries outside the EU. Other students from those countries pay reduced fares;

Persons completing their military service;

Employees of the Ministry of Culture and TAP;

Holders of special membership card of ICOM+ICOMOS;

Tour guides holding EOT identity cards;

Journalists holding ESYEA identity cards; and

Holders of free passes.

The following persons are entitled to have three-year free passes, which may be renewed: academics; educators of primary, secondary, and tertiary education; graduates of departments of archaeology and history of the faculties of philosophy in the EU countries; directors and members of foreign archaeological schools in Greece; the KAS members of the Council of Recent Monuments and local monument councils; members of the board of directors of TAP; members of the board of directors of the Archaeological Society; artists and members of the Chamber of Artists; conservators of antiquities and graduates of conservation schools; and

parents with more than three children.

Reduced-fare cards may be given to groups of citizens who wish to visit the sites and monuments for educational purposes or who can prove that they need financial assistance from the State, for a specific number of persons and for a specific date.

The measures taken by the State to implement the right of everyone to enjoy the benefits of scientific progress and its applications are as follows:

(a) The "open doors" project, co-financed by the EU and Greece, which aims at popularizing and disseminating the research results of the research centres supervised by the Secretariat-General of Research and Technology (GGET)/Ministry of Development, through:

Mass media, internet (radio and television programmes, publications, GGET web pages etc.);

Organization of "Science and Technology Weeks" twice a year, during which universities, polytechnics, research centres, and enterprises cooperate in the presentation of the results of joint projects focusing on priority fields;

(b) The National Documentation Centre (EKT), which is the national electronic information service provider on matters of science and technology; it also distributes and disseminates scientific and technological information.

The Ministry of Culture cooperates with the Ministry of the Environment, Town Planning and Public Works for the protection of the environment which comprises monuments and archaeological sites. By special legislation, it protects the natural environment and prohibits quarrying and other activities near archaeological sites and monuments. It also creates protection zones around them, and expropriates the said expanses with the consent of the Central Archaeology Council (KAS - inter-scientific advisory body of the Ministry of Culture on matters of ancient monuments).

In 1997, GGET established the Bioethics Advisory Committee. Its objectives are informing the public/civil society and advising the State, as well as promoting relevant studies and research in Greece and monitoring international developments on ethical, legal and socio-economic matters in the field of bioethics arising from the rapid progress of biology and biotechnology.

The Industrial Property Organization (OBI) was established in 1987 for the protection of rights resulting from scientific and technological discoveries. Its main duties are:

Safeguarding patents in Greece by granting patent diplomas, utility model certificates and other protection certificates; and

Protecting industrial designs and models by granting relevant certificates.

OBI also receives applications for the European Patent Diploma for protection of inventions in any of the 19 member-parties to the Munich Convention on the European Patent.

The Copyright Organization (OPI) was established for the protection of the copyright of creators and related rights by virtue of Law No. 2121/93, article 69, in conjunction with PD No. 311/94. Its duties are:

Safeguarding copyright and related rights;

Regulating matters of television piracy; and

Protecting software and payment of reasonable fees to creators.

OPI is in continuous contact with international organizations, such as the World Intellectual Property Organization, World Trade Organization, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, and the European Union. It represents Greece in the said organizations, and provides information to creators on matters of copyright and related rights. The Greek legislation reflects all modern trends expressed in the national legislations of mainly European States, and is harmonized with the European Community Directives constituting community "acquis" in the field of copyright.

Greece has ratified almost all international conventions, particularly the three main conventions safeguarding international protection:

International Hague Convention for the protection of literary and artistic works;

International Rome Convention for the protection of performers or performing artists, producers of phonograms and broadcasting organizations; and

The TRIPS Agreement.

As a matter of fact, the enacted legislation has largely contributed to the creation of a modern and efficient framework for the protection of creators and other beneficiaries.

In some matters, the basic and established principles shaped by science and case-law under the status of pre-existing law were adopted. They are mainly provisions concerning the structure of copyright, such as the concept of work, the principle of truth, according to which the subject of the right is the creator-natural person, the possibility to transfer the property right, and the non-transferable character of the moral right. It should be noted that Greek law has always recognized the moral right that protects the personal bond of the creator with his work. Law No. 2121/1993 also protects the moral right of performers or performing artists with article 5, which guarantees the recognition of authorship and integrity of their contribution. The maintenance of protection of the moral right of the creator and of the performers or performing artists is an element of paramount importance in the framework of the information society, in which amendments and adaptations of works risk to end up in mutilating the creations.

In most issues, arrangements are provided for which establish strong forms of protection of the creator and the beneficiaries of related rights, including, in an indicative way, the right to lease and lend, the reinforcement of the right to reproduce, the establishment of written form, the principle of protection of percentile fee, whose model is the respective provision of the French code, the non-possibility of conclusion of contracts concerning all future works or referring to future means of exploitation, the contractual allocation of powers, the interpreting rules on term, purpose, extent and means of exploitation, the recognition of reasonable fee for private reproduction, the long length of protection reaching 70 years after the death of the creator, the network of civil sanctions, which, *inter alia*, facilitate the calculation and restoration of damage and the strict penal sanctions aiming at preventing the violation of the right.

Article 68, paragraph 3, of Law No. 2121/1993 which imposes the adaptation of the old contracts to the provisions of the new law since 3 April 1994 is especially mentioned. This arrangement has had great practical application to old cinema films which are shown on television; as a result, the directors and scriptwriters have achieved, in or out of court, to collect fees for the television exploitation of the audiovisual media.

It should also be noted that related rights are established in favour of performers or performing artists, producers of phonograms and audiovisual works and broadcasting organizations to a broader extent than the International Convention on the Protection of Artists or Performers, Producers of Phonograms and Broadcasting Organizations (Rome Convention), while a related right is established for the first time in favour of the editors, concerning typesetting and layout. The protection of related rights is also recognized for actions done in the past, namely before the entry into force of Law No. 2121/1993 (art. 68, para. 3). This arrangement enables actors to claim in court their reasonable fee for the television transmission of old Greek cinema films (art. 49).

Moreover, certain hybrid forms of creation are recognized as works, such as computer programmes and databases, the protection of which is the basic infrastructure for the adaptation of Greek law on copyright to the information society.

The legislation also recognizes the institutional framework of operation of self-managed collective management organizations by the possibility of establishing cooperatives (arts. 54-56 of Law No. 2121/1993). The Ministry of Culture has granted licence of operation to collective management organizations representing almost all categories of creators, performers or performing artists, producers of phonograms, and producers of audiovisual works.

Lastly, it should be noted that the Greek Copyright Protection Society, in application of the aforesaid legislation, represents approximately 1,500,000 intellectual music creators, Greek and foreign (i.e. a percentage of more than 99.9 per cent of their total number), sees to the protection of their rights by collecting the intellectual royalty and allocating it to intellectual creators, and by taking all measures provided for by law against those who violate copyright. The Society is associated by mutual representation contracts to the respective copyright societies of other countries (about 160), which it represents in Greece.

Steps and measures taken to assure the conservation, development, and diffusion of science and culture

For the development and diffusion of Greek culture, the Ministry of Culture has established by Law No. 2557/97, the Greek Cultural Heritage Promotion and Dissemination Society, which finances a very wide range of actions to promote and present Greek culture in Greece and abroad, as well as the message of peace, conciliation, and noble competition between creators or new scientists.

Major events of the Cultural Olympics extending between 2001-2004 (until the Olympic Games, Athens 2004) include:

International meetings and congresses, major art exhibitions;

Major theatre, dance, music, and lyric events;

Film festivals, audiovisual creation and digital arts festivals;

Events presenting “the other aspect of culture”, alternative forms of art, “art brut”, exhibitions, and artistic activities of “confined creators” etc;

Events presenting the aspects and wealth of folk culture; and

Establishment of the Cultural Olympics “Kotinos” (olive branch) prizes to be awarded at the Ancient Olympia by the International Committee of the Foundation.

Greek culture abroad will also be presented and promoted by:

The Greek Culture Foundation and its branches (London, Berlin, the United States, Egypt etc.);

The reinforcement of approximately 250 chairs of modern Greek studies at foreign universities;

The participation and support of Greek artists in international exhibitions, biennales, book fairs (Frankfurt Book Fair);

The organization of "Greek months" abroad in cooperation with the educational departments of Greek Embassies;

The reinforcement of associations of Greeks abroad;

The participation of theatrical groups, music bands and ensembles in festivals and other events;

The organization of exhibitions in the framework of projects of international organizations (EU, Council of Europe, UNESCO) or on the basis of the programmes of bilateral agreements concluded by the Ministry of Culture with approximately 80 countries;

The participation in events of cultural capitals of other countries;

The participation in major international book fairs (Frankfurt, Leipzig, Paris, Bologna etc.); and

The organization of major exhibitions of archaeological findings, Byzantine treasures, and folk culture.

The promotion and diffusion of culture abroad is achieved by supporting the participation of artists in the country's cultural life, the participation in international days of cultural heritage, music, books, poetry, dance, etc., the organization of film festivals (Thessaloniki Film Festival, Drama Short Film Festival, Human Rights Festival by the NGO Open Horizons, Festival for New Technologies and Art (MEDI@TERRA), prizes, support of professional bodies of authors, artists and creators in general.

In particular, since 1994 the Ministry of Culture has begun the elaboration and implementation of the national policy for the promotion of books, plastic arts, theatre, dance, music and other expressive arts, photography, cinema. This policy was enacted by Law No. 2557/1997, which regulates matters of institutions and measures to be taken for the creation of the bodies that will support actions for the development of culture.

There follow activities being developed in recent years, in application of the above legislation and in implementation of the policy by sector:

(a) Promotion of Greek literature, development of Greek letters, dissemination of Greek language through promotion of books and literature:

State literature prizes are awarded, aiming at developing Greek letters in general;

Honorary pensions are granted to authors, literary translators, essayists, historical writers, etc. for the provision of distinguished services in the development of letters;

Book fairs organized in Greece by professional bodies are supported for the purpose of dissemination of books and increase of readability;

Participation in major book fairs abroad is ensured;

A programme of financial support to publishing houses is applied for the translation of works of modern Greek literature into foreign languages;

A programme of financial support to literary associations and magazines is applied for the development of activities aiming at disseminating books and increasing readability;

A programme is applied for the purchase of State literature prizewinning books and their allocation to seats of modern Greek studies at foreign universities and other domestic and foreign cultural bodies;

A programme is applied for the remunerated visit of Greek authors to Greek universities and chairs of Greek studies at foreign universities, where they give lectures on their work and Greek literature in general;

A programme is applied for the visit of provincial authors to the capital and vice versa, where they give lectures and develop contacts with the broad public;

A programme is applied for the development of the cultural character of provincial bookstores; and

Several other programmes are applied contributing to the promotion of books and the increase of readability;

For the financing of the above programmes, approximately Dr 1 billion are allocated each year, including funds spent by the National Book Centre;

(b) Promotion of Greek artistic creation by the National Modern Art Museum established in Athens, and the State Modern Art Museum in Thessaloniki. These museums are supervised by the Ministry of Culture, and their objectives are:

Salvaging and presenting works of Greek and foreign artists belonging to the history of modern art and works of different trends of modern artistic production, Greek and foreign, with original and experimental character;

Promoting aesthetic culture and cultural education of the public;

Developing scientific research on matters of history and theory of modern art and modern artistic creation; and

Facilitating specialization in museology for art historians and theorists;

(c)The State Modern Art Museum has organized and operates a special department, the Photography Museum of Thessaloniki, which, apart from collections and studies of photographs with artistic value, also aims at:

Creating organized archives;

Designing scientific and educational programmes for the purpose of promoting scientific research in art and history of photography, and educating the public;

Organizing exhibitions of Greek and foreign creators;

Producing exhibitions; and

Publishing editions promoting the art of photography;

(d)Theatre, dance, and other expressive arts are promoted through:

Regulation of matters concerning the State Orchestral Art School;

Establishment of committees of authors, and artists in the plastic arts, music, theatre, cinema and dance;

Establishment of the State Prize for Authors of Child Plays;

Establishment of the annual "Melina Merkouri State Prize" for supporting the efforts of new intellectual and artistic creators;

Establishment of annual State Dance Prizes in the fields of Classical Ballet and Modern Dance for better (a) production, (b) choreography, (c) male performance, and (d) female performance;

Assignment, every year, to five recognized playwrights of the writing of plays to support modern Greek theatrical creation; and

Establishment of the "Chamber Opera of Thessaloniki" as an autonomous section of the Northern Greece State Theatre;

(e)Cinematography policy includes, notably:

Establishment of a non-profit legal entity of private law in Thessaloniki, entitled the Thessaloniki Film Festival and supervised by the Ministry of Culture;

Establishment of the Cinema Museum of Thessaloniki as an autonomous section of the Thessaloniki Film Festival, for the purpose of collecting, salvaging, and promoting the cinematographic life of the country. To fulfil its objectives, the museum organizes research and educational programmes in cooperation with other pertinent bodies, and sees to the study and documentation of any material relating to cinematographic art;

Award of pecuniary prizes every year to Greek films approved to be shown at the Greek Film Festival of Thessaloniki or shown at the "Short Film Festival of Drama" of the same year;

Provision for the establishment of theory departments of cinematography at Greek universities or of an autonomous higher practical school of cinematography;

Preparation of the statutes of the Greek Cinema Centre operating as a société anonyme; and

Support to film distribution agencies distributing films of Greek production;

(f)Orchestras and music education are supported through:

Establishment in Athens of the Special Fund for the Organization of Concerts by the Athens State Orchestra, a legal entity of private law; and

Establishment in Thessaloniki of the "Special Fund for the Organization of Concerts by the Thessaloniki State Orchestra", a legal entity of private law.

Both funds are supervised by the Ministry of Culture. Their purpose is to manage any credits, resources, revenues, and property of the Athens and Thessaloniki State Orchestras respectively, and to allocate such funds to organize concerts, establish and operate music ensembles, cooperate with other artistic bodies of the public or private sector, including foreign artistic bodies, to produce artistic events, organize tours in Greece and abroad, recording and reproducing sound and image of the orchestras' events. There is also regulation of matters concerning the establishment, organization and operation of State and private schools for higher music education. The State Conservatory of Thessaloniki operates a higher music education school and a basic music education school;

(g)Museum policy includes notably:

Establishment of a Museum Policy Advisory Board, which recommends measures to support and specify museum policy and offers opinions on matters of museum policy;

Establishment of a legal entity of private law in the form of société anonyme for the promotion of Greek heritage;

Establishment of the European Centre of Byzantine and Post-Byzantine Monuments, supervised by the Ministry of Culture, with the purpose of promoting scientific research in the fields of museography, restoration, maintenance, presentation and study of Byzantine and post-Byzantine sites, monuments, and works; and

Regulation of all matters concerning the establishment and operation, the purpose, management, and powers of the collective bodies of Christian and ecclesiastical museums.

Other practical measures taken

The establishment of the Technical Museum of Thessaloniki was an important measure taken by Greece for the development and diffusion of science. This museum, established in 1978, is a non-profit scientific, educational, and cultural organization for updating and training the public in general, and pupils and students of universities and technical schools in particular on subjects of technology and applied science.

Again, as it was mentioned earlier under paragraph 66 (b) and (f), the Ministry of Culture established in 1997 the Stone Centre, in order to identify the causes of damage to historical monuments and sites and discover methods to preserve and protect their structural material. The results of the Centre's investigations are forwarded to international preservation centres and international scientific journals and publications; it also cooperates with respective centres in other countries, for exchanging and disseminating of the discovered know-how and technology and for perfecting the monument conservation methods through new technologies and relevant updating of the sector's professionals, as well as awareness of the public and the project financing bodies.

The respect for and protection of the freedom for scientific research and creative activity is safeguarded by the Greek Constitution.

The possibility for creation of a centre of art and technology is being examined, in order to enable mostly young artists to experiment and express themselves creatively through new technologies.

By PD Nos. 941/77 and 37/73, the Ministry of Culture provides for support to the creation and operation of Intellectual Centres and Scientific Associations throughout Greece, through the Department of Cultural Associations and Foundations of the Directorate for Cultural Activity of the Ministry. The Department cooperates with local authorities for the financial support of cultural centres which develop significant activities in the region.

The purpose of the support granted is the organization of congresses and lectures on the development of professional dialogue and research, the publication of magazines and other scientific journals, and the organization of exhibitions for the diffusion and dissemination of artistic creation and the promotion of social coherence.

A bulletin is issued annually in Greek and English, which informs on and presents scheduled congresses supported by the Ministry of Culture in the fields of humanities, theoretical, positive, technical sciences, medicine, fine arts, etc.

The Secretariat-General of Research and Technology (GGET)/Ministry of Development promotes and supports bilateral and international cooperation in scientific fields where the skills and expertise of different countries have added value. The overall experience leads to the conclusion that bilateral and international cooperation provides a valid tool for the introduction and establishment of new technologies in the research structure of the country. For this purpose, Greece has signed and ratified framework agreements or agreements on scientific and technological cooperation which include joint research with some 20 countries, such as EU member States, and Central and Eastern European countries.

Greece makes use of the facilities of international organizations which have scientific and technological mandates or encourage science and technology in their mandates, such as NATO, the Centre Européen pour la Recherche Nucléaire, the European Molecular Biology Laboratory, the European Molecular Biology Conference, the Organization for Economic

Cooperation and Development, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization, the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, the World Intellectual Property Organization and the International Atomic Energy Agency.

On its side, the Ministry of Culture has signed bilateral cultural agreements and programmes with some 80 countries, with which it implements cultural programmes, including bilateral cooperation in all fields of culture.

Through membership in the bodies of international organizations (European Union, UNESCO, Council of Europe, International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property, International Council of Museums, International Council on Museums and Sites) and of regional cooperations (Mediterranean Forum, Euro-Mediterranean Barcelona Process, Adriatic and Ionian Initiative), the Ministry of Culture participates in multilateral cultural programmes and develops international and regional cooperation and dialogue, which reinforce exchanges in every cultural sector. Through such cooperation, it encourages cultural bodies and private citizens to participate in the international cultural life.

In this framework, the Ministry of Culture signed in 1998 a cooperation agreement with UNESCO for the creation of the Cultural Olympiad Foundation. The Cultural Olympiad mobilizes the cultural forces of all countries, the focal point at this time being Greece, which is organizing the 2004 Olympic Games. The Cultural Olympiad is a permanent institution seated at Ancient Olympia. In close cooperation with the International Olympic Committee and the Athens 2004 Organization, the Cultural Olympiad is linked to the United Nations and all the countries in the world.

In the framework of bilateral and international cooperation, GGET organizes joint events, such as conferences, workshops, seminars, one-day meetings, and exhibitions of scientific and technological character. There are no difficulties in developing international cooperation in the above fields.

The Ministry of Culture, in cooperation with professional organizations, trade unions, and scientific associations of its employees, as well as in cooperation with culture professionals, is elaborating a new Law on the Organization of the Ministry, which will replace the relevant PD No. 941/77.
