

THEMATIC COMPILATION OF RELEVANT INFORMATION SUBMITTED BY GREECE

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PUBLIC REPORTING

GREECE (SEVENTH MEETING)

Government initiatives for the strengthening of transparency in the public administration.

-Open government

The **opengov.gr** online deliberation platform includes two basic initiatives: Open calls for the recruitment of public administration officials, and electronic, open-deliberation for participatory rule making. The citizens' needs for timely information as well as their participation into public affairs, consist the central scope of the opengov project. Draft legislative acts and governmental policy initiatives are posted to a blog like platform for deliberation, prior to their finalization. Citizens and organizations are invited to post their comments, suggestions and criticisms article-by-article. All submitted comments are collected and processed by the relevant authorities and in many cases they are incorporated in the final text. After the completion of the consultation process, the responsible ministry for the legislation prepares a report which is uploaded on the Parliament's website along with the approved text of law. From October 2009 up until February 2016, 508 consultations took place and 13756 comments were submitted.

Additionally, the **labs.opengov.gr** digital platform allows citizens to submit ideas and proposals on the improvement of public e-services. This platform aims at introducing innovation in the relationship between citizens and businesses with public agents. Within this framework, planning and implementing public eservices become more participatory and decentralized.

In addition, since October 1st, 2010, all government institutions are obliged to upload their acts and decisions on the Internet through the online platform of the transparency program (**diavgeia.gov.gr/en**), paying special attention to issues of national security and sensitive personal data. Each document is digitally signed and assigned a unique Internet Uploading Number (IUN) certifying that the decision has been uploaded. Following the latest legislative initiative of the Greek Ministry of the Interior and Administrative Reconstruction, administrative acts and decisions are not valid unless they are published online. The transparency program introduced unprecedented levels of transparency within all levels of Greek public administration and established a new "social contract" between the citizen and the state. The direct accountability brought upon the administration by the radical transparency that the Transparency program introduces, leaves considerably less room for corruption, and exposes it much more easily when it takes place since any citizen and every interested party enjoy the widest possible access to questionable acts.

The transparency program also provides all administrative acts in formats that are easy to access, navigate and comprehend, regardless of the citizen's knowledge level of the inner processes of the administration. Since October 2010, 19 million acts and decisions have been published on the Transparency Portal by 4.376 public authorities. The current rate of uploads is 19.000 decisions per working day (statistical information diavgeia.gov.gr/stats).

Since 2012 Greece is an active **member of the Open Government Partnership (OGP)**, which is a multilateral initiative that aims to secure concrete commitments from governments to promote transparency, empowers citizens, fight corruption, and harness new technologies to strengthen governance. Greece is now implementing the *second National Action Plan 2014 – 2016* which is co-created with civil society and includes commitments to advance transparency, accountability, participation and/or technological innovation in the Greek Government but also the Greek Parliament. The country commitments include initiatives such as the integration of PSI Directive on the re-use of public sector information, the implementation of platform for central distribution of public open data, the provision of open geospatial data and other critical data sets, setting up a new organizational unit for the coordination of the Open Government policy, the provision of historical parliamentary documents to the public.

-Improving the delivery of services -Engaging citizens

Founded in 1998, **the Greek Ombudsman** is an Independent Authority that investigates individual administrative actions, omissions or material actions taken by government departments or public services that infringe upon the personal rights or violate the legal interests of individuals or legal entities. Complaints are accepted from anyone, regardless of nationality, who wishes to report a problem concerning the public services in Greece or abroad.

Furthermore, **Greece encourages the participation of social partners** and organised groups of the civil society, such as trade unions, employers' organization and non-governmental organisations, in the decision-making process. Civil society groups are well organised and have an effective cooperation framework with the public administration during the policy planning process. Consequently, there is a positive reaction among the public organisations and social partners regarding promotion of public administration reforms.

-Innovative policy design for inclusive growth

In the Greek Public Administration, **the Centre of Government** plays an important role in applying the appropriate policy instruments and promoting joined-up government in the policy-making process. The institutions that mostly correspond to the Centre of Government are the *General Secretary of the Prime Minister*, the *General Secretary of Coordination* and the *General Secretary of Government*. These bodies play an active role

in the development of national inter-sectoral strategies and programmes. Their competences include the general monitoring of policy planning, the reform of Government and the coordination of specific horizontal policies. In particular, the General Secretary of Government must be consulted at the preparatory stage of new policy initiatives. This institution has the right to block policy initiatives or draft legal acts during different stages of procedure.

A great variety of instruments has been adopted to underpin the efficiency of the horizontal and vertical coordination in the public administration and to communicate the policies developed, such as inter-sectoral strategies and programmes, reporting and audit systems. Choosing the most suitable policy instrument is a crucial factor for a successful policy implementation. Therefore, transparent procedures are followed so that all the relevant political agents are equally involved and informed. In addition to Government meetings, there are ad hoc committees of different levels (e.g. Government Committees) that include the participation of highlevelofficials, including the State Secretaries. In order to promote a diverse and inclusive civil service, the Greek Public administration established a diversity strategy, which addresses gender diversity, ageing workforce, migrant background, specific ethnic groups, sexual orientation and people with disabilities. The aim of the strategy is two-fold: first, to provide equal opportunities for employment and advancement for all groups, and, second, to protect against discrimination.

Within this framework, the Government created the **Diversity Charter**, which applies to the entire public administration. Diversity policies are assessed annually through reports addressed to the leadership, the labour force of the public administration, and the public. Also, diversity issues are integrated in leadership competency frameworks. Furthermore, specific training in diversity awareness is mandatory for to civil servants who work on discrimination issues. As well, targeted training programmes to enhance competencies for specific diversity groups (e.g. providing language skills in order to facilitate communication between public servants and migrants) or for older workers is available.

Finally, recruitment processes in public sector are adaptable to people with special needs. These processes can be conducted in more than one language and are targeted to specific groups. Selection committees must reflect diversity and must be trained in diversity sensitivity.

A smart method to boost a country's competitiveness is the adoption of a more balanced representation of women and men in the digital economy. To this goal, the Hellenic General Secretariat for Gender Equality in collaboration with a number of Public and Private sector partners have set off to develop a functional ecosystem of entrepreneurs, business people, policy makers, the academia in order to assist women in pursuing ICT careers and help the best and brightest talents shine among Greek women and girls.

The initiative concentrates efforts to: leverage accumulated knowledge, strategies, best practice and policies in Europe implemented for the promotion of ICT among women; offer state-of-the-art career counseling and mentoring; raise awareness about ICT careers

among women; enhance female ICT enabled entrepreneurship; encourage a more balanced representation of gender in economic decision making.

Also, in terms of equality between women and men, Greece responds with the newly drafted **National Action Plan for Gender Equality 2016-2020** initiated by the General Secretariat for Gender Equality. The document will be launched soon and it will act as a roadmap for the advancement of the status of women and for substantive gender equality in the following priority areas:

- social cohesion, poverty, migration
- gender-based violence
- economy, labour market, reconciliation of family and working life
- education, training, stereotypes
- health
- decision-making.

Finally, cooperation between the Public Administration and other institutions is improved through the use of new information and communication technologies (ICTs). Specifically, the decentralised decision-making process used by the Greek Government is supported by the use of such ICTs. The new *General Secretariat for the ICT Policy* aims to design and coordinate all the governmental ICT programs. Special attention will be given for the compliance of public sector bodies' websites with the web accessibility requirements set out in EU's Regulations for Societal reasons.

-Strengthening accountability through better performance management and evaluation of the public administration's performance

The Greek Government has drafted an **Action Plan on Goal Setting and Quality**, as part of the National Partnership Agreement 2014-2020, which will reform the public administration and enforce administrative efficiency. The Action Plan consists of two parts, which presents the legal framework of goal setting and quality as well as the Common Assessment Framework (e-CAF)

The first part of the Action Plan introduces management by objectives into the Greek Public Administration to strengthen performance management and delivery of services in public agencies of both central and local government and associated public entities. A top-down procedure with three phases (goal setting, monitoring and evaluation) as well as measurement of effectiveness and efficiency and the relevant indicators is stipulated.

Within this framework, the law establishes a network of quality and efficiency units in every Ministry. The implementation of the law and coordination of the network is the responsibility of the Directorate of Organisational Reforms of the Ministry of the Interior and Administrative Reconstruction.

The Greek Government introduced **new legislation (L.4369/2016)** regarding public administration in an attempt to innovatively change the traditional operation of the administrative system by regulating for the first time systematically and as a whole the evaluation of structures and personnel, the promotion and selection of competent managers and the selection of Executives that constitute the top of the administrative hierarchy from a National Registry that is created through specific and transparent procedures. The basic pillars of the introduced reform are a) **The National Registry for the selection of Executives in the Public Administration**, b) **The Evaluation System**, c) **The promotion system** and d) **The System for the selection of Managers**. In terms of inclusive growth, it is important that the new legislation establishes the social accountability of public administration in order to improve its operation and the provided services by locating functioning problems, cases of misadministration etc. Examples of the aforementioned social accountability are the **Hearing Committees** that are established in each Ministry in order to record all misadministration cases as pointed out by citizens and respond accordingly, as well as the **Public Administration Observatory**, which will be competent to overview the operation of the Public Administration and coordinate the procedures related to evaluation and social accountability of the Public Administration. Through these reformative provisions the citizens will be able to evaluate the Public Services in an attempt to enhance public participation and democratize their operation by deliberating with society.

Furthermore, **article 22 of Law 4369 introduces** a new perspective in the procedure of the annual goal setting within the framework of **the implementation of Management by Objectives** in the Greek public sector.

According to the above-mentioned Article, each year, the Minister determines the strategic goals of the public organization. Subsequently, the Director Generals specify the strategic goals for each Directorate and inform accordingly the Directors of their area of responsibility.

In the next stage of the process, Directors ask from the Heads of Units for their suggestions regarding the goal setting of each unit whereas the latter ask employees to submit their proposals on the goal setting.

At the final stage of the goal setting procedure, the Heads of Units present the goals for each Unit in a formal meeting with all employees of the Unit and discuss with each employee his/her personal goals setting. The decision for the goal setting is published online on Diavgeia Transparency Portal. At the end of each year, each Unit and Directorate evaluate their performance and draft Assessments Reports regarding their achieved results. The Assessment Reports are approved by formal meeting of all employees of Units and Directorates respectively.

The second part of the Action Plan includes a variety of actions in the fields of goal setting and evaluation through the **Common Assessment Framework (CAF)**. This second part will be implemented by various agencies, such as the Ministry of the Interior

and Administrative Reconstruction, the Ministry of Health and other relevant public authorities during the period between 2015 and 2017.

In detail, the implementation will involve:

- Goal setting: setting up a quality framework, making suggestions for interventions to legislative framework, implementation of goal setting and making use of performance indicators for 2016, and
- Implementing the CAF: translating and publishing of CAF 2013 into Greek, issuing circular and instructions concerning CAF implementation in public agencies and completing the electronic version of CAF.