

Presidency of the Hellenic Government

GREECE

Voluntary National Review 2022

ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE
2030 AGENDA FOR SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT



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MAIN ABBREVIATIONS

AMIF	Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund
AML/ELS	Advanced Mobile Location & Emergency Location Service
ASEP	Supreme Council for Personnel Selection
BIM	Building Information Modeling
CAP	Common Agricultural Policy
CHP	Combined Heat and Power
DG REFORM	Directorate-General for Structural Reform Support
DMMOs	Destination Management and Marketing Organizations
EDP	Entrepreneurial Discovery Process
ELSTAT	Hellenic Statistical Authority
EPAS	Apprenticeship Vocational Education Schools
ESF	European Social Fund
ETS	Emissions Trading System
EU	European Union
EU FTAs	Free Trade Agreements between the EU and third countries
EUIPO	European Union Intellectual Property Office
EUROPOL	European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Cooperation
EUSAIR	EU Strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian Region
FEAD	Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived
FRMPs	Flood Risk Management Plans
GBF	Global Biodiversity Framework
GENE	Global Education Network Europe
GHG	Greenhouse Gas

GIS	Geographic Information Systems
GMI	Guaranteed Minimum Income frm. Social Solidarity Income
GPP	Green Public Procurement
GSCO	General Secretariat of Coordination
GSLPA	General Secretariat for Legal and Parliamentary Affairs
HEIs	Higher Education Institutions
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
HPV	Human Papillomavirus
ICAO	International Civil Aviation Organization
ICT	Information Communication Technologies
ILO	International Labour Organization
INTERPOL	International Criminal Police Organization
IPAWS	Integrated Public Alert and Warning System
ISO	International Organization for Standardization
IT	Information Technology
IWRM	Integrated Water Resources Management
JDT	Just Development Transition
LAG	Local Action Group
LULUCF	Land Use, Land Use Change and Forestry
NAP	National Action Plan
NAPWPS	National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security
NAS	National Adaptation Strategy
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NBSAP	National Biodiversity Strategy and its Action Plan
NECCA	Natural Environment and Climate Change Agency
NECP	National Energy and Climate Plan
NGO	Non-Governmental Organizations
NHS	National Health System

NPLs	Non-Performing Loans
NPP“SD”	National public health Prevention Program “Spyros Doxiadis”
(N)RRP	(National) Recovery and Resilience Plan
NSRF	National Strategic Reference Framework
NTA	National Transparency Authority
OAED	Manpower Employment Organization
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OLAF	European Anti-Fraud Office
PISA	Program for International Student Assessment
PLMP	Passive Labour Market Policy
PoG	Presidency of the Government
PVs	Photovoltaics
R&D	Research & Development
RAAPs	Regional Adaptation Action Plans
RBMPs	River Basin Management Plans
RDP	National Rural Development Programme
RES	Renewable Energy Sources
RRF	Recovery and Resilience Facility
RRP	see (N)RRP
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SEMP	Migrant and Refugee Integration Councils
SMEs	Small and Medium-sized Enterprises
SMHTs	Special Mobile Health Teams
STANAGs	Standardization Agreements
STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics
SUMPs	Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans
SUP	Single Use Plastics
TEKA	Hellenic Auxiliary Pensions Defined Contribution Fund

UN	United Nations
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
VET	Vocational Educational and Training
WFD	Water Framework Directive
WHO	World Health Organization
WMO	World Meteorological Organization

Opening Statement



The global quest for sustainability is founded on the shared belief that the way our societies and economies function can cause significant, yet avoidable, harm to life on earth. This poses a threat not only to our prosperity, but also to our very survival.

Greece has faced dire economic circumstances in the last decade and a deeply uncertain future. Nonetheless, we were still making progress towards a more sustainable future when the Covid-19 pandemic hit and threatened what we had built.

Thanks to our collective hard work Greece managed to contain the threat and avert the risk of a relapse to socio-economic distress. We did so by protecting the vulnerable, public health and employment. Instead of allowing ourselves to be diverted from our policy reforms, we pursued them with steadfast determination because these were inextricably linked to building back better from both crises.

It was against this backdrop that EU members also agreed to bring forth the Recovery and Resilience Facility, a major financial instrument to aid transition to a new, sustainable socio-economic model - one more resilient and better prepared for the challenges and opportunities of the green and digital transitions.

A critical lesson learned from the crises Greece has faced is that it is only through inclusion, mobilization and common endeavour that hope is restored, and success is achieved. Of course, for all countries, the same is true when it comes to the Sustainable Development Goals. Economic recovery and growth must mean all citizens benefit, just as we must recognise the finite nature of certain natural resources.

In Greece, we more than doubled the share of Renewable Energy Sources in energy consumption – transportation, electricity, cooling and heating – from 10.1% in 2010 to 21.7% in 2020. We reduced income inequalities to pre-economic crisis levels of 5.23% in 2020, the lowest since 2010. And we saw poverty decline, after social transfers, to 17.7% in 2020, the lowest rate in 11 years. We should be proud of what has been achieved, but there is far more to do.

Greece's 2022 Voluntary National Review seeks to address all SDGs equally and to report progress without shying away from the country's vulnerabilities. It is the result of an inclusive dialogue with stakeholders, civil society and public entities, which we have committed to continue.

The Review shows how far we have come since our first report in 2018. In this period great strides have been taken to address legacy issues, enhance social resilience, regain economic stability, and build a better future. Assessing our course towards sustainability is a vital task and we must all be restless in that pursuit.

I know Greece will continue to leverage its strengths, leave no one behind and play its part in inspiring lasting change.

Kyriakos Mitsotakis
Prime Minister of Greece

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'K. Mitsotakis', with a long, sweeping underline.

Main Messages

In spite of the adversities, Greece remains fully committed to the Agenda 2030. The 17 Goals are embedded in all its major binding political plans. Compact strategies are launched, policies are elaborated and institutional reforms are designed to accelerate the full implementation of the SDGs and to build back better from the COVID-19 pandemic. Greece is also reported as one of only two (2021) countries in the European Union (EU) that managed to not move away from any of the 17 Goals and remained in the cluster as one of five (2022) that did not move away, while improving, within a year, its performance in SDGs 2, 7, 10 and 12 to above the EU average.¹

SDG implementation in Greece was affected by the pandemic, albeit not invariably: plans to improve the accessibility and effectiveness of health services were negatively influenced, policies for clean energy advanced mostly undeterred and digitalization of public services was largely accelerated.

Systemic **challenges** escalating for decades are not favoured by the crises. Of particular concern are weak demographic rates, higher female and youth unemployment and a low record on gender equality. Moreover, the pandemic brought out long overdue reforms in the health sector; the justice and waste management systems have exceeded their operations limit causing complications to the society, economy and environment.

Several long-standing challenges are showing significant **progress**; inter alia, poverty, unemployment, poor housing, sanitation, income disparities, early school-leaving, female participation in senior management, share of RES in energy consumption, greenhouse gas emissions, road accident fatalities and homicides.

In 2020, the EU member states agreed on an ambitious comprehensive plan to **build back better** from the pandemic and to make European societies and economies more sustainable, inclusive and resilient. This overarching plan is supported by a temporary recovery instrument, the EU Recovery and Resilience Facility.

¹ Eurostat, *Sustainable development in the European Union: Monitoring report on progress towards the SDGs in an EU context*, 2021 edition, p. 375; Eurostat, *Sustainable development in the European Union: Monitoring report on progress towards the SDGs in an EU context*, 2022 edition, p. 326.

1

INTRODUCTION

Scope

Greece's second VNR provides an overview of the overall progress achieved from 2018, when the first VNR was presented, until 2021, in terms of policy measures, legislative initiatives, financial instruments, partnership schemes and institutional reforms adopted to accelerate the full implementation of the SDGs and to build back better from the adverse economic and social consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Greek VNR also serves as a roadmap towards achieving the SDGs. It comprises a plethora of policies corresponding to each one of the 17 Goals, most of which have started between 2018 and 2021, and are still underway. All of the ongoing policies are being monitored and evaluated within the Presidency of the Government. Moreover, the VNR includes the country's main forward-looking policies expected to be launched within 2022, with some of their milestones and budgets.

Process

The preparation and drafting of the VNR was steered by a specific Working Group on the SDGs set up within the Presidency of the Government (PoG), in close cooperation and consultation with all ministries and key stakeholders, including the Hellenic Parliament, regional/local authorities, social partners, and civil society organisations, and guided by a whole-of government and whole-of-society approach. The work of the Working Group on the SDGs is supported by an inter-ministerial network that includes representatives from all ministries, acting as focal points for SDGs-related issues. The Working Group on the SDGs also cooperated closely with the Hellenic Statistical Authority (ELSTAT) which has developed a set of national indicators on the SDGs, aimed at monitoring the quantitative progress made towards the achievement of the 17 SDGs at national level. These national indicators are subject to regular revisions, based on the available official statistics and data. The national indicators on the SDGs were reviewed and updated by ELSTAT in 2020 and 2022, respectively.

The VNR report is the result of an inclusive, participatory and transparent consultation process. During the preparation of the review, ministries and stakeholders had the opportunity to provide concrete good practice examples that could be recommended as a model for innovative, efficient and effective policy interventions in achieving the SDGs and to identify key challenges associated with the integrated implementation of the SDGs and the sustainable recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Governance for Sustainable Development, since 2018

During the current Decade of Action and Delivery for sustainable development, the 2030 Agenda and its Sustainable Development Goals provide an overarching and transformative guiding framework for Greece, ensuring a resilience and recovery from the economic and social impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, facilitating the green and digital transition of the economy and society, and promoting a more inclusive, fair and sustainable growth model, while leaving no one behind.

The overall responsibility for monitoring and coordinating the national implementation of SDG-related public policies lies, at the highest political level, with the Presidency of the Government (PoG) established by the "Executive State" law in August 2019 with the view to coordinate the planning and to monitor the implementation of the whole Government programme and work. In 2021, a specific Working Group on the SDGs was established, under the auspices of the General Secretariat of Coordination of the PoG, tasked with steering the whole process with regard to the preparation of the VNR, in close cooperation and consultation with all ministries and key stakeholders.

The three interlinked dimensions of sustainable development - economic, social and environmental - lie at the heart of the Greek Government programme and policy-making process. They are reflected, in a balanced manner, in the strategic national priorities and the overall policy framework of Greece, including reform strategies, action plans, legislative initiatives, funding programmes and instruments. A particular case in point is the national Recovery and Resilience Plan (RRP, «Greece 2.0») adopted on 27 April 2021 that includes a comprehensive package of forward-looking reform measures and investment actions aimed at accelerating the transition of the country towards a more sustainable and inclusive growth model and fostering its economic, social and institutional resilience. The NRRP is structured around four key pillars inextricably linked to the core priorities and objectives of the SDGs, including: (i) green transition, (ii) digital transition, (iii) employment, skills and social cohesion, and (iv) private investment and economic and institutional transformation.

In a similar vein, the three dimensions of sustainable development lie at the core of one of the most overarching, dynamic and inclusive national strategic documents, the National Reform Plan (NRP). The NRP, which is drafted and reviewed by the General Secretariat of Coordination of the Presidency of the Government responsible for monitoring the implementation of the SDGs at national level, sets out a number of crucial reform measures and interventions carried out by the whole government and its ministries in the form of revised, enhanced, yearly updated and targeted public policies which integrate, in a coherent and balanced manner, the main objectives and priorities of the SDGs.

In this connection, the Government has adopted, over the last years, a number of overarching National Plans, Strategies and Programs that integrate, in a coherent and balanced manner, the three dimensions of sustainable development, including, inter alia: the Just Transition Development Plan (JTDP), the National Energy and Climate Plan (NECP), the National Rural Development Program (RDP) 2014-2020, with its extension for the period 2021-2022, and the National Strategy for Research and Innovation (2021-2027).

Greece attributes importance to the active participation and engagement of stakeholders in the overall implementation of the SDGs at all levels, through the adoption of a whole-of-society approach. Stakeholders from a wide range of social and economic sectors, including local and regional authorities, social partners, civil society organisations and research institutions, have increasingly mainstreamed the sustainability principle and the SDGs into their work programme, strategic priorities, key projects and actions, since 2018. A few active civil society networks are already in place with the most recent one established in 2022, yet a lot of work and collaborations are needed in order to broadly embed sustainability principles and achieve deep transformation.

The Hellenic Parliament has played, over the last years, an instrumental role in elaborating and examining bills or law proposals, along with participating in important initiatives at international level, which fall, inter alia, within the scope and objectives of the 2030 Agenda.

At international level, Greece continues to play a vital role in promoting actions and activities, guided by the fundamental principles of the Charter of the United Nations and international law, which support the effective implementation of the 2030 Agenda, through the establishment of multilateral and bilateral partnership schemes, the adoption of comprehensive legal and policy instruments and the launch of cooperative initiatives, in the context of international and regional organizations and fora, in the field of trade and investments, development cooperation, environmental protection and sustainable use of natural resources, cultural and natural heritage, peace, stability, security, human rights and the rule of law.

Good Practices

Greece has established, within the General Secretariat of Coordination in the PoG, a robust and comprehensive monitoring and review mechanism responsible for measuring progress towards the implementation of public policies and evaluating systematically strategic policies and measures, including those which are closely related to the SDGs, on the basis of robust, high-quality and quantified evidence and data. Part of the process is, importantly, ensuring policy cohesion.

The Greek Government attaches importance to the promotion of measures that improve the quality of legislation and foster the adoption of an integrated approach to the entire law-making process. In this context, a new comprehensive and redesigned Manual and Template on Regulatory Impact Assessment (RIA) is in place since 2020, introducing, for the first time in a systematic manner, the SDGs into the regulatory policy and governance. RIA incorporates a distinctive index addressing the consistency of the proposed regulatory measures with the three dimensions of sustainable development and the SDGs. In a similar vein, the Presidency of the Government is in the process of publishing in 2022 a new Manual and Template on Ex-post Evaluation of Legislation, which addresses, inter alia, the extent to which the existing legislation has contributed to the achievement of the SDGs.

In 2021, the Government integrated, for the first time, sustainability and environmental footprint indicators in the process of drafting and implementing the state budget, within the framework of a currently implementing green budgeting, performance budgeting and spending review reform, which aims to increase and enhance transparency, accountability, coherence, resilience and inclusiveness in public financial management.

Leaving No One Behind

Aiming to build social resilience after consecutive crises with an underperforming welfare state and to create conditions for social development, the country has accelerated the adoption of measures and actions aimed at protecting and empowering the most vulnerable and disadvantaged groups of society,

Over the last three years, the Greek Government has endorsed a number of National Action Plans and Strategies that mainstream, in an integrated manner, the principle of leaving no one behind in public policies and reform measures, placing particular emphasis on those who are furthest behind and promote human rights, gender equality and social inclusion, not least for people with disabilities, minorities, women and children. At the same time, significant reforms and investments in education, vocational training and employability of human capital are underway.

Illustrative examples include: the National Action Plan for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2020), the National Plan for the Rights of the Child (2021) and a forthcoming one for Child Protection against sexual abuse, National Youth Plan (finalised, 2022), the National Action Plan for Gender Equality (2021), the National Strategy and Action Plan for the Social Inclusion of Roma (2021) and the National Strategy for LGBTQ+ Equality (2021).

Very importantly, among others, this organized array of interlinked policy initiatives and reforms have brought to the forefront and addressed long-standing issues of child protection, welfare and access to personal development. As a result, **children and youth are mainstreamed in all social national action plans and strategies.**

This was the basis for furthering **child mainstreaming in the Greek VNR 2022 where child-related policies are found in 13 of the 17 SDGs.**

Building Back Better form Covid-19

Mitigating the pandemic's risks has been a challenging task, particularly following a decade of recession and austerity. Nevertheless, due to the prompt uptake of measures in order to contain the virus, enhancement of the public health system, effective interventions for the support of the economy and the effective organization of the vaccination programme, Greece is considered to have managed the pandemic successfully.

A pandemic management system was established immediately, with a centralised approach. At the highest level, an Intervention Mechanism headed by the Prime Minister holds the power to make decisions on COVID-19 mitigation measures. At the same time, the government had to deal with the consequences of the imposed restrictions on the economy as well as on education. To this end, a number of compensatory measures have been taken, in order to alleviate those affected by the restrictive measures and the pandemic in general. The Greek Government has financed a multitude of interventions to protect the economy and its citizens from the adverse effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. The total amount of measures that have been taken during the period 2020-2022 surpasses €43 billion. The extraordinary conditions also led to a paradigm shift in teaching and learning, which was massively embraced by teachers, students and their parents. Similar to other policy areas, the Greek government acted promptly in order to ensure that contact with the educational process is maintained.

Overall **a significant effort has been made to turn the obstacles created by the pandemic into stepping stones for further progress.** The National Health System has been strengthened with many new Intensive Care Units, thousands of new staff recruited and an innovative tracking system that will shield the country in the face of future challenges. The financial support to employment has had significant results not only in retaining jobs but also in creating new ones: before the pandemic was over, the country scored its lowest unemployment in 10 years. In addition, the pandemic accelerated provision of a range of digital services to citizens, which are already reshaping the Greek state against the bureaucratic inertia of the past.

2

METHODOLOGY AND PROCESS FOR PREPARATION OF THE REVIEW - LESSONS LEARNED

The VNR report is the outcome of a collaborative process, in which inputs and data have been gathered and consultations have taken place, involving multiple actors. The preparation and coordination of the whole process was carried out by the Presidency of the Government in close cooperation and consultation with all Ministries and key stakeholders, guided by a whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach.

A special working group was formed within the Presidency of the Government, composed of members of two of its core entities, the General Secretariat of Coordination (GSCO) and the General Secretariat for Legal and Parliamentary Affairs (GSLPA). Under the General Secretary of Coordination, the working group was tasked with planning the entire preparation process, drafting the VNR and designing and following the public consultation and dialogue with key stakeholders.

The 2022 VNR of Greece was the result of three rounds of consultations. First, during the consultation with the Ministries, the working group collaborated closely with General Secretaries, ministerial consultants, the Inter-ministerial Coordination Network made-up of the ministries' SDG focal points as well as representatives from other governmental bodies belonging to the centre of government and the Hellenic Statistical Authority (ELSTAT). The ministries provided the input on public policies undertaken aiming to achieve the social, economic and environmental goals of sustainable development, as set out by the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs. Data measuring progress towards the implementation of the SDGs was provided by ELSTAT. In the second round, consultations with the social partners and other stakeholders on the challenges and national priorities for sustainable development were conducted centrally, by the General Secretariat of Coordination. The Secretary General participated in SDG-related public events, promoting the 17 Goals and inviting stakeholders to dialogue for achieving them. The social dialogue process included written communication, with letters sent to all major stakeholders asking them to report their perspective on how the SDG implementation can be deepened in view of the major challenges faced, as well as informing on best practice cases for that matter. Their feedback is incorporated in Annex of the VNR. Finally, before submission, in a third round of consultations the draft VNR was uploaded to the opengov.gr platform for a 10-day public deliberation and received comments from civil society organizations, private citizens, ministries and UNICEF, which were taken into account not only for the final draft of the VNR but for future reference as well.

Special support was also provided by the Institute for Sustainable Development of the European Public Law Organization, an International Organization with Permanent Observer status at the UN General Assembly, who provided useful input and comments on the VNR and organised, in cooperation with the General Secretariat for Coordination, an open discussion in May 2022 on the VNR and HPLF process, with more than 500 stakeholders and interested citizens invited.

Ministries and stakeholders also provided concrete good practice examples that could be recommended as a model for innovative, efficient and effective policy interventions in achieving the SDGs and, together with the GSCO, identified key challenges associated with the full implementation of the SDGs and the sustainable recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic.

The lessons learned from the consultations with civil society and the private sector, as well as from the cooperation of the centre of government with the ministries and other government entities, concern issues such as:

- ❖ Increasing and expanding the participation of stakeholders in the process of the SDGs implementation, monitoring and evaluation through transparent, inclusive and representative procedures at all levels.
- ❖ Establishing a permanent and structured framework of stakeholder dialogue and cooperation on the SDGs, in the form of a multi-stakeholder platform, in which the stakeholders can participate and contribute in a more systematic way, so as to facilitate the creation of synergies, to share experience and best practices and to address potential conflicts of interest.
- ❖ Improving the necessary processes and mechanisms, within central government and public administration, ensuring policy coherence in SDGs implementation, across different sectors and governance levels.
- ❖ Placing particular emphasis on addressing the most pressing social, economic and environmental challenges associated with the implementation of the SDGs, including quality jobs, sustainable infrastructure, education for sustainable development and its links with the labour market, green and digital transition of the economy and society, sustainable production and consumption, poverty, inequalities and social inclusion, energy efficiency and security, climate neutrality, protection of the environment and preservation of natural and cultural heritage.
- ❖ Ensuring a clear and stable regulatory framework, which supports and facilitates the implementation of long-term reforms and investments on sustainable development.
- ❖ Increasing the regional and local anchoring of the SDGs.
- ❖ Improving the processes and tools for monitoring and measuring, in quantitative terms, the economic, environmental and social impacts of the SDGs-related public policies, based on robust, reliable and high-quality evidence and data.
- ❖ Promoting public awareness actions and initiatives, including educational and learning programmes along with integrated communication strategies, which highlight the importance of achieving the SDGs across different sectors and governance levels, and identify the key challenges associated with their full implementation.

The exchange of information and knowledge between the government, the ministries and other public entities, stakeholders from civil society, the business sector, municipalities and regions, and the academic and research community has greatly contributed to the making of the VNR report. Moreover, the VNR-drafting process itself served as a model for exercising a whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach to sustainable development. The awareness, ownership and political commitment for the successful implementation of the SDGs was once again reaffirmed, as the second VNR report of Greece was prepared.

3

POLICY AND ENABLING ENVIRONMENT

3.1 Key changes

- The overall responsibility for monitoring and coordinating, at the highest political level, the national implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs lies with the **Presidency of the Government (PoG)**, established by the “Executive State” law in August 2019, with the view to coordinate the planning process and to monitor the implementation of the whole government work, ensuring the promotion of a whole-of-government approach and reinforcing the much-needed political ownership of public policies.
- In 2021, a specific **Working Group on the SDGs** was set up under the auspices of the General Secretariat of Coordination (GSCO) of the PoG tasked with steering the whole process regarding the preparation and drafting of the VNR, including the close cooperation, dialogue and consultation with all ministries and key stakeholders.
- Greece has established, within the Presidency of the Government, a **monitoring and review mechanism** responsible for measuring progress towards the implementation of government work and evaluating systematically strategic public policies and reform measures, including those which are closely related to the SDGs, on the basis of robust, high-quality and quantified evidence.
- The three dimensions of sustainable development - economic, social and environmental - lie at the heart of the Greek Government programme and policy-making process. They are reflected, in a coherent and balanced manner, in the strategic national priorities and the overall policy framework of Greece, including reform strategies, actions plans, legislative initiatives, funding programmes and instruments. An illustrative example is the **National Recovery and Resilience Plan** (NRRP, «Greece 2.0») adopted on 27 April 2021 that includes a comprehensive package of forward-looking reform measures and investment actions aimed at accelerating the transition of the country towards a more sustainable and inclusive growth model and fostering its economic, social and institutional resilience. The NRRP is structured around four key pillars inextricably linked to the core priorities and objectives of the SDGs, including: (i) green transition, (ii) digital transition, (iii) employment, skills and social cohesion, and (iv) private investment and economic and institutional transformation.
- Over the last two years, the Greek Government has endorsed a number of **National Action Plans and Strategies** that mainstream, in an integrated manner, the three dimensions of sustainable development and the **principle of leaving no one behind** in public policies and reform measures, placing emphasis on targeted measures which support the most vulnerable groups and those who are furthest behind, including people with disabilities, minorities, women and children and promote human rights, gender equality and social inclusion.
- The **Hellenic Statistical Authority** (ELSTAT) reviewed and updated in 2020 and 2022 respectively a comprehensive set of **national indicators** on the SDGs developed, after consultation with ministries, with a view to monitoring the quantitative progress made towards the achievement of the 17 SDGs at national level.

- The **Hellenic Parliament** has played, over the last years, an instrumental role in elaborating and examining bills or law proposals, along with participating in important initiatives at international level, which fall, inter alia, within the overall scope and objectives of the 2030 Agenda. In recent years, the Special Permanent Parliamentary Committee on Environmental Protection (SPPCEP) has enhanced its role with regard to the promotion and implementation of a wide range of SDGs. It initiates and steers debates about the SDGs, integrates the SDGs in its annual reports and monitors government initiatives on whether they are effectively and comprehensively promoting the 2030 Agenda and ensuring policy coherence for sustainable development.
- **Stakeholders** from a wide range of sectors of society, including local and regional authorities, social partners, civil society organisations and research institutions, have substantially mainstreamed the sustainability principle and the SDGs into their work programme, strategic priorities, key projects and actions, since 2018. New networking endeavours are also being witnessed, creating synergies, promoting cooperation and partnerships and strengthening advocacy and consultation with public bodies on a wide range of issues related to the SDGs.

3.2 Ensuring ownership of the SDGs

3.2.1 Institutional mechanisms

3.2.1.1 The Centre of Government

The overall responsibility for monitoring and coordinating, at the highest political level, the national implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs lies with the **Presidency of the Government (PoG)** established by the “Executive State” law in August 2019. The core mission of the PoG is to assist the Prime Minister in performing his duties, ensuring the effective coherence, coordination and monitoring of the entire government work. The PoG comprises executive units and processes that are crucial for the promotion and implementation of policies that pertain to sustainable development, including: the General Secretariat of Coordination (GSCO), the General Secretariat for Legal and Parliamentary Affairs (GSLPA) and the Special Secretariat for Strategic Foresight (SSSF).

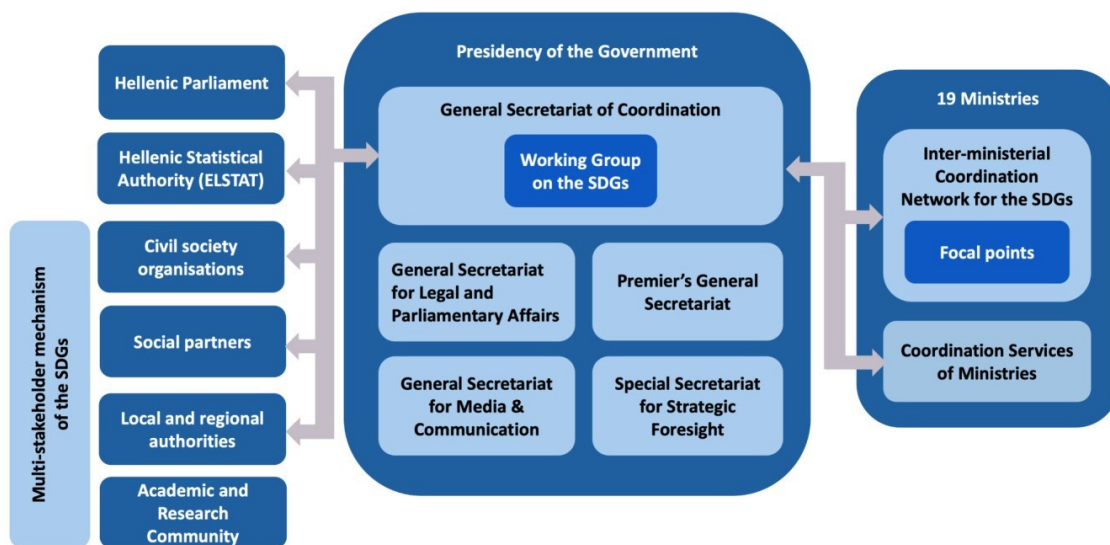
The core mission of the **General Secretariat of Coordination (GSCO)** is to ensure the effective coherence and coordination of the whole Government work, including all public policies which are closely related to the SDGs. This is achieved through: (i) proposing and programming public policies, (ii) monitoring, coordinating and evaluating the implementation of public policies, (iii) resolving disputes, (iv) reviewing the compatibility of the proposed legislative and regulatory initiatives with the core governmental policy, (v) designing and proposing horizontal and cross-sectoral policies, (vi) contributing to the central political communication strategy, and (vii) producing the Annual Consolidated Governmental Policy Plan.

Within the framework of its competences, the GSCO is responsible for operating and managing a robust and comprehensive **monitoring and review mechanism**, which measures progress towards the effective implementation of government work and evaluates systematically strategic public policies, including those that are inextricably linked to the SDGs, based on reliable and quantified evidence. The GSCO, which is in charge of coordinating the whole policy cycle, including the design, monitoring and evaluation of public policies, supports the ministries to formulate their annual action plans that contain actions, projects and measures aimed at implementing their public policies on a yearly basis. The whole monitoring process is performed by using a special Management Information System, called “MAZI”, in which all the implementation details, including responsible parties, deadlines, deliverables and intermediate milestones, are stored. The evaluation of public policies involves, among others, setting target values for key performance indicators measuring the immediate output or long-term outcome of the policy goals that have been set by the Government program. GSCO monitors the achievement of these target values within the agreed time frame and cooperates closely with the ministries to examine and evaluate the performance of their policies in view of their short-term and long-term objectives, both in the context of an ex-ante and an ex-post evaluation process.

In 2021, a specific **Working Group on the SDGs** was set up by the GSCO of the Presidency of the Government tasked with steering the whole process regarding the preparation and drafting of the VNR, including the close cooperation, dialogue and consultation with all ministries and key stakeholders.

The **General Secretariat for Legal and Parliamentary Affairs (GSLPA)** of the Presidency of the Government plays an instrumental role in ensuring the integration of the sustainability principle in the regulatory governance and the introduction of the three dimensions of sustainable development into the whole legislative process. According to its primary mission and tasks, the GSLPA is responsible, inter alia, for ensuring the coherence and coordination of the law-making process, coordinating the effective application of the principles and tools of better regulation, providing legal support, within the framework of its competence, to the Prime Minister, the Presidency of the Government and the Government, and coordinating the codification and recasting of law.

The **Special Secretariat for Strategic Foresight** is a newly established self-contained unit, within the Presidency of the Government, tasked with identifying and exploring potential future challenges, trends, risks and opportunities for the country. With a portfolio currently covering the environment, artificial intelligence and robotics, energy as well as international relations and geopolitics, the Special Secretariat for Strategic Foresight aims to significantly support and inform the long-term strategic planning and decision-making process of the Government through the provision of useful information and data on forward-looking issues closely related to sustainability and the economic, social and institutional resilience of the country.



3.2.1.2 The Inter-ministerial coordination network for the SDGs

The **Inter-ministerial Coordination Network for the SDGs** has been operating since 2016 and brings together representatives from all ministries, acting as focal points in charge of working on SDGs-related issues within their respective ministries and mainstreaming them in sectoral and horizontal public policies. It facilitates the coordinating role of the Presidency of the Government (PoG) and enhances the shared commitment and responsibility in implementing the SDGs. It contributes to the preparation and drafting of the voluntary national reviews on SDGs, in close cooperation with the coordination services of ministries. In doing so, it discusses, among others, ways for achieving the SDGs at national level and reflects on existing and new national policies, legislation, strategies, action plans and programmes that aim to integrate the three dimensions of sustainable development.

3.2.1.3 The Hellenic Parliament

The Hellenic Parliament comprises a number of parliamentary committees, including standing, special standing, special and special permanent committees, established with a view to elaborating and examining bills or law proposals, which fall, inter alia, within the overall thematic scope of the 2030 Agenda. The work of the parliamentary committees is supported by special hearing of relevant stakeholders, including those actively engaged in issues associated with sustainable development. Of particular importance is the **Special Permanent Parliamentary Committee on Environmental Protection (SPPCEP)**, whose work contributes significantly to the promotion and implementation of a wide range of SDGs (SDGs 6, 7, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 17).

The mandate and task of the SPPCEP are inextricably linked to the scope and primary objectives of the 2030 Agenda. As defined by the Standing Orders of the Hellenic Parliament, the SPPCEP is responsible for the monitoring and the assessment of the status of the environment nationally as well as the evaluation of the environmental impact of various human activities. The Committee's mandate is extensive, provides oversight on government environmental actions and leads policy discussion on environmental challenges and solutions.

Unlike Standing Committees, the Special Permanent Committees don't have a formal legislative role, which allows them to operate more flexibly than Standing Committees, without the obligation to meet, at specific intervals, to address legislative proposals. Therefore, the SPPCEP has the flexibility to set its own agenda, which is centred around SDG-related issues. It initiates and steers debates about the SDGs, integrates the SDGs in its annual reports and monitors government initiatives on whether they are effectively and comprehensively promoting the 2030 Agenda and ensuring policy coherence for sustainable development. It also discusses, as a matter of priority, a wide range of issues addressed in the context of important international decision-making processes directly related to the SDGs, including the UN SDGs Summit and the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF).

Within the SPPCEP, a Subcommittee on Water Resources is established. The task of the Subcommittee on Water Resources is to continually monitor, evaluate and record the state of water resources in the country, to investigate and assess issues related to their sufficient quantity and to submit proposals for their effective management. The work of the Subcommittee plays a pivotal role in supporting the implementation of SDG6 regarding the integrated water resources management and SDG14 on the protection of the marine environment.

Due to the holistic and horizontal nature of the SDGs, the SPPCEP undertook the initiative to propose in its 2020 Annual Report the establishment of a **Special Parliamentary Coordinating Committee** with the mandate: to monitor the implementation of the SDGs, to review the associated government work and their progress, to provide guidance to fine-tune line actions and to ensure the mainstreaming of the SDGs in all legislative and policy frameworks. The proposed Coordinating Committee should consist of the Presidencies of the thematically relevant Parliamentary Committees, such as the Standing Committee on Cultural and Educational Affairs, the Standing Committee on Economic Affairs, the Standing Committee on Social Affairs, the Special Permanent Committee on Equality, Youth and Human Rights and, of course, the Special Permanent Committee on Environmental Protection.

At international level, the Hellenic Parliament has undertaken, over the last years, important initiatives aimed at fostering closer working relations with other national Parliaments, strengthening inter-parliamentary cooperation in the context of international organisations and keeping foreign Parliaments and international parliamentary organisations up to date as to Greek views and positions on crucial global and national issues, including those which are inextricably linked to the SDGs.

During the last four years (2018-2021), Members of the Hellenic Parliament (MPs) and the competent Parliamentary Committees participated constructively and contributed substantially to the work and activities (Assembly meetings, reports, seminars) of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, (I.P.U.) and the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE). Indicative examples of those activities and initiatives that promote the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, include: (i) Parliamentary Meetings at the United Nations Climate Change Conferences (COPs), (ii) Fifth World Conference of Speakers of Parliament «Gender equality is a pillar of sustainable development, peace and democracy and a precondition for the achievement of all the SDGs» (September 2021), (iii) Annual Parliamentary Hearing at the UN – «Education as a key to peace and sustainable development: Toward the implementation of SDG 4» (February 2020), (iv) «Climate change and implementation of the Paris Agreement», (Resolution 2210 of PACE, 2018), (v) «Implementation of the SDGs: synergy needed on the part of all stakeholders, from parliaments to local authorities» (Report Doc. 14851 of PACE, 2019).

3.2.1.4 The Hellenic Statistical Authority (ELSTAT)

With the adoption of the UN General Assembly Resolution 70/1 “Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”, the Member States of the United Nations committed to follow-up and review the progress made towards implementing the SDGs and targets over 2030. The Resolution noted that the SDGs and targets will be followed up and reviewed using a set of global indicators, which will be complemented by indicators at the regional and national level.

The 2030 Agenda states that progress reports shall be based on the global indicator framework and data produced by the National Statistical Systems and information collected at regional level. The UN Statistical Commission has also decided that the compilation of global indicators will be based to the greatest extent possible on comparable and standardised national official statistics provided by countries to the international statistical systems and that when other sources and methodologies are used, these will be reviewed and agreed by national statistical authorities and presented in a transparent manner.

The 17 SDGs are specified in a group of 169 individual targets to be achieved by all countries by 2030. To evaluate the progress made towards achieving these targets, a number of quantitative indicators have been chosen. The number of Sustainable Development Indicators has reached the number of 231 while there has been a continuous discussion on the usefulness, effectiveness and availability of statistical data or methodology for each one. Indicators should be disaggregated, where relevant, by income, sex, age, race, ethnicity, migratory status, disability and geographic location, or other characteristics, in accordance with the United Nations Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics.

At European (regional) level, in December 2016, Eurostat distributed an initial proposal of an EU SDG indicator set, structured along the 17 SDGs. Indicators considered for the EU SDG indicator set had to be produced and disseminated in line with the principles stipulated in the European Statistics Code of Practice (CoP). This requires that at least one data point is ready to use and published by its producer (the National Statistical Agencies), that regular data production is ensured, preferably with official mandate and adequate resources, that a sound methodology exists, that data are accessible online and metadata are publicly available and that compliance with international or EU standards is fulfilled where these exist. The EU SDG indicator set consists of 102 indicators (37 of which are multipurpose) and it is open to annual reviews to incorporate indicators from new data sources as well as to take into account new targets in line with the priorities of the European Commission, such as the European Green Deal and other initiatives.

The Hellenic Statistical Authority (ELSTAT) is responsible for the statistical coordination and monitoring of the members of the Hellenic Statistical System (ELSS). ELSS is the set of rules, tasks and bodies responsible for the execution of statistical operations, with the aim of developing, producing and disseminating the official statistics of Greece. Official statistics cover all sectors of public and private activity, support decision-making and are submitted to international organisations according to the national obligations.

As the statistical focal point, ELSTAT provides data to the Custodian Agencies and informs all the members of the ELSS about their role as part of the National Statistical System and their obligations. ELSTAT actively participates in the IAEG-SDGs and EU Working Group on Sustainable Development meetings and it is always in close cooperation with the Custodian Agencies to find and evaluate new sources of data (administrative, geospatial etc.), to add new variables in the existing official surveys (ex SILC, Health Survey etc.) and validate (or not) the data estimations from the Custodian Agencies regarding Greece. Furthermore, ELSTAT had a crucial role in the formation, in 2019, of the National Indicators Set for Greece. This was designed considering the national priorities and the availability of data.

Finally, ELSTAT's website contains a section dedicated to Sustainable Development Goals as the National Reporting Platform, where users can have direct access to data for each Goal and are able to find publications and visualization tools with regard to the SDGs: <http://www.statistics.gr/en/sdgs>.

The official data for Greece from the Hellenic Statistical Authority (ELSTAT) can be found in Annex I.

3.2.1.5 The national multi-stakeholder consultation and engagement mechanism

Assigning the responsibility for monitoring progress towards the implementation of the SDGs to the Presidency of the Government, and in particular to the General Secretariat of Coordination, tasked with coordinating and monitoring all public policies, lays the foundation and generates new opportunities for the establishment of a specific permanent mechanism aimed at effectively monitoring and assessing the country's progress as regards the Agenda 2030, through policies serving specifically the SDGs, along with ensuring the public consultation and cooperation with organised civil society. Such a mechanism could be agreed on and become operational in 2022 in order to enable the effective and timely implementation of the whole project (i.e. monitoring the SDGs progress) and the setting up of a permanent point of contact and reference concerning the public consultation on the SDGs-related policies and the assessment of progress.

3.2.2 Local and regional authorities

The 13 regions and 325 municipalities of Greece develop and implement a large number of actions directly related to the three dimensions of the 2030 Agenda and the implementation of the SDGs at regional and local level. Some of the regions and municipalities are more SDG-aware than others. For instance, pursuant to paragraph 89 of the 2030 Agenda, the **municipality of Skiathos** has submitted in 2020 a **Voluntary Local Review (VLR)** report on the implementation of the SDGs at the island of Skiathos of the Sporades group in the Aegean Sea. In this VLR, the Skiathos 2030 Vision is laid out, consisting of six strategic goals aligned with the 17 SDGs and transformed into concrete municipal administrative actions. Other regions and municipalities, either on their own or within the relevant European and international networks in which they participate, as well as in cooperation with the Ministry of the Interior and other ministries, have also included the SDGs in their work, and are contributing significantly to the realisation of the 2030 Agenda.

An emblematic, well-coordinated, broad (5,000 projects) and well-funded (€3 billion) national initiative, is the **Antonis Tritsis programme**, discussed in chapter 4, which provides the foundation for a local and regional sustainable development. It includes actions for social protection and cohesion, schemes to improve water and wastewater, waste management, road safety and climate resilience, smart city schemes, flood protection, earthquake protection in schools and improving public health measures against Covid-19. In addition, the Antonis Tritsis Programme includes, among others, plans to invest in exploitation of geothermal fields, renewable energy sources, smart distribution, storage, and energy consumption systems. The new sustainable urban investment initiative will scale up priority investment including urban regeneration and increase renewable energy use to improve the quality of life of local residents and attractiveness for business and tourism.

Other social programmes implemented locally include the “**Help at Home**” and “**Prevention at Home**”, which are also discussed in chapter 4. The first one has been running successfully since 1998. It is implemented by the municipalities of the country and the primary objective is to provide assistance to the elderly, the persons with disabilities, and those living alone or having a low income, through the provision of a wide range of services, from at home medical and nursing treatment to the supply of food and other basic necessities. The latter is a new preventive healthcare programme aimed at supporting the inhabitants of mountainous and remote/inaccessible regions, by making possible, on the one hand, medical examinations at home for the inhabitants of the above regions who belong to vulnerable groups of population and, on the other hand, the automated dispatch of the results to contracted practitioners through the use of information and communication technologies.

The **Association of Greek Regions** (ENPE) notes that efforts are being made by the Greek Regions for: (i) the **protection of ecosystems and biodiversity** by utilising modern grazing management plans that do not harm the environment and the water resources, and contribute instead to the enrichment of aboveground and underground water tanks; and (ii) the **protection of the environment** through many actions aiming at saving energy, reducing water waste, reducing mileage, and raising public awareness about environmental issues.

A recent good practice example is the public agricultural livestock centre of Kozani, in Western Macedonia. It consists of (i) a modern Agricultural and Veterinary Laboratory that will operate in collaboration with the Hellenic Agricultural Organisation Dimitra (ELGO DIMITRA) as a Center of Excellence in the agricultural and veterinary sector; (ii) the Agri-Food Partnership of Western Macedonia; and (iii) the Municipal Veterinarian. Supporting livestock as a natural environmental manager, utilising innovative RES and energy storage systems, and promoting triple-propeller partnerships, will result in enhanced cooperation on research, education and innovation.

Another good practice example is the Region of Attica’s initiative “Social Network Attiki”. It monitors, evaluates and implements social policy actions, related to social inclusion, employment, preventive healthcare, education and culture, and social and solidarity economy.

At the local level, the **Central Union of Greek Municipalities** (KEDE) participates in the national effort to formulate a realistic plan for an efficient use of the resources coming from the Recovery Fund, which will have a positive impact on the implementation of the SDGs. KEDE proposes projects and interventions that enhance extroversion, promote innovation and take advantage of the opportunities offered by the integration of new technologies in the daily operation of the Greek multi-level governance system. It supports horizontal actions aimed at both the alleviation of intra-regional inequalities and decentralisation.

KEDE’s priorities as regards the implementation of the SDGs emphasise the promotion of policies such as:

- Operating the digital municipalities and smart cities, through the widespread promotion of digital convergence and digital interconnection of all government services.
- Enhancing extroversion, by highlighting the local comparative advantages, which can be turned into power multipliers of the national economy.
- Promoting local development.
- Making local authorities protagonists in the adoption of “green policies” and the use of environmentally friendly types of energy, calling also for the exclusive use of electric vehicles by all the municipalities.
- Promoting modern models of waste management, prioritising recycling and energy utilisation of residues. Creating a modern infrastructure, with priority on the islands, but also organising awareness actions.

- Enhancing the security of citizens, through the implementation of projects that make the infrastructure of the cities safer for their lives.
- Adopting a new model of civil protection, with inter-municipal operation centres, modern equipment and infrastructure, which will protect citizen's lives and properties from the effects of climate change.
- Providing incentives for the re-industrialization and the strengthening of the productive capacities of the country, coupled with the new infrastructure that is being created (new roadways, ports and railway networks).
- Expanding and modernising the networks of gas, water supply and fibre optics throughout the country, in each municipality.
- Exploring for more resources, through strategic partnerships with the private sector.
- Enhancing the participation of women in decision-making centres.

KEDE has submitted in the public dialogue **twelve proposals** that can contribute to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda and are supported by the European Recovery Fund:

1. Green transformation of cities and municipalities to face environmental and climate challenges. An integrated program to promote the transition to green cities and climate neutrality is proposed, which will include, inter alia, the production of electricity using RES, the energy upgrade of municipal infrastructure, the strengthening of electrification and the creation of local municipal networks, the implementation of awareness programmes, and the targeting and operation of monitoring systems for the energy footprint of cities. In addition, there is planning for smart energy management through the municipalities' action plans, the respective interventions and projects, as well as the expansion of the natural gas network in all municipalities.

2. Waste Management: reducing waste and strengthening prevention and modern management. The most important action concerns the central waste management by region or through inter-municipal collaborations with special attention to, among others, the minimization and management of solid waste. Actions include the production of alternative fuels from the residues of MEA and KDAW, the management of solid and liquid waste in the island municipalities, and the implementation of smart collection and recycling management systems aiming at gradually increasing the recycling rate at source, with a corresponding reduction in the percentage of mixed waste.

3. Digital Decalogue for smart and sustainable cities. The aim of the action is the digital transformation of municipalities through concrete steps (request recording platforms, "smart" management systems of a series of functions such as parking, municipal fleets, public markets, citizen consultation platforms, education and training of employees, recruitment and training of employees schools, upgrading of digital school infrastructures, smart transport systems, promotion of municipal infrastructures through applications for the service of the citizens and the visitors etc.).

4. Digital Local Government - The next step. It concerns the utilisation of digital technologies as the next administrative and operational reform of the public administration, aiming at the internal reorganisation of the local authorities, their systematic cooperation with the other levels of the public administration and the improvement of the services to the citizens.

5. Development of 5th Generation networks by the Municipalities - 5G Plug n' Play Cities. It concerns the utilisation of municipal infrastructure (electricity network, traffic lights, municipal infrastructure) through PPPs, for the development of new 5th generation mobile telephony networks, aiming at leasing them to mobile telephony companies but also serving national, municipal and other purposes such as education and trade.

6. Upgrading Social Structures with a view to the future. It concerns, among others, the creation of a panhellenic network of primary health care, the upgrading of primary social care and welfare, strengthening entrepreneurship and access to employment for vulnerable social groups.

7. Towns of Greece - Utilising the national advantages, in order to attract quality investments. Development of ports and marinas, support for spa tourism, utilisation of municipal property, development of theme parks and strengthening thematic tourism.

8. Better Infrastructure - Accessible Towns. The goal concerns projects that improve the living standards of local communities by strengthening the existing municipal infrastructure and creating new one, implementing the Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans, elaborating the Local Spatial Plans, upgrading the roads of the islands, enhancing the accessibility for the disabled as well as reconstructing town roads.

9. Resilient Towns, with Strong Civil Protection. It concerns the financing of projects improving the resilience of towns and the more effective protection of human lives and property from natural phenomena and disasters (strengthening of rainwater networks, stabilisation and landslide control projects, coastal erosion control projects, creation of inter-municipal protection centres, and protection of water balances using digital metres).

10. New Entrepreneurial clusters. Greece utilises the new road and railway axes (design and creation of new craft and industrial areas, establishment of special incentives and financing of expropriations).

11. Reform of the Social Policy system at local level - Creation of an Inter-Municipal Social Network. The aim of the action is the homogenization of social policy at the local level, which is of critical importance for an integrated, interoperable and effective social safety net that can provide integrated support to the vulnerable groups.

12. Social integration of refugees-immigrants in local communities, including their integration into the labour market. The purpose of the proposed project is the integration of asylum seekers, refugees and immigrants in Greek society and workplace. Proposed actions include Greek language learning, familiarity with public services and support for beneficiaries through intermediaries, family counselling, and providing and/or certifying beneficiaries with skills.

3.2.3 Social partners

Balancing the often-conflicting economic, social and environmental objectives is what sustainability is about. Hence, a successful implementation of the SDGs requires a genuine and effective social dialogue between the representatives of employees and employers, taking into account the environmental dimension, and being in close cooperation with the government and other stakeholders. For the promotion of the 2030 Agenda the Greek government is engaged in a dialogue with the social partners. This is taking place either on a bilateral basis (government discusses with representatives of employers and/or employees), as well as through the **Economic and Social Council of Greece (ESC)**, which is the constitutionally established institution responsible for conducting the social dialogue.

The **ESC** is actively involved in the public consultation with the national social partners and European institutions. It has highlighted the need to monitor sustainable development policies, through the creation of consultation channels and the collection of opinions by the social partners in this regard. In 2017, the ESC issued, upon request of the government, its opinion no 317, UN 2030 Agenda – Priority Objectives for Greece, which included an extensive list of recommendations for the effective implementation of key economic, social and environmental aspects of the SDGs. In 2018, the president of ESC participated and spoke at the presentation of Greece's first VNR at the UN HLPF of July. In 2022, the ESC delivered its contribution to the government for the drafting of the country's second VNR review, calling for action on various targets of [SDGs 3, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 13, 15, 16, 17](#).

In the process of the VNR drafting, the GSCO received input from major representatives of the business sector, including the Hellenic Federation of Enterprises (SEV) and the Business Council for Sustainable Development of SEV (SEVBCSD), the Greek Tourism Confederation (SETE), the Global Compact Network Hellas, and the Hellenic Network for Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR Hellas). Some of these contributions can be found in Annex III.

Focusing here on the state of play of the Greek business community as regards the SDGs, it could be noted that according to the most recent (2021) “Business Pulse” survey, conducted by SEV Business Environment Observatory: (i) corruption/low level of transparency and low capacity of institutions are classified in the top 3 obstacles to business operation; (ii) almost one out of four companies acknowledge as priorities, initiatives directly linked with the promotion of [SDGs 1, 4, 8, 9](#), namely generating quality jobs, enhancing innovation and infrastructures and strengthening the links between the education system and the labour market; (iii) green transition is assessed as an important issue for almost 81% of the companies, with over 40% of small, medium and large companies acknowledging it as very important or important; (iv) the need for raising awareness of the challenges and prospects of green growth is acknowledged, as only 28.7% of small companies consider it very important compared to 50% in large companies; (v) almost 70% of the companies interviewed are planning to proceed in the short-term with investments enabling their green transition; (vi) the majority of companies, regardless of size, consider the provision of salary increases and training/development opportunities to employees as the main pathways for strengthening society’s trust in entrepreneurship.

SEV, which is the largest business network in the country, focuses on scaling-up industry’s contribution to 15% of national GDP by 2030, and its action plan is built and developed across 6 priority areas that are strongly linked with the sustainable development agenda, i.e., innovation, skills for everyone, green growth, digital transformation, industry scale-up and strengthening links with society. SEV and SEV BCSD seek to leverage the SDG platform to catalyse collaborative action at scale through dialogue and partnership across sectors, supply chains and necessary stakeholders. In this regard, they see of great value the formation of a small group of experts that could assist national authorities in preparing their plans on the SDG agenda across four key design pillars: (i) risks of inaction, (ii) arising opportunities, (iii) governance and transparency, and (iv) need for collaboration. The structured involvement of the business sector in this process is of particular importance for sharing best practices, diverse ways of engagement and first-hand experience on achievements, expectations and barriers to overcome.

CSR HELLAS has also conducted research, finding that 62% of the Network’s members have included the SDGs as a reporting framework in their annual reports. These are mainly large corporations, and it is noted that there is no consistent way of using the SDGs as a reporting framework. Moreover, when it comes to small and medium enterprises (SMEs), which in Greece account for more than 90% of the private sector, these lack both the capacity and the incentives when it comes to aligning their strategy and actions to the SDGs. Moreover, according to another recent study by CSR HELLAS in partnership with the University of the Aegean most companies listed in ATHEX (Athens Stock Exchange) have adopted adjuvant international reporting standards (apart from national ones) to report to stakeholders, one of which is the SDGs framework. In such a context a limited percentage of the corporate sector is taking notice of the importance of aligning business strategies to the SDGs. On the other hand, CSR HELLAS comments on the lack of an overarching long term strategy for the coordination of all stakeholders’ initiatives towards their contribution to the 2030 Agenda at national level. As SDGs are a voluntary reporting framework the private sector faces a number of challenges for incorporating them in the business model as well as assessing the progress of implementation. These include the lack of connectivity of individual business strategies to a concrete national long term strategy for achieving the SDGs as well as a lack of harmonious partnerships and cooperation among stakeholders, the scarcity of regulatory tools that incentivize the SDGs’ adoption, the lack of monitoring and evaluating methods, and the low awareness on the part of businesses and of society as a whole.

In the context of the 2030 Agenda, the private sector has a key part to perform in accelerating the achievement of the SDGs through effective public–private and civil society partnerships via [SDG 17](#). Nevertheless, for gaining real and tangible results, all SDGs, targets and indicators should be in line

with the national strategies and plans, and they should be agreed based on a multi-stakeholder consultation framework. As such a framework has not yet been set up, the exchange and sharing of good practices cannot be achieved, creating twofold obstacles for achieving the 2030 Agenda – firstly best practices are not incorporated into concrete policies, and secondly there are no guidelines for businesses for aligning their initiatives with the national action plan on the SDGs.

The **Global Compact Hellas** (UNGC Network Hellas), which is the local cluster of the United Nations Global Compact initiative, supports the power of the private sector to engage responsibility and promote the SDGs in Greece. For this purpose, it has identified seven strategic priorities and focus areas, in which the business community can have an important impact: human rights, labour and decent work, climate change, anti-corruption, gender equality, SDG integration. Hence, the orientation is on how businesses can integrate the SDGs across their strategies and operations and how to be innovative and transform their governance.

The business-members of UNGC Network Hellas, as part of their commitment, are already taking actions to advance the SDGs and are disclosing this information through their annual Communication on Progress (CoP) report submitted to the UNGC. The CoP, in its new digitised format, includes a tool to monitor and gather information on corporate actions for the SDGs. Based on the content of their CoP, the three SDGs that are mostly reported are **Goal 8**-Decent Work and Economic Growth, **Goal 5** - Gender Equality and **Goal 13** - Climate Action. The industries, which are reporting policies on these SDGs, are construction & materials, financial & support services and oil & gas producers. Among the actions that businesses are undertaking are the alignment of core corporate strategy with the SDGs; the development of products and/or services that contribute to achieve the SDGs; the voluntary (financial or in-kind) contributions to NGOs; the organisation or participation in key summits or major events related to the SDGs; the public communication of their best practices; and their impact on the engagement of the public-private partnerships projects.

On the part of the workers, the **General Confederation of Greek Workers** (GSEE) via its **research institute** (INE GSEE) is monitoring the **SDG 8**. In its contribution to the preparation of Greece's second VNR report, it stresses that although labour income and employment have mildly recovered over the past few years, several factors that determine working conditions and job quality remain problematic, injecting uncertainty, macro-financial fragility and socio-economic problems. Despite the recent increases in the minimum wage, the average real compensation per employee remains lower than that in 2009 and, moreover, the households' disposable income is currently being eroded by inflation. Meanwhile, households' living conditions and well-being have been aggravated by high levels of work intensity. Job quality has also been undermined by the deterioration of the terms of employment. Equally worrying are the increasing episodes of atypical employment (involuntary part-time work). Precarious work has proliferated in parallel with poor employment prospects, provided that Greece's unemployment rate, albeit in constant decline since 2014, is still well above its pre-crisis level and long-term unemployment stands today at high rates. Last but not least, the country also scores poorly in terms of social dialogue and collective interest representation. These developments severely impact the prospects of sustainable and inclusive growth, increasing inequalities and undermining human capital.

In view of the above, **INE GSEE** underscores the need for immediate and effective measures to improve job quality in Greece, as this could act as an effective means of increasing people's well-being and delivering a more prosperous and inclusive society. For this to happen, several measures are proposed, such as: (i) the abolition of all labour market deregulation measures taken over the last decade as part of the internal devaluation strategy, coupled with the full restoration of free collective bargaining; (ii) a further increase in the minimum wage, along with the institutionalisation of a new approach to wage-setting that would ensure wage levels compatible with decent living standards; (iii) mobilisation of sufficient NGEU (Next Generation EU fund) resources for training and education to improve employees' skills, as well as the financing of a permanent Job Guarantee scheme to bolster employment and labour income, support labour market reforms, combat inequalities, while facilitating green transition; (iv) strengthening the labour inspectorate body to ensure adherence to employment protection law.

Stakeholders from various sectors of the economy are making their own efforts for integrating the SDG framework in their activities. Tourism is a very important sector for Greece and the **Greek Tourism Confederation** (SETE) is aiming, in the period from 2022 to 2024, to (i) focus on its own sustainability transformation, including compliance with the GRI reporting principles, adoption of the SDGs and a gradual adoption of a structured sustainability strategy model (including the formation of internal sustainability committees, gap analysis, stakeholder mapping, materiality analysis, the presentation of the sustainability strategy and its action plans, monitoring mechanisms and sustainability communication channels); and (ii) coordinate the sector's sustainability transformation, through a series of initiatives comprising the presentation of a sustainability roadmap, training and workshops on SDGs, ESG and the Green Deal, sharing of best practices, benchmarking with the sector's leaders and international case studies. SETE, through its institutional role, is also committed to enhancing its footprint in the sustainability ecosystem at large, following best practices that are already in place since 2018, comprising, but not limited to, participation in sustainability and cyclical economy committees, environmental and social studies undertaken by its research institute INSETE, its educational programs and workshops and other targeted activities promoting sustainable development.

As Greece is the world's largest ship owning nation (20% of world and 59% of EU tonnage), the **Union of Greek Shipowners** are contributing, for their part, to the implementation of the SDGs, especially through their participation in the International Chamber of Shipping (ICS) and the consultations with the UN International Maritime Organization (IMO), in which Greece is a category A council member (states with the largest interest in providing international shipping services). In the process of public consultation on the Greek VNR, and specifically as regards the [SDG 14](#), they commented that shipping cannot move towards a carbon-free future on its own and that collective action is required, together with out-of-sector stakeholders, such as shipyards, ship engine manufacturers, marine fuel producers and suppliers in order to meet the individual objectives, insofar as they relate to international shipping.

Persons with disabilities are an important stakeholder. As the **National Confederation of Disabled People** (NCDP) of Greece notes, it is significantly interested in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda at a national level, since (i) out of the 17 Goals, 13 are mainly related to persons with disabilities, although only seven (7) targets have an explicit reference; (ii) several other Goals and targets refer to vulnerable groups and thus include persons with disabilities because of the reference in paragraph 23 of the 2030 Agenda Preamble; (iii) the inclusive phrasing of many Goals and targets also makes them implicitly applicable for persons with disabilities, such as those referencing "for all" or "all women and men"; (iv) even without any such references, all Goals and targets apply to persons with disabilities by simple virtue of the universality, which applies to all, and the overarching principle of "leave no one behind." The NCDP stresses the importance of the political will and commitment for the achievement of the SDGs at all levels (EU, national, regional, and local), and proposes the utilisation of the conditionality approach of the European Structural and Investment Funds since, through this approach, the SDG implementation will be promoted through the Operational Programs of the member states. In addition, the effective implementation of the SDGs requires on the one hand the strengthening of democratic values and governance and on the other the awareness and involvement of all bodies, authorities, companies, civil society organizations, professionals etc.

The **Greek Patients Association**, the confederation of more than 60 patients' organizations from all over Greece and across the spectrum of disease aims at defending the rights of health care recipients, the equal participation of patients in designing and implementing policies concerning them and their contribution to the promotion of public health. They stress that in order to achieve the goal for universal health, there is a need to develop a health in all policies strategy, a collaborative approach that integrates and articulates health considerations into policymaking across various sectors for improving health for all people and in every community.

3.2.4 Civil society

The active participation of civil society is pivotal to the transition to a sustainable society. Hundreds of civil society, voluntary and non-governmental organisations perform activities that relate to a wide variety of sectors, including human rights, migration, environmental protection, social cohesion and welfare, culture, health and education. Many of these organisations are explicitly working on specific SDGs or on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda as a whole, and some of them have raised important issues and criticisms, bringing into the social dialogue new knowledge and innovative approaches to sustainability.

The government and all the ministries are in constant dialogue with the stakeholders from civil society, as this can lead to the adoption of more informed and balanced public policies. In the process of drafting Greece's second VNR report, the GSCO asked numerous civil society organisations to assess the progress in the implementation of the SDGs, and to inform the PoG about (i) the extent to which the SDGs form part of their activities or plans, (ii) their participation in partnerships for the SDGs, (iii) the main difficulties and challenges for the implementation of the SDGs, (iv) any proposals that they have for that matter, and (v) any good practice cases, in which they are involved in or are aware of. The feedback from civil society organisations to this communication are included in Annex III.

An important network of Greek Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), is the **Hellenic Platform for Development (HPD)**, which operates as a "national platform" of NGOs, active in the fields of sustainable development education, humanitarian aid, global citizenship action and developmental support. Since 2015, it focuses on fostering partnerships among civil society using UN's Agenda 2030 as a common tool of collaboration, of advocacy and of public awareness raising. The main objective of the Hellenic Platform is to influence -through the joint action of its members- policy makers in Greece, in the EU and internationally, for the improvement of policies and practices for sustainable development. Since the SDGs' adoption, HPD has been actively working towards their implementation, through projects, initiatives, advocacy, knowledge sharing, and monitoring of the 2030 Agenda. Although Greek CSOs are primary partners, HPD often works in partnership with other sectors, including business, academia and policy makers (HPD was a contributor to Greece's first VNR). Founding partners of HPD include ACTIONAID HELLAS, CULTURAL FOUNDATION "THE ROUTES OF THE OLIVE TREE", ELIX, EQUAL SOCIETY, FAIR TRADE HELLAS, GREEK COMMITTEE FOR INTERNATIONAL DEMOCRATIC SOLIDARITY, HANDICAP CARE HELLAS, KENTRO ZOIS, KMOP, ORGANIZATION EARTH, POSITIVE VOICE, PRAKSIS, SCOUTS OF GREECE, UNESCO YOUTH CLUB OF THESSALONIKI, WORLD WITHOUT WAR AND VIOLENCE. However, HPD on several occasions during the last 7 years has led broad civil society ad hoc networks that at instances overpassed the number of 300 organizations.

At EU level, HPD is an elected member of the Steering Committee of **SDG Watch EU**, Europe's largest EU-level, cross sectoral Brussels-based Civil Society alliance of NGOs from development, environment, social, human rights and other sectors. Its goal is to hold governments to account for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (SDGs). HPD also represents Greek Civil Society in **CONCORD**, the European NGO Confederation for Relief and Development, which constitutes the main non-governmental interlocutor of EU institutions on the formation of the European Development Policy.

At international Level, HPD is an elected member (representing European civil society organizations) at the Global Council of **GCAP**, a network of over 11,000 NGOs from 58 countries collaborating to combat inequalities and to advance social justice. GCAP works at local, national, regional and global levels to monitor the implementation of the SDGs in order to ensure that countries achieve the goals and meet and exceed the targets for all groups. GCAP focuses on a bottom-up approach to engage people and governments. Through its work within GCAP, HPD is affiliated with **Action for Sustainable Development (A4SD)**, a global platform supporting civil society and citizen action for the delivery of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change.

HPD is leading many activities related to the SDGs in Greece, such as the biggest capacity building program for CSOs on the SDGs, **"Make Europe Sustainable For All"** (MESA) and the annual national civil

society campaign “**17 Days 17 Goals**”, that takes place every year in September around the time of the UN General Assembly and the Global Action Week. Since November 2021, HPD has been working with other stakeholders to form a broad societal coalition, including businesses (UNGC-CSR Hellas-SEV) and academia (UNSDSN), in advance of this year’s HLPF. It has also been working, since spring 2022, towards leading civil society organizations to prepare an independent civil society report on national delivery of the SDGs in Greece (Peoples Scorecard).

HPD’s proposals include the establishment of a multi-stakeholder platform on the SDGs, in order to support and advise the government and provide a forum for exchange of experience and best practice, as well as a parliamentary committee on sustainable development. Furthermore, HPD calls for a closing of the data gap by strengthening ELSTAT, learning from best practices such as the World Bank’s Statistical Performance Indicators (SPI), and avoiding practices such as EUROSTAT’s failure to include in its Annual EU SDG Report the spill over effects of EU’s policies outside its borders.

Another civil society network for the promotion of SDGs in Greece, is attempted to be created by the **Hellenic Foundation for European and Foreign Policy (ELIAMEP)**, an independent, non-governmental, non-profit research institute and think tank, through the project “**Civil Society Network in the Context of UN’s Sustainable Development Goals in Greece**” (January 2022-December 2023). Its key objectives are to mobilize both formal and informal groups in urban and in rural areas, create cross subject and cross-organizational synergies, promote cooperation and partnerships, and strengthen advocacy and consultation with public bodies. The project promoter and project partner will use their long experience to start building a new Greek civil society community in the context of SDGs.

Attempting to relate the responses of other CSOs to the thematic areas that the HLPF 2022 focuses on, i.e. **SDGs 4** (quality education), **5** (gender equality), **14** (Life below water), **15** (Life on land) and **17** (partnerships), some information is gleaned here.

Concerning **quality education (SDG 4)**, aside from the public policies discussed in chapter 4, one can see a plethora of initiatives, educational programmes and knowledge enrichment taken up by civil society organizations. Specifically for the SDGs, the **Quality Net Foundation** in collaboration with UNICEF, UNESCO, and PROJECT EVERYONE launches in Greece the official program of UN for SDGs - The World Largest Lesson, addressed to primary and secondary schools, aiming to develop an overall educational approach, and supporting education on sustainable development. It is based on the official educational programme of the UN, enriched with the Greek SDGs Library, experiential programmes and digital learning platforms, and supported by the teachers. Every year 100.000 students follow the SDGs education tool kit.

Education for sustainable development is, of course, directly related to the **environmental Goals (SDGs 14 & 15)**, which are pursued by the same and dozens of other civil society organizations. **Organization Earth** is active in environmental education, urban greening and community engagement, and it runs the “Center of the Earth” project, a vegetable and permaculture garden situated 6km from the centre of Athens that serves as an environmental education hub for experiential community activities. “Center of the Earth” community activities include building green skills for students, adults, the elderly and vulnerable groups, organizing open Sundays, collective cooking, CSR corporate events, volunteerism, and thematic tours.

HELMEPA, over the past 40 years, has inspired more than 450,000 schoolchildren and youth and 8,500 teachers on marine environment protection and stewardship, climate change and sustainable development through educational programs, knowledge enrichment and leadership cultivation initiatives. Since 1993, environmental education activities have focused on “HELMEPA Junior”, a flagship initiative engaging every year 8,000 kids aged 5-13, approved by the Ministry of Education and awarded by UNEP and the European Parliament, among others. Additionally, HELMEPA has supported 46 young scientists with scholarships for postgraduate studies in European universities in maritime and environmental sciences. Acting as national coordinator of international voluntary campaigns, HELMEPA has organized/ coordinated more than 4,000 clean-ups of beaches, seabed, lakes, forests and other coastal or land areas, in which more than 250,000 volunteers have taken part, removing 820 tons of waste, covering a total length of 1,900 km of shoreline. As a partner of the “Blue Generation” EEA and Norway Grants

Fund for Youth Employment, 40,000 young people between 15 and 29 years will be reached in order to pursue a sustainable career in the Blue Economy in 6 European countries. The program offers -among others- free mentoring, study visits, etc. As coordinator of the project "Training the Guardians of our Seas", HELMEPA promotes healthy seas, by training marine professionals, promoting good practices in fish stock management and avoiding marine pollution. With the implementation of the project "My plastic footprint", young people between 11 and 15 years are sensitized and informed about the reduction of plastic.

The **Green Tank** is an independent, non-profit think tank developing policy solutions for a sustainable future. Their work relates to the three pillars of sustainable development: environment – economy – society, with emphasis on (i) biodiversity conservation and the sustainable management of natural resources and ecosystems; (ii) climate change mitigation and adaptation, decarbonisation with a simultaneous shift to renewable energy sources, energy efficiency and energy savings; (iii) transition towards a sustainable economy; and (iv) social well-being, social cohesion and the improvement of people's quality of life. The Green Tank works to accelerate the transition to sustainability through research, analysis and policy recommendations, in collaboration with stakeholders at local, regional, national and European level. While it is clear that the SDGs are interconnected and the environmental dimension transcends all SDGs, the Green Tank's contributions concentrate on [SDGs 7, 13, 14, 15 and 16](#).

As regards **gender equality (SDG 5)**, the **Women on Top** organization notices that the last two years have been seminal for the advancement of gender equality in Greece. The recent #metoo movement and the subsequent opening of the public discussion about gender-based violence, femicide and sexual harassment in the workplace, coupled with the indisputable and disproportionate negative impact of the pandemic on women everywhere, have brought SDG 5 to the forefront of CSO activity, policy making, corporate responsibility and collective sentiment. This does not mean that progress on SDG 5 has been remarkable or easy in Greece, it does mean, however, that preoccupation with this issue is bound not to fade soon.

The **Women Act** organization aims at empowering women in leadership positions in the public sphere. This goal is achieved through networking, educational and campaigning activities and by focusing on building up networks for women by hosting monthly Women Act Aperitifs where women meet role models and listen to inspirational speakers thus building their own networks. Women are given the necessary tools for leadership through the Leadership Academies, a very intensive workshop that focuses on branding, public speaking, media presence, social media use and many more issues affecting women disproportionately in the public sphere.

YWCA of Greece, one of the oldest women's, voluntary organizations in Greece and worldwide, has been working systematically to achieve its collective vision so that, "By 2035, 100 million young women and girls will transform power structures to create justice, gender equality, and a world without violence and war; leading a sustainable YWCA movement, inclusive of all women." It offers programmes and services such as the "Athena" free housing programme, the Femina Career Lab (a career Counselling Programme), and the Femina Support Lab (providing social services).

ActionAid has also developed significant action in the field of combating gender inequalities with many prominent programmes and research initiatives in order to address gender and domestic violence in Greece. Since 2015, ActionAid has been an implementing partner in EU funded projects that focus on the SDGs, such as "Faces of Migration" that links the SDGs with migration, and "Climate of Change" about the climate induced migration and youth participation in climate decision making processes. The participation in EU-wide consortia has facilitated the development of a regional/ international understanding of the SDGs that ActionAid is trying to infuse in its activities, considering which of the encountered elements can be of added value for the Greek context. Moreover, the active involvement in European and national networks and platforms (i.e. the Hellenic Platform for Development and CONCORD) enriches ActionAid's work and vision on collective action for the achievement of social justice.

Concerning **partnerships for the SDGs (SDG 17)**, while it is evident from the above that these do take place in Greece, the **Green Tank** made a remark, which has been stated by other stakeholders and

CSOs as well, on the perceived lack of a concrete institutional initiative that could bring all stakeholders together in a concerted action. Although the SDGs are mentioned in the vast majority of the government's policy and legislative initiatives, what is missing is a truly participatory process that will ensure the involvement of all stakeholders. It follows that the establishment of a more holistic governance scheme to oversee the implementation of the SDGs is needed. On a vertical axis, that will include all levels, from the highest political level to the administrative and institutional set up to public participation.

Added to that, is the role of the parliament, while on the horizontal axis, a more systematic multi-stakeholder dialogue must take place that will be broad enough to cover issues from awareness raising to open and organised engagement with all stakeholders, public consultations, policy initiatives, exchange of information and best practices, as well as support towards citizens' initiatives.

Certainly, CSOs' activities related to other SDGs are abundant. For example, **Boroume** aims at reducing food waste (SDG 12.3) and increasing food insecurity (SDG 2), the **Hellenic Antipoverty Network** monitors SDG 1, and **SOS Children's Villages** are taking action for the rights of the most vulnerable children, i.e. those living outside the family environment (SDGs 1, 4, 8, 10, 16). **Together with Children** partners with municipalities and NGOs in the "PROSFERO" programme, which offers products for children from all Greek regions, with the goal to eliminate poverty (SDG 1), and in another program that runs in remote areas of the country, aimed to tackle inequalities in health and education (SDGs 11, 1, 3, 4, 8), as well as in a third program for the support of poor families with children. Youth organisations, such as **Erasmus Student Network Greece**, **Hellenic Youth Workers Association** and **YWCA of Greece**, are also SDG-aware and their activities contribute to the realisation of the Goals.

3.2.5 Academic and research community

Network of Higher Education Institutions for Sustainability

The "Network of Higher Education Institutions for Sustainability", which was launched in 2021, consists of members from all Greek Universities. Its primary objective is to promote and mainstream the sustainability principle and the SDGs into the main programmes and action plans of Greek Universities. To this end, the Network proceeded in 2022 to the establishment of two specific working groups. The first working group aims to prepare the revision of the Universities' Charter for Sustainability (adopted in 2011), so that it becomes aligned with the main priorities and objectives of the 2030 Agenda. The second working group intends to prepare a set of guidelines that will facilitate the integration of the sustainability principle and the SDGs in the strategic planning of Greek Universities. The Network will contribute to the UNESCO World Higher Education Conference to be held in May 2022, with the view to reforming traditional models of higher education, in line with the core objectives and priorities of the 2030 Agenda.

General Secretariat for Research and Innovation (GSRI)

The General Secretariat for Research and Innovation (GSRI) of the Ministry of Development and Investments is the main body responsible for setting research policy priorities and is major direct funder of R&D. For the GSRI, investment in science, research, technology and innovation is a key strategic priority for a development model that is socially, financially and environmentally sustainable and is based upon highly skilled workforce and novel, innovative ideas.

Through its programmes, it supports the research activities of both the country's scientific research institutes and those of its productive industry, focusing on areas that are important for the national economy and for the improvement of the quality of life. Additionally, it designs and promotes a comprehensive, inclusive strategy for research, technology and innovation, maximizes the impact of the highly qualified human potential in the area of research through the creation of new employment opportunities for the highly skilled and reverses brain-drain, promotes the transfer and dissemination of innovative technologies to the country's productive sectors for targeted use of the research results, su-

perives and funds the country's Research and Technological Institutions, enhances public awareness on Science, Research and Technology issues and assesses the outcome and impact of research and innovation policies and programmes. At international level, the GSRI represents Greece to the relevant institutions of the European Union and other international organizations, thus bringing the country's research and technology activities into line with the requirements of the international community, and promotes initiatives and programmes for international research & technological cooperation with other countries.

Furthermore, the GSRI provides support for 14 of the country's best-known research and technological centres. The Research and Technological Institutions supervised by the GSRI cover a wide spectrum of research fields in the areas of Biosciences & Health, Natural Sciences and Engineering, Information and Communication Technologies, Humanities & Social Sciences. Its tasks also include the detailed design, planning, implementation and monitoring of policy and interventions (measures, programmes, etc.). The GSRI sets thematic priorities for funding based on the needs and structure of the Greek economy, the needs of society and global S&T perspectives.

Academic and Research Centres and Institutes

Academic and research centres and institutes are important stakeholders playing a crucial role in promoting and achieving the full implementation of the SDGs. They work on sustainability issues, across different scientific fields, both on their own and in close cooperation with international scientific institutions, bodies and networks. They develop innovative, multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary research projects, addressing all dimensions of sustainable development. Their research is focused on a wide spectrum of scientific fields falling within the scope of the SDGs, including prominently the humanities and social sciences, bio- and health sciences, natural sciences, engineering and technology, environment and energy as well as information and communication technologies. The academic and research community is instrumental in raising social awareness on sustainability challenges and opportunities, informing evidence-based decision-making, providing solutions to complex and multi-dimensional problems, elucidating SDGs interlinkages and developing synergies and partnerships that disseminate knowledge and best practices in order to support the achievement of the SDGs. (See Annex II for a glimpse of the work they do.)

3.3 Integration of the SDGs in national frameworks

National Recovery and Resilience Plan (RRP)

In 2020, the European Union and its Member States agreed on an ambitious comprehensive plan to build back better from the adverse effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and to make European societies and economies more sustainable, inclusive and resilient. This overarching plan is substantially supported by a temporary recovery instrument, the EU Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF), which assists Member States in promoting and implementing a wide spectrum of strategic reforms and investments set out in national recovery and resilience plans strictly monitored in terms of quality, achieving milestones and targets and timelines. The RRF focuses on the following six thematic policy pillars closely related to the key priority areas of the 2030 Agenda: (i) green transition, (ii) digital transformation, (iii) smart, sustainable and inclusive growth, (iv) social and territorial cohesion, (v) health and economic, social and institutional resilience, and (vi) policies for the next generation.

The Greek **Recovery and Resilience Plan, RRP** («Greece 2.0»), which was one of the first to be submitted to the European Commission on 27 April 2021, introduces a comprehensive and coherent package of forward-looking reform measures and investment actions aimed at accelerating the transition of the country towards a more sustainable and inclusive growth model and fostering its economic, social and institutional resilience¹. This package of reform and investment measures is financially supported by a

¹ https://greece20.gov.gr/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/NRRP_Greece_2_0_English.pdf

budget of €31.164 billion up to 2026. In particular, the Greek plan comprises 106 investment measures and 68 reforms to be supported by €17.77 billion in grants and €12.73 billion in loans. The Greek RRP is structured around four key pillars inextricably linked to the core priorities and objectives of the SDGs, including: (i) green transition, (ii) digital transition, (iii) employment, skills and social cohesion, and (iv) private investment and economic and institutional transformation. It is worth pointing out that 37.5% of the national RRP will support climate-related objectives, whereas 23.3% of the plan will advance digital transformation.

The consistency and compatibility of Greece's RRP with the specific objectives and targets set out in the 2030 Agenda is also confirmed, *inter alia*, by an analysis performed by the EU Joint Research Centre in 2020. According to this analysis, all SDGs are considerably served by the national RRP, though emphasis is reasonably placed on crucial systemic issues, including sustainability of the healthcare system and economic productivity that increasingly emerged during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Annual Ministerial Action Plans and Consolidated Governmental Policy Plan

By recent law, all ministries by the end of a year must submit for approval to the Ministerial Council their comprehensive plan for the year to come. The plan lays out the ministry's policies, staff, financial resources, institutional tools, implementation timelines and milestones as well as Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). The ministries are closely supported in this 6-month process by the General Secretariat of Coordination (GSCO), which ensures the cohesion and general applicability of the proposed policies. During this collaboration possible implementation obstacles, gaps, conflicts and overlaps are traced and resolved in time. In addition, the GSCO makes sure that the overall plan is aligned with the country's national needs and international obligations, a set of which being the Agenda 2030 and the SDGs, and it produces the cohesive Comprehensive Governmental Policy Plan² (CGPP) for the year to come. Complying with the founding values and SDG targets of transparency and accountability the CGPP is publicised for the citizens to assess and follow.

National Reform Plan (NRP)

The 2030 Agenda and the SDGs lie at the core of one of the most overarching, dynamic and inclusive national strategic document, the **National Reform Plan (NRP)**³. The NRP, which is drafted and reviewed by the General Secretariat of Coordination of the Presidency of the Government responsible for monitoring the implementation of the SDGs at national level, sets out a number of crucial reform measures and interventions carried out by the whole government and its ministries in the form of revised, enhanced, yearly updated, targeted public policies which integrate, in a coherent and balanced manner, the main objectives and priorities of the SDGs.

The primary objective of the NRP is twofold: on one hand, to foster the transition to a more sustainable and inclusive growth model, while ensuring that no one is left behind, and on the other hand, to enhance the economic, social and institutional resilience of the country.

It is noteworthy that even in the dire circumstance of the pandemic the NRP was not abandoned nor changed by the Greek government. On the contrary, several reforms were even accelerated to build better response to the arising needs.

2 https://government.gov.gr/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/eskyp_2022_fin2.pdf

3 https://government.gov.gr/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/ethniko_sxedio_metarithmiseon.pdf

3.4 Incorporation of the three dimensions of sustainable development

In 2019, the European Commission (EC) presented the “Green Deal”, a roadmap with reference to the profound transformation of the European Union’s economy, aiming at sustainable growth. The EC introduced, subsequently, a new financial Just Transition Mechanism (JTM), to make the transition to climate neutrality in a fair way (“Sustainable Europe” plan). Greece, with a history of lignite dependence, originally committed to withdrawing all lignite power plants by 2023, except for one that will be operational by 2028. This initial plan underwent revision after the dramatic fluctuations in European energy stability caused by the war in Ukraine, extending withdrawal by 2 years.

The commitment is not abandoned: the protection of the environment, the economic diversification and the social coherence of extended lignite mining areas remain major priorities. The lignite-producing areas suffer consequences stemming from constant, persisting and unilateral focus on lignite activity, to the detriment of other economic activities, but also from the lack of a new, balanced and sustainable development model. In addition to the lignite issue, the local economies lack diversity and inclusion and score high levels of unemployment which were until now capped under the high incomes of those included in lignite production, supporting an unrealistic picture of local prosperity.

With a view to a sustainable and socially fair transition of these areas, the Government has prepared a comprehensive **Just Transition Development Plan (JTDP)**, in order to create new values and socio-economic inclusion opportunities in sectors and branches other than the lignite-related ones, building on technical advantages such as the electricity grid infrastructure and the presence of a significant number of professionals with technical skills. The Plan is composed by five policy pillars (clean energy, industry and trade, smart agriculture, sustainable tourism, technology and education), which are in line with the EU’s policy objectives (a smarter, greener, more connected, more social and closer to its citizens Europe) and at the same time integrate the three dimensions (social, environmental, economic) of sustainable development. On the other hand, the Plan outlines a number of actions that are already being carried out towards addressing immediate social needs, such as ensuring sufficient capacity for district heating and an Observatory to provide reliable information on the type and extent of changes in the social fabric of the territories affected.

The **National Energy and Climate Plan (NECP)** is the Greek government’s overall strategic plan for climate and energy issues, setting out a detailed roadmap regarding the attainment of specific energy and climate objectives by 2030. The NECP sets out and describes priorities and policy measures in respect of a wide range of development and economic activities intended to benefit the Greek society and therefore it is a reference text for the forthcoming decade. It has been approved by EC at December 2019 and at its introductory note it is explicitly stated that “NECP stresses Greece’s priorities and development potential in terms of energy and addressing climate change and aims to serve as the key tool for drawing up the national energy and climate policy in the next decade, taking into account the Commission’s recommendations and the UN Sustainable Development Goals”. The necessity to develop sustainable policies incorporating all three dimensions of sustainable development (social, environmental, economic), with common benefits and synergies in addressing climate change, protecting nature and biodiversity, air quality, water resources is reflected to strategies related to shift to new production and consumption standards, the need for sustainable cities, the elimination of poverty, the establishment of flexible infrastructure, the promotion of sustainable industrialisation, circular economy and the promotion of innovation.

The new Greek **Climate Law** has been voted by the Parliament on the 26th of May 2022. The purpose of the new law is to create a coherent framework for improving the country’s adaptability and climate resilience and ensuring the country’s gradual transition to climate neutrality by 2050, in the most environmentally friendly way. The policies and measures adopted to mitigate climate change are aimed at reducing emissions and increasing absorption, enhancing legal certainty for investors and citizens, and the smooth transition of the economy and society.

The **National Rural Development Program (RDP) 2014-2020**, with its extension for the period 2021-2022, contributes significantly to the three dimensions of sustainable development and the achievement of a wide range of SDGs. Primarily, it plays an instrumental role in enhancing economic and social sustainability of the agrifood sector and the rural areas of Greece, thus contributing to the **SDGs 8, 9, 1 and 2**. It is worth mentioning that the Greek RDP supports investment in agricultural holdings and in marketing and processing of agricultural products, installation of young farmers and small rural business start-ups, contributing to the value added, innovation and growth of the agrifood sector and rural areas but also the creation of jobs, food security and the alleviation of social inequality especially in rural areas. Its overall interventions include the upgrade of rural public infrastructure, naming land reclamation works (e.g., dams, reservoirs), roads and other works for the access of rural population to basic services and quality of life, e.g. broadband infrastructure. Regarding its environmental and climate dimension, the Greek RDP has a strong focus on it, contributing more than 57% of its budget (incl. EAFRD and EURI), thus contributing to the **SDGs 2, 6 and 15**. In addition, the RDP promotes the implementation of agriculture, environment and climate commitments in relation to the reduction of pesticides and fertilizers and the related water and soil pollution (e.g. nitrates reduction commitments, alternative weed and insect protection for rice and trees cultivations), the protection of wild birds and the support for organic farming. Investments for water savings are also supported both through community public works and at farm level. Finally, the RDP includes measures and actions contributing to the afforestation and the prevention or rehabilitation of forest damages.

For Greece, the investment in science, research, technology and innovation is a key national strategic priority for a sustainable development model that is socially, financially and environmentally sustainable, and is based upon highly skilled workforce and novel, innovative ideas. Based on the key objectives and thematic priorities of the National Research and Innovation Strategy for Smart Specialisation adopted in 2015, a number of innovative interventions and programmes covering all the economic, social and environmental aspects of sustainable development have been financed during the programming period 2014-2020, under the coordination of the General Secretariat for Research and Innovation of the Ministry of Development and Investments. Currently, the Government is in the process of planning the new **National Strategy for Research and Innovation 2021-2027**, which places particular emphasis on the following priority areas: Agri-food Chain - Life Sciences, Health, Medicines - Digital Technologies - Sustainable Energy - Environment and Circular Economy - Transport & Supply Chain - Materials, Constructions & Industry - Tourism, Culture and Creative Industries. The NSRI 2021-2027 will pay attention to ecological, social and economic effects in its selection process. Projects with a clearly positive effect should have a higher chance of receiving funding.

3.5 Leaving no one behind

Greece attributes particular importance to the protection of the most vulnerable and disadvantaged groups of society and the effective integration of the principle of leaving no one behind at all levels and across all public policies and reform measures.

The main challenge is to design and implement comprehensive, coherent and forward-looking policies which significantly contribute to reducing the inequalities and vulnerabilities that leave people behind and undermine their potential. In significant numbers, people, as part of social groups, face different exclusions and are deprived of opportunities for independent living, participation, acceptance and well-being. Greece is focusing on defining priorities and fast-tracking actions for the poorest and the most marginalised people, vulnerable to discrimination based on their area of residence, their socio-economic status, their gender, their age, their abilities, ethnic or religious identity and sexual orientation. These most vulnerable groups, whose discrimination risk factors often add up, are facing high rates of unemployment, difficulties in accessing free health services, education, childcare, housing and adequate food and are more exposed to gender and domestic violence, institutionalization, delays in service delivery, bureaucracy, multiple systems existence and stereotypes.

In order to face these challenges and build a fair and inclusive society, a coherent framework that enables the acceleration of national progress towards achieving the SDGs and promoting the principle of leaving no one behind is needed. It is within this context that over the last two years, the Greek Government has endorsed a number of national strategies, action plans and legislative initiatives that mainstream, in an integrated manner, the principle of leaving no one behind in public policies and reform measures, placing emphasis on targeted measures which support the most vulnerable groups and those who are furthest behind, including people with disabilities, minorities, women and children and promote human rights, gender equality and social inclusion.

Therefore, specific policies have been adopted in the form of national strategies, plans or comprehensive laws to tackle the main challenges and to The updated **National Action Plan for Gender Equality** (2021), which is fully aligned with the strategy's analysis as identified by the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, aspires to respond effectively to a persisting systemic issue in Greece, overturning obstacles for women and girls that prevent them from equally accessing basic rights and opportunities. The Plan reflects the priority axes for preventing and combating gender and domestic violence, equal participation of women in decision-making/leadership roles and equal participation of women in the labour market. The pandemic rendered the new plan indispensable as women's rights appeared to be further suppressed, starting with incidents of domestic violence which increased during lockdown. It is a cross-sectoral commitment on 4 pillars: (i) prevention and elimination of gender-based and domestic violence, (ii) equal female participation in the labour market, (iii) equal female participation in decision making and leadership roles and (iv) gender mainstreaming in sectoral policy making.

A first-time cohesive **policy framework for Youth** (2022) is based on the strategic pillars of Employment, Education, Housing, Social Cohesion and Well-being, which are directly relevant to most of the Sustainable Development Goals (Goals 3, 4, 5, 8, 10). As a result, it regards multiple policy areas and it seeks to address all the serious issues affecting young people's lives and the challenges of modern times. Youth in Greece paid a heavy toll in past and recent economic crises, which undermined their opportunities to shape their lives constructively as early as they wished. The framework aspires to support young people to achieve social independence earlier and make the most of their potential through education, work, housing, accessing good services, connecting to the world or raising a new family. It is a comprehensive investment both in people and in the country's resilience and prospects.

Aiming at reducing inequalities, which is in line with **SDG 10**, the first-time **National Strategy for LGBTQ+ Equality** (2021), is based on the principle of equality, on the prohibition of sexual orientation and gender identity discrimination and on enhancement of social inclusion. LGBTQ+ people face significant problems daily in almost every aspect of the public sphere, among others when visiting the health services, contacting the police and all public administration, adapting to working environments and going to school. Most of their reported difficulties are based on either stereotypical discrimination or lack of institutional provisions. Consulting closely with their representatives, the Government deemed it important to treat the systemic malfunctions that demote them to second-class citizens and ensure protection of their rights while building LGBTQ+ inclusive societies.

The first-time **National Action Plan for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities** (2020) is a "road map" that provides a clear, coherent and systematic framework for action regarding the rights of persons with disabilities. The Plan had been a long-time pursuit of the local disability movement. The main goals of the Plan are to fully integrate the protective EU framework and the recommendations of the UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, to codify the scattered legislative provisions and to create a National Accessibility Authority that will ensure the participation of the persons with disabilities in the economic, political and social life.

The new **National Strategy and Action Plan for the Social Inclusion of Roma** (2021) reflects the strategic choices of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs in order to address the identified and persistent issues of social exclusion of Roma in Greece. It reflects, defines and substantiates measures to tackle the different contexts of deprivation facing the Roma in Greece. The Plan aspires to address the problem with national, regional and local policies in 4 Pillars: (i) poverty prevention and alleviation, (ii) access to basic services and goods, (iii) prevention and fight against stereotypes and discrimination and (iv) active participation in economic, social and political life.

The **Law on the prevention and treatment of child abuse and neglect and the strengthening of Social Protection** (2021) aims to adopt measures of preventing incidents of child abuse and neglect and address them timely and effectively, by (i) upgrading the quality of services provided to infants through a comprehensive curriculum for preschool education, (ii) promoting adoption and foster care, (iii) launching the "Personal Assistant" action for People with Disabilities in order to ensure their independent living and avoid deinstitutionalization, and (iv) ensuring the protection of institutionalized children.

The **Strategy for social inclusion and the fight against poverty and the first National Action Plan for the protection of Children's Rights** (2021) are commitments to reduce child poverty, to guarantee that every child has access to free health services, education, childcare, housing and adequate food, to apply guardianship to unaccompanied minors refugees, to simplify adoption procedures, to ensure independent living and avoid institutionalization for people with disabilities, to provide a safety net against deep poverty by the constitutionally guaranteed social solidarity income (GMI), to provide decent housing for vulnerable groups and for persons aged 67 years and over with low or no income.

Greece's first **National Plan against Child Sexual Abuse** (finalised in 2022) aims to safeguard the health and dignity of children-victims of an underreported crime. It identifies critical systemic failures and presents measures to prevent, locate, report, treat and take to justice incidents of sexual abuse and exploitation of children. Special care is foreseen for the victims through a child-friendly justice approach, institutional obstacles are set to prevent predators from working with children in all possible sectors and essential protocol revision is put forward in order to ensure timely response that does not cause further victimization and risks. The overall twofold aim of the Plan is to (i) minimize the incidents and (ii) maximize reporting, working towards the protection of children from all forms of violence.

3.6 Systemic issues

Despite significant progress having been made towards a more sustainable living during the past decades, Greece still faces some persisting challenges that were further enhanced by consecutive economic and social crises that started a decade before the Covid-19 pandemic, and whose impact is still present. Recognition of the problems and policies to address them have always been present in the political agenda - followed by occasionally significant investment - and progress has been made, yet their outcomes did not suffice to bring forth reforming change.

The literally vital, oldest and most persisting challenge is the **demographic** one, directly affecting the prospects of the country's prosperity, resilience and survival. The indicators are low and since the 1980's are off-balance, scoring well below 2.1 children per woman, nearly "extremely low" in the last 20 years (1.37 in 2020). Since 2011, the overall population of Greece has started to shrink, a phenomenon affected by the fewer births and emigration of young people and their prospective families and not significantly alleviated by incoming immigrants and their families since the 1990's.

One of the most persisting issues regarding the Greek economy, both in the years of prosperity and of crunch, is the **high levels of female and youth unemployment**, two indicators that are detrimental when they converge in young women, today in a context of the high unemployment caused by the economic crises. Female unemployment is, continuously, nearly double than male,⁴ and female employment and ranks among the 3 lowest in the EU (58.3% in 2020). As for youth unemployment, nearly 4 out of 10 young people are unemployed, a rate double than the EU average. The unemployment of people of 15-29 years is more than double than the unemployment of seniors 54+. Systemic dysfunctions are definitely the cause for these two issues, which exceed supply and demand explanations and directly relate to factors such as the quality and relevance of education, family roles culture, nursery care availability and job market regulations. Closely linked to these is Greece's **low performance in gender equality**. Despite the fact that the country has institutionally safeguarded gender equality since the early 1980's and the aim has never left the political agenda, the findings show that it has not yet been dealt with dedication. Greece ranks steadily last in gender equality among EU countries according to the Gender Equality Index, although in recent years a slight improvement in score has been noted. Between the 6 clusters of indicators, women in Greece seem to do best in Health-related ones and worst in those connected with Power.

An enduring challenge that surfaced clearly during the pandemic was the **limited ability of the Public Health system to respond to new emergencies**, mainly due to two reasons: that it had to a great extent reached its capacity limits even before the pandemic, and because its policy content needed updating and rationalization. Both reasons were results of the 10-year economic crisis that preceded. In spite of the fact that secondary health care and its shortcomings came under the spotlight during the pandemic, the two most important deficiencies are the lack of a comprehensive primary care network that is accessible to all and a comprehensive framework for the prevention of diseases and accidents. These two elements would act as gatekeepers to secondary care and promote better health for all. A third -albeit less- persisting challenge is the rationalization of secondary health care management, both on financial and care outcome levels.

An institutional point of congestion that has been building for decades, seriously affecting the economic and social life is the partial **inability of the Justice system to cope with its workload** using its traditional ways and resources. Significant delays of trials of all categories lead economic disputes practically at an impasse, discouraging investments, as well as to postponement of closure for all kinds of cases. These have also contributed to public perceptions of impunity and lack of trust to essential institutions that, if not overturned, could undermine the country's democratic status and economic prospects.

Last but certainly not least, the **waste management challenge**. At the municipal level, lagging behind European targets, the country produces more waste than the EU average, partly because of tourism, and landfilling of waste amounts to 78% of total waste. Waste recycling is progressing, amounting to 21% of all waste, with still low composting or waste-to-energy activity. Overall, 5.4% of material resources come from recycled waste materials (vs. 12.8% in the EU). Concerning the circularity of the economy, even though progress has been observed, the circular material use rate remains also below the EU average. Overall, the country is required to accelerate its pace and carry out immediately significant investments and reforms in order to meet its post-2020 targets that are in effect. Finally, a somewhat neglected aspect of waste management in Greece, with strong cultural and educational influences, is the prevention of waste generation - becoming more demanding in the tourism context - which is necessary to ensure sustainability even in the most successful management systems.

⁴ A typical example, in January 2022 female unemployment was 16.6% when male unemployment rated 9.6%.

3.7 The COVID-19 pandemic

In the last two years, Greece, along with the rest of the world, has been trying to implement its policy commitments while encountering the COVID-19 pandemic. Mitigating the pandemic's impact has been a challenging task, made more difficult by the high percentage of elderly in the population and the imprint of a decade of recession and austerity, an effort expectedly overshadowed by loss of life and public uncertainty. Nevertheless, due to the prompt uptake of measures in order to contain the virus, enhancement of the public health system, effective interventions for the support of the economy and the rolling organization of the vaccination programme, Greece is considered to have managed the pandemic successfully.

A pandemic management system was established immediately, with a centralised approach. At the highest level, an Intervention Mechanism headed by the Prime Minister holds the power to make decisions on COVID-19 mitigation measures. Decisions are evidence-based, taking into account the report submitted to the Intervention Mechanism by a dedicated COVID-19 Observatory, which gathers data from all relevant governmental bodies (e.g. for Public Health, Civil Protection, Finance and Labour). A Committee of 21 renowned public health experts is set up at the Ministry of Health as a scientific advisory body. Also, the Governmental Committee for Coordination and Monitoring of Governmental Policy for the response to the pandemic of the coronavirus COVID-19 was established, with the participation of key government bodies, the local authorities, the Armed Forces, the security forces in terms of planning and programming of all necessary operational actions at national, regional and local level to deal with the consequences of the disease.

Among others, the committee's decisions have included the epidemiological surveillance of the country and the adoption of restrictive measures aimed at protecting public health, the reopening of public sector services and the resumption of operation of private sector industries. The government also viewed the pandemic as an opportunity to support the struggling healthcare system and increase healthcare capacity. Hence, a series of measures have been taken to enhance efficiency of the public health care system. Crucial reforms which had not been advanced due to the economic crisis were accelerated, such as e-prescription of medicines, digital services of the National Health System (NHS), recruitment of medical staff and a significant increase in ICU beds in public hospitals. Between March 2020 and February 2021, the Greek Healthcare System has been strengthened with more than 7,500 new recruitments (short-term contracts) of medical, nursing, paramedical and other staff, far exceeding the initial plan for 2,000 recruitments. Reference hospitals were initially designated for the treatment of confirmed COVID-19 cases while access to oncology and emergency services has been ensured. Moreover, a significant amount of monetary and in-kind donations (mostly medical consumables or personal protective equipment) has been directed to the health system through the Ministry of Health and later on through a centrally managed donation system.

As soon as the first vaccines were approved and available (2020), "Operation Freedom" was initiated. The national anti-COVID-19 vaccination programme prioritised all eligible populations according to medical vulnerability and included a roadmap for administering vaccines to anyone who opted for it, based on criteria such as occupation, recurring health issues and age. Appointments can be made via phone, physical points (e.g. pharmacies, Citizen Service Centres) or a digital platform, and accessible notifications are sent through the e-prescription system. Vaccines are being administered through many different structures of the National Health System, including public and military hospitals and dedicated centres, primary care facilities, mobile health units - especially for remote areas-, doctors' offices, while there is a provision for vaccination at home for the frail elderly people. In order to address scepticism about vaccines, incentives were introduced, tailored for different target groups, resulting in 73.46% of the population being fully vaccinated by May 5, 2022. A digital certificate is issued once the vaccination is complete, necessary for participating in many social and economic activities. At the same time, the government had to deal with the consequences of the imposed restrictions on the economy as well as on education. To this end, a number of compensatory measures have been taken, in order to alleviate those affected by the restrictive measures and the pandemic in general.

The Greek Government has financed a multitude of interventions to protect the economy and its citizens from the adverse effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. The total amount of measures that have been taken during the period 2020-2022 surpasses €43 billion. These measures provided a wide “safety net” for households and businesses, so that the effects of the health crisis are as small as possible. This effectively prevented the risk of the coronavirus pandemic leading to a surge in unemployment and closures of businesses. The measures consisted mainly of interventions: (i) facilitating natural and legal persons in servicing their debts; (ii) supporting horizontally affected workers, businesses and employment in general, as well as (iii) workers in seriously affected sectors (i.e. tourism) and for vulnerable population groups; and (iv) increasing the resilience and effectiveness of the state in the coronavirus response.

In particular, faced with the COVID-19 pandemic, Greece has taken a series of economic support measures in 2020 and 2021 in order to protect employment as well as disposable income. These measures, include, inter alia: (i) the reduction of VAT for a number of products and services (i.e. restaurant services, non-alcoholic beverages and drinks, all passenger transports, sanitary products, dialysis equipment), along with other specific relief measures associated with tax deferrals, enhanced tax refunds and income taxation (*fiscal measures*); (ii) the provision of refundable prepayment grants, advance payment programmes and State guarantee measures (*monetary measures*); and (iii) 40% reduction in commercial and primary residence rent, extension of deadlines for expiry and payment of bank cheques issued by affected enterprises and tourism industry, the suspension of performing loan repayments (for the principal amount) for affected enterprises, the extension of fully digitalised procedures, and the redirection of confiscated ethyl alcohol to produce antiseptic by public entities.

The extraordinary conditions of the pandemic also led to a paradigm shift in teaching and learning, which was massively embraced by teachers, students and their parents. Similar to other policy areas, the Greek government acted promptly in order to ensure that contact with the educational process is maintained. E-learning platforms were utilised, while courses for classes at pre-primary and primary levels were broadcasted through national TV (interpretation in Greek sign language was also available). Facilitating the pupils’ right to education and following a request made by the competent Ministries, cell phone carriers agreed to offer access to various educational platforms at no cost. Moreover, digital infrastructure at schools has been reinforced, while accessibility to e-learning was supported with a €200 voucher awarded to over 500,000 children and youngsters (4-24 years old) for the supply of tablets/ laptops/ desktop PCs. A voucher for the **purchase of technological equipment** is offered to **teachers**. This voucher is part of the interministerial program Digital Care II, part of the National Recovery and Resilience Plan. Additionally, Greek teachers were actively supported through a fast-track training program, the largest ever implemented in the country. Continuity in education was also ensured for Public Vocational Training Institutes as well as for public Universities (96.35% of undergraduate courses were provided through synchronous distance learning). During lockdown textbooks for tertiary education students were delivered free of charge to their place of residence, while Universities had the opportunity to upgrade their digital infrastructure and services.

Specifically, with regards to the pandemic, Greece leveraged the digital transition tools towards three goals: to help the healthcare system save as many lives as possible, to maintain business continuity for the government and to support and empower citizens by deploying technology solutions. Therefore, gov.gr was promptly launched in March 2020, featuring hundreds of popular digital services, in order to help minimize the citizen’s travel to a government service centre. At the same time, it deployed tele-conference, teleworking, healthcare (drug prescriptions on the cloud), remote education, arts streaming digital solutions, a “Digital Solidarity” platform as well as a digital service for citizens to request work commute and extraordinary movement permits during the COVID-19 lockdowns via SMS text messages, which was recommended by OECD as a digital best practice of government COVID-19 responses. With the goal to streamline as many processes as possible, the competent Ministry of Digital Governance also deployed a COVID-19 patient registry, paperless prescriptions for all patients in order to simplify drug purchase and delivery and eliminate unnecessary visits to drugstores and physicians.

Additionally, in order to curb physical presence at government agencies due to the pandemic, it launched video call services that enable citizens and businesses to meet and interact with civil service via video conference calls. This family of services proved to be very popular and has been extended to many other agencies.

Overall a significant effort has been made to turn the obstacles created by the pandemic into stepping stones for further progress. **The National Health System has been strengthened with many new Intensive Care Units, thousands of new staff recruited and an innovative tracking system** that will shield the country in the face of future challenges. The financial support to employment had significant results not only in retaining jobs but in creating new ones: before the pandemic was over the country scored its lowest unemployment in 10 years. In addition, the pandemic was used as an opportunity to provide a range of digital services to citizens, which are already reshaping the Greek state against the bureaucratic inertia of the past. Very significantly, the relaxation of some fiscal rules at the pan-European level in order to deal with the pandemic, allows for spending and investments that will improve the country's standard of living and reduce the gap with its richer partners.

At international level, it is worth pointing out that Greece has donated over 4 million doses of COVID-19 vaccines, through bilateral agreements, to Albania, Armenia, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Egypt, Gabon, Ghana, Iran, Jordan, Kenya, Libya, North Macedonia, Rwanda, Tunisia, Ukraine, and Vietnam. The vaccines delivered, serve as an example of solidarity of Greece to its partner countries and of commitment to share resources to fight the COVID-19 pandemic. Moreover, Greece offered almost 6 million doses of COVID-19 vaccines, 4.3 million of which were immediately donated, via the European Union COVAX mechanism, to Djibouti, Ethiopia, Indonesia, Kenya, Laos, Nigeria, Pakistan and Syria, thus contributing to the full vaccination of approximately 17% of the combined population of these countries.

Respect and protection of the value of the human being constitute the primary obligations of the State.

All persons have the right to participate in the Information Society. Facilitation of access to electronically transmitted information, as well as of the production, exchange and diffusion thereof, constitutes an obligation of the State, always in observance of the guarantees of articles 9, 9A and 19.

PROGRESS ON GOALS AND TARGETS



SDGs and related policies

The Greek VNR 2022 is, to a significant extent, the country's **roadmap towards achieving the SDGs**. This chapter presents Greece's main **recent policies** and measures, mostly between 2018 (first Greek VNR) and 2021, as well as a selection of **forward-looking initiatives** expected to be launched within 2022 with some of their **milestones** and **budgets**. Specific reference to the relevance of each measure to the underlying Targets with the SDG (and connection to other SDGs in many cases) relates the effectiveness of the measures to the implementation of the Goals. Furthermore, the chapter examines the progress made at the national level in all 17 Goals, highlights the policy and legal framework, and displays some **good practice examples**. Key **challenges** are briefly discussed in each SDG and **progress** is mainly assessed through relevant SDG **indicators** that, unless stated otherwise, have been provided by the Hellenic Statistical Authority (ELSTAT) and can be found, among others, in Annex I.

Child mainstreaming

Having experienced the dire impacts of recurrent crises, accompanied for a while by low performance in many social indicators, Greece has strongly associated its pathway to sustainable development with children's well-being. Better education, equal opportunities to psychosocial development, unhindered inclusion, protection from poverty and violence, a healthy way of living and SDG awareness are among the main priority fields for this important investment in the country's resilience and prosperity. The VNR process provided the opportunity to illustrate this high priority by **mainstreaming child-related policies**, including policies for families' protection and mental health, in 13 SDGs as shown in the following **infographic**.



Mainstreaming policies for children and families among SDGs



Economic relief measures for the most vulnerable households, against the adverse effects of the international energy crisis

State support for low-income households to deal with their mortgage loan debts

Benefit of 2.000 euros for every child born in Greece

Better access of vulnerable rural population to basic services or services enhancing the quality of life

Social Solidarity Income

Financial literacy for the 15+

Training, mediation and job preparation for teens and youth at risk

Asylum seekers' access to housing, healthcare, food and clothing provided in kind, or as financial allowances or in vouchers



Food and meals distribution system to 400.000 households per month with support services for children

Daily school meals for 225.000 pupils

Nutritional standards for foods offered in schools, kindergartens and nurseries

National Food Policy Plan against malnutrition

Program against (risk of) obesity in children and adolescents

Groceries, cooked meals and cash assistance, for Asylum Seekers



PROGRESS ON GOALS AND TARGETS

The National Vaccination Programme, for vulnerable populations

National Childhood Cancer Registry

Community mental health care

New mental health structures and services for children, adolescents and young adults

Early Intervention in Psychosis Units and short-stay facilities for people with autism

Telepsychiatry outpatient network for the remote support of adults and minors in remote areas

"No One Alone in the Pandemic" psychological support helpline for Covid-19 patients and their families

Two mobile health clinics for age assessment and essential health services to unaccompanied children

Prenatal and perinatal screening for 270,000 pregnant women and their newborns

Establishment of Human Milk Banks and of breastfeeding areas in workplaces and Health and Culture facilities

Alcohol prevention programme for 291,000 young people aged 14-24

Sex education for boys, girls, and relationships in adolescence

Traffic education and road safety for children and youth



Upgrading of public schools' operation and curricula

Investments in infrastructure for general and special education as well as VET, placing emphasis on the digital equipment.

Evaluation of the educational work of schools

Reform of the educational program of infants aged from 3 months to 4 years, to promote their cognitive development, including early diagnosis of cognitive impairment.

Universal mandatory education from the age of 4

English lessons in all public pre-primary kindergartens

Skills Labs in primary and secondary education, for a wide variety of skills (i.e. soft skills, life skills, technology and science skills), values, and attitudes (e.g. social empathy)

Better VET for students with disabilities and/or special educational needs

Model vocational high schools,

Strategic Plan for Equal Access of Persons with Disabilities to all levels of Education and measures for inclusive and equitable education

Measures for access of unaccompanied minors to education

In addition to formal, a holistic non-formal education is provided to Applicants for and Beneficiaries of International Protection.

Access of immigrants and refugees' children to the educational system through intercultural schools, reception and tutorial classes, and second chance schools

Interventions aimed to upskill the low-skilled/low-qualified young people aged 16-24, including adolescents and youth at risk, with a migrant, refugee or minority background, children and young people with disabilities, unaccompanied children, and children with complex needs

Education for sustainable development through teacher training

Various programmes for linguistic and intercultural training, active vocational guidance, vocational training on basic, digital and technical skills, as well as skills certification to promote integration of refugees to the labour market



Support of equal sharing of parental leave between men and women, introducing paternity leave and protection from dismissal upon applying for it

Legal reformulation of family relationships, particularly between parents and children, after spouse separation

Nannies of the Neighborhood: accredited caregivers and financial support to working mothers to cover a part of the childcare cost through a voucher for babies, aged from 2 months to 2.5 years

Creation of Childcare units within large companies

National Programme on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women including shelters that provide accommodation and food to women-victims and their children

Measures to strengthen the primary, secondary and tertiary prevention of gender-based violence, child abuse and human trafficking, primarily at first reception facilities, with an emphasis on women and children.

Strategy on Fighting Trafficking in Human Beings with particular focus on the most vulnerable groups



Urgent action for Roma families in settlements for the supply of sanitary material and other services, including information activities on precautionary Covid-19 measures, disinfection and drinking water



The National Action Plan for Alleviating Energy Poverty

Measures to address energy poverty including discounts to the electricity bills for vulnerable customers

Just Development Transition Master Plan to mitigate the effects of de-carbonisation on social cohesion and economy of dependent areas



Increase of the minimum salary and wage for full-time employment in 2022.

Regulation of teleworking, with emphasis on respect for the privacy and work hours of the teleworker.

Hosting and accommodation services for low-income families, to the infants, toddlers and children and persons with disabilities at public and private nurseries and child care facilities of integrated care, at kindergartens and creative occupation centers.

New curricula for 50 Apprenticeship Vocational Schools and 30 Vocational Training Institutes, attended by 10,000 students annually

Programmes for the integration of refugee women and men in the labour market and protocol against Forced Labour.

National Youth Guarantee Action Plan



Strategy for social inclusion and fight against poverty and the National Plan for the protection of Children's Rights as commitments to reduce child poverty and deprivation

Mentorship programme to support unaccompanied children in every step of their journey; including reception, accommodation, education, ensuring children's smooth transition to adulthood as well as their integration into the labour market.

Subsidized access to employment for women returning to work after childbirth or victims of gender-based and domestic violence and young offenders or youth at social risk.

National Action Plan for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

Personal assistants for people/families with disabilities for responsibility relief, deinstitutionalization and independent living

Reform of the community-based services for persons with disabilities to facilitate establishment of Supported Living Homes for Persons with Disabilities

The National Deinstitutionalization Strategy including a pilot program of professional foster care for children with disabilities, a mobile support unit for families with disabilities, the development of creative employment centers and the creation of day care centers for the disabled.

National Roma Strategy and Action Plan

Roma Branches and mediators, established in community centers of municipalities hosting significant rates of Roma, to support all aspects of social integration

Social mediation and preventive security training for Police personnel in direct contact with the Roma communities

A first-time National Strategy for LGBTQ+ Equality to protect them from discrimination in health services, contacting the police and all public administration, working environments and school.

Establishment of a permanent procedure for the integration of third country nationals in the labor market in order to enhance their livelihoods.

Intercultural mediation services in municipal Community Centers and Migrant Integration Centers.

Amendments on the provisions of the Code of Greek Citizenship for a more objective, transparent and faster acquisition of Greek citizenship

Migrant Integration Centers



Special programme for energy renovation of residential buildings, for vulnerable households to adapt their dwellings to climate conditions & change, through a range of improvements

Mechanism to rapidly identify unaccompanied children who are homeless or living in insecure conditions and provide safe and secure accommodation and support.

Enhanced long-term accommodation for unaccompanied minors

Housing and work for the homeless

Housing and work for homeless persons and families, among which single parent and Roma families and, until now, a total of 160 children.

Program to cover the renovation costs for 100 houses of very low income households aiming to reduce homelessness in the two largest Greek cities

Infrastructure improvement in Roma settlements & temporary relocation

Antonis Tritsis programme for integrated strategic plans supporting sustainable development and social solidarity (including schools' safety) at local and regional levels

Sustainable urban mobility plans, mandatory for municipalities of more than 30,000 inhabitants

Subsidized tickets in public and intercity transport for students of all educational levels



National adaptation strategy, including educational material and training for primary and secondary school teachers in order to improve education and awareness-raising for climate adaptation



National Action Plan for Children's Rights 2021-2023, including provisions for Child-Friendly Justice.

A first National Plan against Child Sexual Abuse, to safeguard the health and dignity of children-victims of an underreported crime, minimize incidents and raise awareness

Abolishment of protective custody of unaccompanied minors deprived of safe or known accommodation

Amendment of the institutional framework for fostering and adoption to ensure that all children coming under state responsibility have equal access to a family and home, foster or adoptive.

Independent Office for Minor Victims (House of the Child) to facilitate the judicial examination of children who were victims of sexual violence and abuse

Amendment of the institutional framework governing the Companies for the Protection of Minors and Children's Homes and the Services of Juvenile Supervisors

Interdisciplinary seminars for Judges, on the child-friendly justice and the rights of children that are victims of criminal acts.

National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security including protection of women and girls from gender-based, sexual and domestic violence, sexual exploitation and abuse

National Council against Racism and Intolerance in an effort to tackle racism and discrimination, xenophobia, antisemitism and intolerance and Guide on the rights of victims of racist crimes.



Working Group on the protection of victims of human trafficking

Collaborative initiatives aimed at protecting the LGBTQI+ community's adults, minors and families, against intolerance and hate crimes, promoting inclusion and acceptance

National multi-stakeholder educational project for sustainable development: "I defend my right to the environment, health, employment, I think and act BEFORE I recycle: Education for the circular economy" for schools and local communities

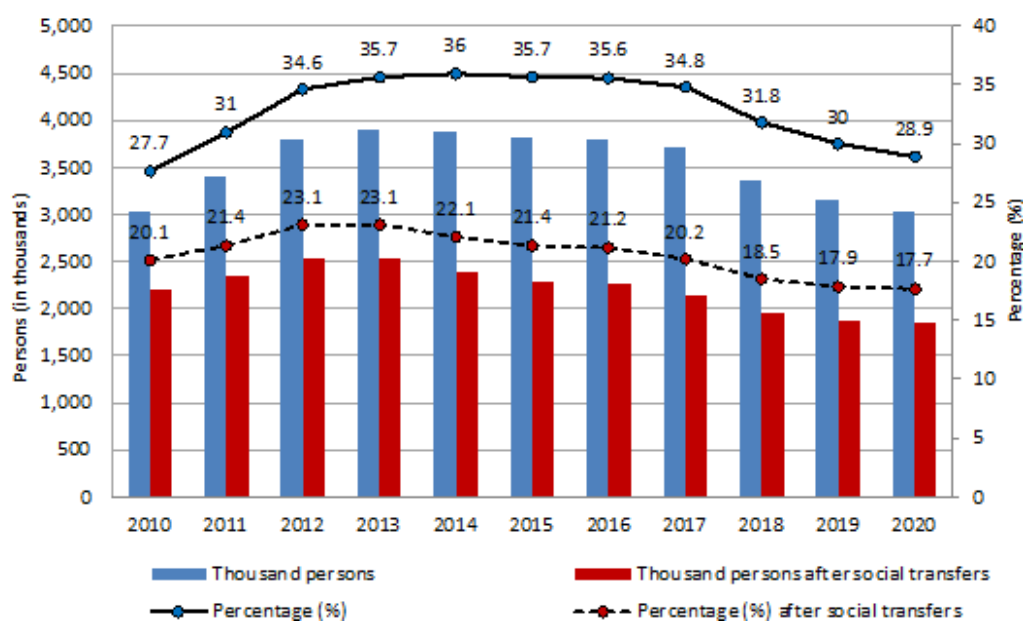
1 NO
POVERTY



End poverty in all its forms everywhere



People at risk of poverty or social exclusion and at risk of income poverty after social transfers



Assessment of progress in relevant SDG indicators

- After 9 years of rates exceeding 30%, 2020 is the first year to see people at risk of poverty before social transfers reach 28.9%. Following a similar trajectory, the risk of poverty after social transfers showed the lowest rate in 11 years, at 17.7% (2020).
- During the decade of the financial crisis, severely deprived people reached a peak in 2016 (22.4%) and the rate has been declining to reach 16.6% in 2020.
- A significant decrease of people living in poor housing conditions has been observed as the rate has dropped, despite the financial crisis, from 17.1% (2010) to 12.5% (2020).
- Keeping houses warm is a challenge for Greek people as, in spite of the significant decrease of the high rates of the financial crisis, 17.1% (2020) of the population still cannot meet this need adequately, to this rate contributing 39.2% of people living on below 60% of median income.

Key challenges

Poverty eradication constitutes an ethical, social, political and economic imperative for humankind, and Greece has set the priority of reducing at least by half, the proportion of people living in poverty and to achieve substantial coverage of the poor and the vulnerable. The main challenge is to address the high poverty rates created between 2008 and 2013, as a result of an economic crisis which brought an increase in unemployment rates together with a pre-existing inadequate social safety net. In the last two years, the great risk of these conditions being exacerbated by the pandemic called for immediate action to support citizens and the economy. Many of the policies implemented or planned aim to provide solutions for persons aged 67 and older with low income who did not receive any pension or social security benefit, for uninsured elders who do not own a house and for people living in deep poverty and social exclusion (school meals programme and meals for the most deprived). Non-performing loans given before the financial crisis posed a threat on thousands of poor households and the banking sector. Regarding the poverty level of persons with disabilities, Greece faces the challenge to serve citizens with an integrated social inclusion and social cohesion mechanism for the provision of interactive applications and services through a Single Digital Portal and to ensure decent independent living conditions (camping programme, reduced travel ticket). Finally, measures address the country's low demographic rates, promote parenthood and support the family and social cohesion.

Main policy initiatives and measures

- In 2021, the Government adopted a comprehensive package of **relief measures** aimed at supporting society and particularly the most vulnerable, **against the adverse effects of the international energy crisis**. Indicatively, the most important measures include: increase of the disposable income of the citizens in order to support their purchasing power, increase of state subsidy for electricity and natural gas bills, increase of the heating allowance (by expanding the income and property criteria) and provision of additional financial support to low-income retirees and people with disabilities. **SDGs 1.3, 1.4, 7.1**
- In order to face the adverse effects of the **Covid-19 pandemic**, the Government adopted in 2020 and 2021 a comprehensive package of specific legislative measures targeting, in particular, the poor and most vulnerable. These measures include, inter alia: (i) the introduction of a programme to support borrowers affected by the enormous consequences of the Covid-19 pandemic, through a state contribution for the repayment of their loans with a mortgage to the main residence (Bridge I), and (ii) the establishment of a state contribution programme for the repayment of business loans, for borrowers affected by the severe impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic (Bridge II). **SDG 1.4**
- In order to assist the low-income households to deal with their debts, Greece adopted in 2019 a new law on the option of **regulating the primary residence mortgage loans**, by granting a state subsidy in the form of monthly instalments for the repayment of the regulated amount. **SDG 1.4**
- In 2020, the Government passed a new law on **debt restructuring and second chance**, transposing the European Union (EU) Directive 1023/2019, which allows households and businesses to settle all their debts towards tax authority, social security funds, banks and servicers, through out-of-court or judicial settlement procedures or through bankruptcy and debt write-off proceedings. The new institutional framework provided for by this legislative initiative has three main pillars: (i) the establishment of an early warning mechanism, in order to avoid over-indebtedness and insolvency; (ii) the establishment of insolvency procedures by providing effective tools for the restructuring of all the debts, such as the out-of-court settlement mechanism for households and small businesses, the rehabilitation scheme for medium and large businesses, the use of mediation, and the provision of support to socially vulnerable groups, through state subsidy for loans with collateral on their primary residence; (iii) the establishment of bankruptcy procedures for natural persons and legal entities which are unable to meet their debts and simultaneously discharge them of all debts after liquidation of their assets. **SDG 1.4**
- The Government completed in September 2020 the drafting of the **National Private Debt Resolution Strategy**, in cooperation with the European Commission's Directorate-General for Structural Reform Support (DG REFORM). **SDG 1.4**
- The Government has developed a **network of 52 borrowers' information and support centres**, providing free information to any interested party on the options for dealing with their debts, as well as the rights and obligations arising from the respective legislation. Through this, over 62,361 debtors (employees, pensioners, freelancers, small entrepreneurs, farmers, workers, vulnerable social groups, etc.) have the opportunity to receive free personalized advice, instructions and support, on the problems of arrears they face and in particular for the procedures provided for in the new integrated institutional framework. **SDG 1.4**
- In the context of the **National Rural Development Programme (RDP) 2014-2020**, Greece pursues measures, which promote the design and implementation of local integrated development strategies, with the participation of stakeholders in rural areas implemented by Local Action Groups – LAGs (LEADER/CLLD). In this regard, particular emphasis is placed, inter alia, on the implementation of public works – infrastructure regarding the access of rural population, including the poor and the vulnerable farmers, to basic services or services enhancing the quality of life (indicatively basic services for old and young residents, restoration of areas, sport activities etc.) and facilitating the

introduction of the related services. In addition, the RDP includes actions that support the development of broadband infrastructure and the provision of broadband services for all in rural areas. [SDG 1.4](#)

- In 2021, a new law was passed entitled “**State support to businesses and non-profit entities for damages from natural disasters**”. The primary objective of this legislative initiative is to ensure the effective, coordinated and timely implementation of state support funds to businesses and non-profit entities, including those in vulnerable situations, on the basis of clear procedures and organizational structures, in order to cover emergencies and damages from natural disasters, primarily caused by climate change or other natural disasters such as floods, forest fires, landslides and earthquakes. State support actions and funds are implemented through the state support platform (arogi.gov.gr), a database with information on every support given to citizens, as well as to businesses and non-profit entities, after natural disasters. [SDG 1.5](#)
- The “**Help at Home**” programme has been running successfully in Greece since 1998. It is implemented by the municipalities of the country and the primary objective is to provide assistance to the elderly, the persons with disabilities, and those living alone or having a low income, through the provision of a wide range of services, from at home medical and nursing treatment to the supply of food and other basic necessities. [SDGs 1.1-1.5, 2.1](#)
- A 2020 law established a benefit of **€2,000.00 for every child born** in Greece. The enactment of the childbirth benefit aims at strengthening the country’s demographic policy, and supporting parenthood, as well as family and social cohesion, which have been seriously compromised during the period of economic crisis. [SDGs 1.2, 1.3](#)
- Following the rapid increase in poverty from 2008 until 2013, the rate of people at risk of poverty or social exclusion and at risk of income poverty after social transfers, are in decline ever since 2014 but still remain at high levels. A further improvement of the situation is expected due to the increase in employment and the reforms of the social protection system. Policies that have been implemented over the past four years to address the problem include the **Social Solidarity Income (GMI)**, the **social solidarity benefit for uninsured elders**, a **housing benefit for uninsured elders**, **two financial aid schemes for uninsured and financially weak elders**, and extensive food programmes described under SDG 2 below. [SDGs 1.3, 10.2](#)
- Greece is in full compliance with its international and European obligations regarding the reception of applicants for international protection. **Asylum seekers are entitled to protection**, including access to material reception conditions that include housing, healthcare, food and clothing provided in kind, or as financial allowances or in vouchers. Moreover, financial allowances are provided on a monthly basis ensuring that their needs are met, without exposing the applicants to financial hardship. [SDGs 1.1-1.4](#)

Best practice example

Better employment opportunities for youth at risk

SDGs 1.1, 1.2, 1.4, 4.3, 4.4, 4.5, 8.3, 8.5, 8.6, 10.1, 10.2, 10.7

With a view to breaking the poverty trap of low skills that leads individuals to a lifelong economic struggle and instability, Greek authorities recognise the need for supporting adolescents and youth. OAED and UNICEF are implementing a partnership-based project (2021-2022) under the EU Child Guarantee Initiative Preparatory action, to Support adolescents and youth at risk for better employment opportunities. The project is mainly targeted at young people aged 16-24 at risk, including those with a migrant, refugee or minority background, children and young persons with disabilities, unaccompanied children, and children with complex needs, aiming at providing them with opportunities to enhance their employability. Activities completed include a labour market needs analysis in the Attica Region with emphasis on young people from groups at risk of social exclusion, a digital platform with multiple functionalities aiming at facilitating the integration services offered by OAED to these specific groups (skills assessment – e-portfolio – matching), as well as three targeted Vocational Training Actions: “Intercultural Mediator for young people with a migrant/refugee background” (completed), “Intercultural Mediator for Roma Education” (to be launched), and “Social Entrepreneurship” (currently implemented). Next steps, until conclusion at the end of 2022, include group counseling, such as job search techniques and active career guidance, as well as work placements, so that beneficiaries can acquire work experience and quality work opportunities linking their skills to labour market needs. Within the same framework, a support action for Social Cooperative Enterprises is under preparation, specially designed for young social entrepreneurs with disabilities and aiming to help them start their own businesses.

Forthcoming initiatives

- Launch a number of **projects funded by the EU Recovery and Resilience Fund (RRF)**, related to: (i) the establishment of a Public Credit Bureau, which will provide a valid and objective credit rating of natural persons and legal entities, based on their data and payment profile towards the public sector (tax authorities and social security institutions), in order to fill the information gap and information asymmetry between creditors and debtors; (ii) the upgrade/development of an electronic platform to support the early warning mechanism and the out-of-court settlement of debts for individuals and legal entities; (iii) the implementation of the National Private Debt Resolution Strategy; and (iv) the development of a monitoring registry for private debt. **SDG 1.4**
- In 2022 a new program will be implemented concerning the **State support of the main residence loans of vulnerable households**, as an interim scheme until the creation of the Sale and Lease-back Organization (SLBO) of the new insolvency law. Specifically, the program provides a state subsidy for the mortgage instalment of vulnerable debtors for €70 to €210 per month, depending on the composition of the household. The duration of the program will be 15 months. The main benefit for vulnerable debtors is the avoidance of creditors’ measures (e.g. foreclosures, auctions and evictions). Eligible are debtors who meet the income, property and other criteria that were established and are valid in the welfare program “Housing Allowance”. These criteria are checked when issuing a certificate of vulnerability, which is necessary for participation in the program and which is issued by a special electronic platform of the Special Secretariat for Private Debt Management. **SDG 1.4**

- At the end of the aforementioned program, vulnerable debtors who will not be able to adhere to a sustainable debt settlement, will be able to use the provisions of a private sector legal entity acting as an **Acquisition and Leaseback Body (SLBO)**, which will be selected by the State through a concession agreement. This Body will undertake the obligation to acquire the primary residence of a vulnerable debtor (who is bankrupt) or before the auction, by paying the commercial value of the asset. Then, the primary residence will be leased back to the insolvent person for twelve years, at the end of which, the debtor has a right to buy it back. In July 2021 a new electronic platform was launched, through which debtors have the opportunity to be certified as vulnerable under particular criteria and therefore be eligible for the social provisions of the Law -such as the SLBO- and the possible receipt of a housing benefit. The next steps include the selection of the financial advisor, the adoption of the relevant Ministerial Decision on Expression of Interest (EoI) and the launch of the SLBO interest process, as well as the evaluation and pre-selection of candidates for SLBO. The ratification of the respective law by the Parliament -according to the baseline scenario- is expected in June -September of 2023. **SDG 1.4**
- In Greece, non-performing loans and excessive debt cause obstacles to economic prosperity at the individual level, but also to the economic stability in general. In this context, the Greek Government is in the process of developing **a national strategy for financial literacy and financial skills** for its citizens, in order to improve their financial well-being and at the same time promote the health of the financial system. As part of the project, a mapping study of the existing financial education activities in Greece will be completed by May 2022 and a gap analysis from the desired situation as well as a benchmarking report based on the collection of quantitative data on the financial literacy of adults and young people (15-18) in school will be completed by November 2022. **SDG 1.4**
- Beginning in 2022, the **Single Digital Access Portal to Social Protection** will be gradually developed. The project will be funded by the RRF. The Single Digital Portal aspires to expand the functions of the National Mechanism for Coordination, Monitoring and Evaluation of Social Inclusion and Social Cohesion Policies (NM) and to eventually integrate the electronic application forms of the cash social assistance benefits into a single digital portal. **SDG 1.3**

2 ZERO HUNGER



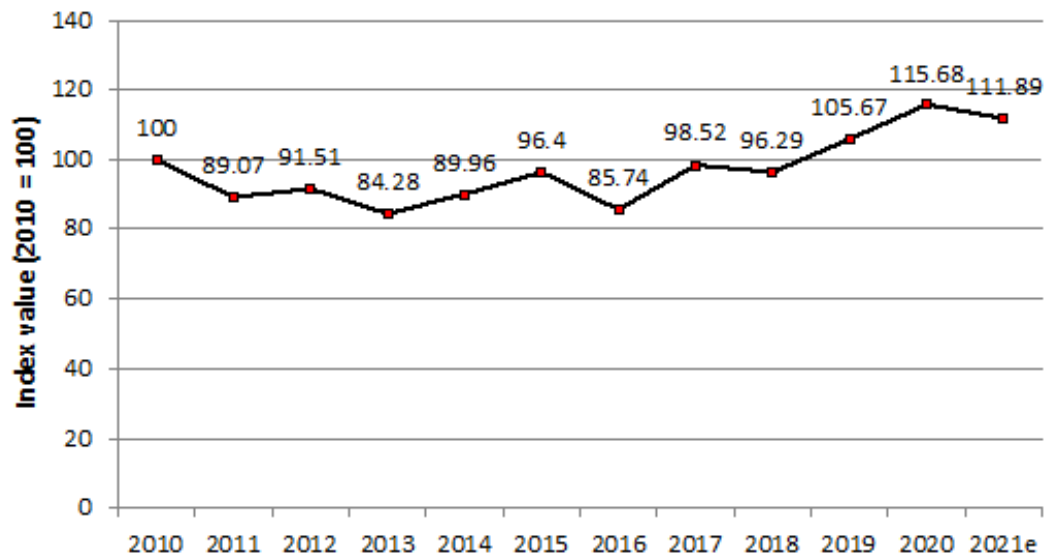
End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture



Percentage of pre-Obese and Obese people

Year	% Pre-Obese	% Obese	% Overweight
2014	39.4	17.3	56.7
2019	41.0	16.7	57.6

Index of the real income of factors in agriculture per annual work unit (2010=100)



Assessment of progress in relevant SDG indicators

- Overweight (pre-obese and obese) adults in Greece remain a relatively stable proportion of the population at 57.6% with a tendency to increase. This ranks the country above the EU-members average, although not in the highest cluster. There is currently an effort to bring out obesity as a serious risk factor for health problems and diseases.
- The index of real income of agricultural factors per annual unit of work, showed fluctuations during the period 2010-2018. Since 2019 it demonstrates an increase, mainly due to the implementation of policies in the agricultural sector placing emphasis on technological and organizational modernization, human resources development, close cooperation with research agencies and the repositioning of Greek agri-food products to the domestic and international markets.
- The government financial support to agricultural R&D which had been relatively low at up to €3.1 per inhabitant, shows an increasing trend especially after 2019 and onwards, reaching €5.3 per inhabitant (2019). Areas under organic farming increase slowly, marking 1% more in a decade.

Key challenges

The attainment of the zero hunger goal is facing challenges such as the steady, and at times pressing, influx of migrants and asylum seekers, as well as the vital need to ensure that all children up to 12 years old have access to at least one nutritious meal per day. Poor nutrition and dietary risks, including low fruit and vegetable intake, and high sugar, salt and sugar-sweetened beverages consumption, are estimated to account for about 15% of all deaths in Greece. At the same time, while adult obesity rates are close to the EU average, the relevant childhood and adolescence obesity percentages are steadily growing and more than one in five 15-year-olds are overweight or obese, a percentage higher than in most other EU countries.

The framework for achieving food security and sustainable agriculture is set by the EU Green Deal, "Farm-to-Fork" and Biodiversity Strategies, in combination with the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). This framework has been implemented nationally since 2014 through the Rural Development Program, and a new period is now beginning with the aim to address challenges such as improving the productivity and incomes of small-scale farmers, promoting secure and equal access to land and other productive resources, fostering knowledge, technology, financial services, markets and opportunities for value addition, and supporting sustainable and innovative food production systems and organic farming practices. Within the Recovery and Resiliency Fund (RRF) framework, the reform "Economic Transformation of the Agri-Food Sector" seeks, inter alia, to improve the environmental profile of agricultural holdings and to ensure food safety and adequacy, and the reform "Digital Transformation of the Agri-Food Sector" aims at promoting the sustainable management of natural resources. Within the new National Waste Prevention Programme 2021-2030, particular focus is given to food waste prevention, an area where the country is underperforming, where measures are adopted and incentives are provided for encouraging food donation and redistribution.

Main policy initiatives and measures

- **Food and meals distribution system** through the Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived (FEAD) contributes to achieving the specific objective of alleviating the worst forms of poverty, by providing non-financial assistance to the most deprived persons by food, basic material assistance and social inclusion activities, aiming at the social integration of the most deprived persons. The program has been implemented nationally since 2015. The Greek FEAD supports (i) national schemes whereby food and basic material assistance, are distributed to the most deprived persons **through 57 Social Partners** and (ii) accompanying measures, complementing the provision of food and basic material assistance with a total budget of €276m for Food and €45m for Basic Material Assistance. In July 2021 an additional budget of €62,797,650 was approved in order for the financial gap between the two periods to be covered. In view of the new programming period, the budget of the program is expected to reach €400m. FEAD has been totally integrated since 2017 in the Guaranteed Minimum Income (GMI) eligibility rules and business processes, in relation to the implementation of the second pillar, to deliver complementary social services. Each GMI's recipient unit can be automatically included in FEAD, without a separate application. Each recipient receives a food package or takes part in the accompanying measures if the payment of the GMI income support has not been discontinued. Indicative accompanying measures are: psychosocial support, empowerment and social integration services to children and their families, dietary and healthy eating advice, family budget management advice and supportive after-school tutoring. Number of beneficiaries: 347.214. **SDGs 2.1, 2.2, 10.2, 10.4**
- **Asylum seekers** in Greece receive **groceries** and cooked **meals** through framework contracts by the Ministry of Migration and Asylum, as well as **cash assistance**, ensuring a long term food planning and nutrition security. **SDGs 2.1, 2.2**

- As of the second half of 2019, a dedicated effort was initiated towards combating malnutrition and obesity. The **National Food Policy Plan** aims to integrate healthy dietary habits and exercise into the daily lives of the Greek population. A specific online questionnaire, to collect statistical data on infant nutrition, was disseminated in public and private nurseries and kindergartens. Moreover, initiatives were taken scoping on raising awareness, dietary specifications were issued for the School Meals program and a specific section regarding nutrition and exercise was introduced in schools under the Skills Labs as seen in SDG4. Furthermore, the National Public Health Strategy "Spyros Doxiadis" Program, was launched in 2020, targeting -among others- the adoption of healthy dietary habits, while promoting the necessity of physical activity for all age groups. Key priorities include: (i) the mapping of behavioural, social and environmental risk factors, in order to address each of them with specific action plans; (ii) the control and management of risk factors related to malnutrition and physical inactivity; and (iii) the implementation of information and awareness-raising campaigns for the general population on the benefits of well-being by changing daily habits. **SDG 2.2, 3.4**
- Cooperation between the Government and the food industry is pursued for the improvement of the nutritional composition of food products (food reformulation), with the aim of reducing the addition of salt, sugars, saturated fatty acids and industrially produced trans fatty acids. Suggested actions aimed at food reformulation include producing food with healthier profiles (e.g. less salt and sugar), selling food in smaller portions, limiting advertising and other promoting techniques for foods high in salt, added sugars, and trans fats, and setting nutritional standards for foods offered in specific structures (such as schools, kindergartens, nursing homes, camps, etc.). **SDG 2.2**
- Authorities issued specific instructions regarding the diet offered to infants and toddlers in public and private nurseries and kindergartens. The nurseries were encouraged to include wholemeal products to ensure that children have an adequate intake of fibre, to include vegetables on a daily basis and to exclude foods containing added sugars. Furthermore, recommendations regarding the feeding of pupils were sent in all-day schools, both in terms of measures to prevent the spread of coronavirus and measures to prevent foodborne diseases. **SDG 2.2**
- Within the framework of the **RDP 2014-2020**, Greece promotes measures and actions aimed at: (i) reducing water pollution from nitrate ions and other polluting inputs (e.g. phosphate ions) related to agricultural activity, targeting at vulnerable areas, including wetlands, through the take up of relevant eco-friendly commitments such as green manure incorporation and land being left fallow; (ii) supporting both switching to and conservation of organic agriculture practices, which contribute to the protection of the environment (soil, water and biodiversity), the production of quality products and animal welfare; (iii) increasing the competitiveness of viable agricultural holdings, through the realization of related investments (buildings, constructions, machinery), the purchase of perennial plantations, fencing and landscaping works, purchase of software and office equipment; and (iv) supporting new farmer entrepreneurs in developing their agricultural activities and increasing the competitiveness of their agricultural holdings. **SDGs 2.3, 2.4**
- **Food waste prevention** is an important part of the new National Waste Prevention Programme 2021-2030. Measures are adopted and incentives are provided for encouraging food donation and redistribution in order to reduce food losses along the whole production and supply chain, by 2030, and reduce by 30% food waste per capita in relation to food waste produced in 2022 at retail and consumer level. **SDGs 2.1, 2.2, 12.3, 11.6**
- Regarding food safety, protection fraud and protection of the local farmers and importers, the last 2.5 years, in order to prevent the adulteration of products and eliminate products with forged identities, joint committees (of the Ministry of Rural Development and Food, of Hellenic Food Authority "EFET", of Hellenic Agricultural Organization "ELGO-DIMITRA", of the Economic Police, of the General Directorate of Customs, of Special Secretariat for Financial and Economic Crime Unit, of the General Secretariat of Trade & Consumer Protection and of the Directorates of Agricultural Economy and Veterinary of the Regions), are carrying out intensified audits on the market and the entrance gates of the country. **SDGs 2.1, 2.3, 2.b**

Best practice example

School meals programme SDGs 2.1, 2.2

The school meals programme was introduced in 2017. It is funded by the state budget and is implemented by private contractors providing the meals directly to schools. The programme is implemented in specific primary schools across the country and is gradually expanding every school year. During the pilot school year 2016-2017, 60 schools had been included in the programme with 9,014 pupils. The following school year 2017-2018, 800 schools had been included in the programme with 130,000 pupils. During the school year 2018-2019, the programme was extended to cover 153,244 pupils and the following two school years, 2019-2020 and 2020-2021, 1,353 schools had been included in the programme with 185,311 pupils.

Finally, during the current school year 2021-2022, a total of 1,621 schools had been included in the programme with 224,335 pupils. The government wishes to keep the programme oriented in areas affected by hardship or underprivileged ones. Its main aim is to provide young children with one nutritious meal per day so that it is ensured that all children have access to indispensable, in quality and quantity, nutritional elements. In 2019 an interim evaluation took place in which students from 12 schools (random sampling), contractors, teachers, programme coordinators and parents participated by filling in an anonymous electronic questionnaire. The purpose of the evaluation was to highlight the positive and negative elements of the programme in order to help improve it.

Forthcoming initiatives

- A key milestone for tackling obesity is the roll-out of the **National Action Plan for Public Health 2021-25**, that encompasses a comprehensive program to address the risk of obesity in Greece, with a focus on specific initiatives for children and adolescents. Furthermore, a National Action Plan is being developed for the prevention of obesity in vulnerable children. **SDG 2.2**
- Implementation measures and actions of the **RDP 2014-2020**, covering the transitional period 2021-2022. **SDGs 2.3, 2.4**
- Implementing the reform "**Economic Transformation of the Agri-Food Sector**" which seeks, among other things, to improve the environmental profile of agricultural holdings and to ensure food safety and adequacy, prioritizing actions such as the promotion of innovation and the transition to "green" processing of agricultural products, the "green" agritourism, the restructuring of crops and the genetic improvement of animals. **SDGs 2.3, 2.4, 2.5, 2.a**
- Implementing the reform "**Digital Transformation of the Agri-Food Sector**", aiming, among others, at the sustainable management of natural resources, particularly water and soil, in order to contribute to the mitigation of climate change and the production of sustainable energy sources. **SDGs 2.3, 2.4, 2.5, 2.a**

Agricultural and urban cooperatives of all types shall be self-governed according to the provisions of the law and of their statutes; they shall be under the protection and supervision of the State which is obliged to provide for their development.

SDG 3: Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages



Healthy life years at birth by sex



Assessment of progress in relevant SDG indicators

- Healthy life years have been steadily increasing for both sexes, from 64 in 2015 to 66 in 2019. However, the number of remaining years that a person of specific age is expected to live without any severe or moderate health problems still remains below pre-crisis levels (67 years).
- Despite the multi-year economic crisis and the outbreak of the pandemic, the percentage of people with self-perceived health as “good” or “very good” has risen slightly over a decade, from 75.7% to 78.6%.
- Smoking prevalence remains a significant problem, as the percentage of the population aged 15+ years who report tobacco smoking every day fluctuated around 40% over the past decade.
- Apart from a minor setback regarding HIV, the standardized death rate due to tuberculosis, Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) and hepatitis by type of disease remained very low, and even decreased slightly from 2012 (1.6) to 2018 (1.45).

Key challenges

In the aftermath of the economic crisis, the Greek health system was already facing serious challenges, which the outbreak of the pandemic only exacerbated. Compared to other European countries, public spending for Health in Greece has been relatively low, because of the economic crisis during the previous decade, particularly concerning long-term care. Investment and institutional reforms in the health sector progress, yet slowly-but steadily- due to the pandemic, especially in important areas such as primary care, whereas access to complementary services is a priority. It is evident that the public health system is in need of further organizational reforms to ensure its resilience, starting with more efficient prevention, more accessible primary and at home/outpatient care, particularly with an aging population and a relatively low rate of long-term care workers. The pandemic also revealed weaknesses in the mental health system that called for both ad hoc and long-term solutions. Moreover, the insular and remote mountain communities face chronic difficulties in accessing the full spectrum of public health services, such as specialist doctors and specialized laboratory centres.

Main policy initiatives and measures

- In 2019, the **National Public Health Organization** was established, which is responsible for promoting health, preventing chronic diseases, and reducing the burden of non-communicable diseases. It has issued guidelines for the administration of antiretroviral therapy and treatment of opportunistic infections in adults and adolescents with HIV infection. **SDG 3.2**
- In order to promote healthcare quality and patient safety, a **Health Quality Assurance Agency**, responsible for quality assurance of health services, was established in 2020. With a view to adopting a Common Assessment Framework for hospitals, the HQAA has already issued directions for specific standards for patient identification and patient file management. It has also developed an operational plan for safe hospital operation under emergency situations. At the same time, training is conducted for medical personnel, regarding quality issues and prevention of disease control protocols. **SDG 3.8, 3.c**
- The **National Vaccination Programme**, targets specific and vulnerable groups of the population, minors and adults, migrant populations and populations at risk. In 2021, three new digital services were launched: the **Child and Adolescent Vaccination Register**, the **Pupil Health Registry** and the **Children's Digital Health Booklet**. In 2022 universal vaccination of boys and girls against the Human Papillomavirus (HPV) in order to meet the target set by the WHO and to eliminate HPV (and the cancers it causes) by 2030 was introduced. Boys and girls aged 9 to 18 will now be vaccinated against HPV free of charge, whereas previously the vaccine was only free for girls. **SDG 3.2, 3.4**
- As part of an information campaign, material from the Global Alliance for **Breastfeeding Action** was promoted in health care facilities and other places where breastfeeding can be encouraged. Institutional interventions took place regarding the operation of "breastfeeding areas" in health structures under the supervision of the Ministry of Health (hospitals and health centres), in structures under the supervision of the Ministry of Culture (museums and sports facilities) and in workplaces for breastfeeding working mothers. "Human Milk Banks" in public hospitals became operational. Moreover, use of breast milk substitutes for new-borns for acceptable medical reasons or with the written consent of the mother, was strongly encouraged. **SDGs 3.4, 1, 4, 8, 5**

- A 5 year **National Action Plan for Public Health** was introduced in 2020, which includes the **National Prevention Programme “Spiros Doxiadis”**. The Programme focuses on prevention of behavioural and environmental factors, such as tobacco use and poor dietary habits related to mortality rate as well as on the early identification and effective prevention of diseases. An extensive screening programme has been launched, focusing on the early detection of common Non-Communicable Diseases in the general population. It is estimated that more than 50% of unidentified cases of cancer will be detected thanks to the mass screening program and more than 4 million diagnostic procedures will be performed by 2025. More specifically, the actions consist of free of charge screening tests for cervical cancer, breast cancer (an SMS has been sent initially to 1,300,000 women to have a free mammogram and have their results examined by a doctor), colorectal cancer, abdominal aortic aneurysm and cardiovascular risk assessment (National Plan for the treatment of Vascular Strokes in specialized centres throughout the country sets procedures that ensure the treatment of patients within a few hours after the occurrence of the stroke), which are the most common non communicable diseases linked to mortality rates. **SDG 3.4**
- A **National Childhood Cancer Registry** was established in 2020. Registration of minor patients and data gathered from different sources will gradually feed into a mechanism to assess the demand for health services and provide scientific staff with the necessary information to manage and monitor specific patients throughout the country. **SDGs 3.2, 3.4**
- A rigid approach towards tobacco use has been followed since 2019, in accordance with the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control. The legislative and regulatory framework for **Tobacco Control** was amended, banning tobacco use in all indoor and specific outdoor public spaces, and foreseeing extensive controls. A 4-digit telephone line (1142) is available for citizens to report violations of legislation and seek information or help to quit smoking. Smoking Cessation Clinics were upgraded, along with the introduction of the relevant regulatory framework of operation. The Ministry of Health, in cooperation with the responsible supervising bodies and services, has been implementing since 2018 actions and interventions to raise awareness and inform the student population on the hazards of tobacco use. In addition, information materials, such as posters and table tabs on prohibition of tobacco and related products, have been distributed across public areas and offices. **SDG 3.a**
- In order to address the increased hospitalization needs that were exacerbated during the Covid-19 pandemic, the total number of available **Intensive Care Unit (ICU)** public beds was significantly increased. In February 2020, there were 565 ICU public beds in Greece with no availability for potential hospitalization of COVID-19 cases. As of February 2022, Greece has 1,343 operational ICU beds, of which 704 are dedicated to COVID-19 patients. **SDGs 3.3, 3.8**
- Implementation of the program **“No One Alone in the Pandemic”** (2021), a psychological support program through teleconsultation, for Covid-19 patients who are hospitalized or are in quarantine at home, for their family members and for the health staff of Hospitals (providing support for anxiety, depression, and suicidal behaviour). In the context of the program, hospitalized Covid-19 patients are provided with tablets in order to counter the negative effects of quarantine. A 5-digit telephone helpline (10306) provides tele-counselling and support from qualified professionals addressed to the general population, free of charge and on a 24-hour basis. The range of services provided include psychiatric care to patients with mental illness, psychological support to children, families and health personnel, as well as social support to the adult population with mental health issues. The line has incorporated new features in order to support children, adolescents and their families, as well as fire- or earthquake-stricken citizens. Meanwhile, ad hoc initiatives have also been carried out to address emergencies that act as stressors for the affected population. **SDG 3.4**

- The institution of **Family Doctor** and the **Primary Health Care structures** have been established since 2017 for the provision of essential health care services, such as medical and dental care, reproductive health and care of the mother and child, and the implementation of vaccination programs. Furthermore, the population coverage was expanded, through Local Health Groups that will also operate as family medical groups. Primary health care facilities played a leading role in the management of the pandemic, as sampling points. They also provided home or remote medical services, by operating Special Mobile Health Teams (SMHTs) to serve mountainous and remote areas and to vaccinate vulnerable groups and people with mobility difficulties. **SDG 3.8**
- In order to support the inhabitants of mountainous and remote regions, a new preventive healthcare programme, "**Prevention at Home**" was introduced in 2020. The Programme makes possible, on the one hand, medical examinations at home for the inhabitants of the above regions who belong to vulnerable groups of the population and, on the other hand, the automated dispatch of the results to contracted practitioners using information and communication technologies. **SDGs 3.8, 1.4, 10.2**
- A **National Mental Health Committee**, consisting of specialized - distinguished scientists in the mental health field, was established in 2021 with a mandate to design a mental health strategy, which will lead to a new 10-year National Action Plan for Mental Health. Funding of mental health and addictions programs was increased by 62% in 2021 for strengthening the mental health facilities and services and the development of new ones throughout the country, aiming to provide care to all population groups. **SDG 3.4**
- In recent years, efforts have been made to further develop programs for the prevention, damage reduction, detoxification and social rehabilitation of users. A significant new initiative is the establishment, in 2021, of a **safe drug consumption space**, specially designed to reduce risk and prevent overdose among socially marginalized, usually homeless, adult users. **SDG 3.5**
- The **National Central Health Procurement Authority** was reorganized in order to rationalise expenditure for a sustainable health care system. A 30% target for centralization of procurement has already been achieved, resulting in the procurement of higher quality materials and better health services; a new target of 40% has been set for 2022. In addition, structural measures to reduce clawback have been taken since 2019, setting yearly reduction targets up to 2025. In this direction, incentives were introduced for pharmaceutical companies, offsetting clawback with R&D expenditure. **SDG 3.8**
- As regards the problem of bloodstream infections due to selected antimicrobial-resistant organisms, the **National Action Plan (2019-23) for the Treatment of Microbial Resistance** in Greece was published in 2019. The Action Plan was developed in the framework of One Health in collaboration with the Ministry of Rural Development & Food and the Ministry of Environment & Energy. In parallel, from 2020, the **National Programme for the prevention and control of hospital-acquired infections and antimicrobial resistance** is being implemented in cooperation with donors and stakeholders. **SDGs 3.d., 2, 17.17**
- A series of measures have been taken to **prevent the West Nile virus and malaria epidemics**, as well as to avoid outbreaks due to imported cases of dengue, chikungunya or Zika. Attention is being paid in order to avoid area designation as malaria-endemic by the World Health Organization (WHO). **SDG 3.3**
- Regarding protection of public health from major-accident hazards involving **dangerous substances**, consultation of all competent authorities is taking place. The consultation seeks to update the institutional framework, aiming at more effective control for the prevention of the occurrence of a major accident and at the clarification of response procedures after a major accident occurs, in order to minimize its consequences. **SDG 3.9**
- To enhance informed decisions regarding sexual relations, contraceptive use and reproductive

healthcare, a series of awareness-raising and information activities and interventions on **sexual and reproductive health** have taken place since 2020, with topics such as contraception in adolescence, sexually transmitted infections, sex education for boys, sex education for girls, and relationships in adolescence. **SDGs 3.7, 5.6**

- Another important type of facility is the Day Centre for Psychological Support of People with Oncological Diseases, which has already been established. Also in 2021 a pilot program of Psychogeriatric Support for the promotion of health and the prevention of mental disorders of the elderly, with emphasis on depression, which is an important risk factor for dementia was established in Aiginiteio University Hospital (pilot phase with island regions, such as Tinos, Syros and Andros, and remote areas, such as Evros and Xanthi). **SDG 3.4**
- **Development of a tele-psychiatry network**, in the form of an integrated digital outpatient clinic (prescription services, consultations, issuance of certificates) for the remote support of adults and minors in remote areas. Implementation has already started in the Greek islands of Kastelorizo and Symi while similar units will be developed in border islands and mountainous areas shortly afterwards. **SDG 3.8**
- The Government adopted a new **National Strategic Plan for Road Safety 2021-2030**, which introduces the Safe System Approach and the long-term Vision Zero road fatalities by 2050. The quantitative targets of the Greek Road Safety Strategic Plan are aligned with the EU targets of reducing the number of fatalities and serious injuries in crashes by 50% by 2030. **SDGs 3.6, 11.2**
- A new legislative **framework promoting Road Safety** and aiming at reducing the level of road traffic fatalities and injuries through managing the interaction between speed, vehicles, road infrastructure and road-user behaviour in a holistic manner, came via law 4850/2021. Next steps include the re-evaluation and updating of the educational material for the assessment of the candidate drivers as well as the revision of the Highway Code, taking into account the international experience. **SDGs 3.6, 11.2**
- Traffic education and road safety for children and youth is fundamental for the national goal of reducing the number of road accidents, and this is done via the “e-Drive Academy” platform and the introduction of a road safety course in all the primary schools of the country. **SDGs 3.6, 4.7, 11.2**
- The Ministry of Citizen Protection has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the **Organisation Against Drugs (OKANA)**, which provides for the development of common actions and training programs in the field of prevention, treatment, harm reduction and social reintegration for drug users. **SDG 3.5**
- As regards **access to public health services by residents of remote areas** and small islands, particularly in emergencies, patient airlift services to city hospitals are provided by both the NHS and the military. Health care services are also provided in military hospitals for family members of Armed Forces personnel and all citizens. Air medical evacuation flights across the country and abroad are carried out by the Ministry of Defence supplementary to the Ministry of Health. **SDGs 3.4, 3.6, 3.8**

Best practice example

Early Intervention Units in Psychosis SDG 3.4

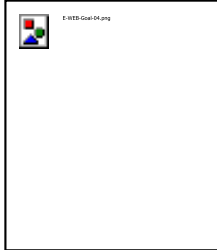
Every year around 3,500 young children are expected to experience a first episode of psychosis following which they will be intense users of inpatient or outpatient mental health services of the National Health System (NHS). Within the framework of the psychiatric reform, prevention and treatment structures are being set up since 2021 with emphasis on regional Greece. New types of Mental Health Units, under the name "Early Intervention Units in Psychosis", aim at the preventive detection and treatment of the most severe forms of mental disorder, in order to minimize the long-term effects and to prevent or reduce the relapse rates. They also improve the functionality of young patients and their occupational, educational and social integration. Short-stay facilities for patients with autism have been established throughout Greece, as well as distance learning psychoeducation and support programs for their family or caregivers (in cooperation with non-profit organizations) have been created.

Forthcoming initiatives

- As part of the National public health Prevention Program "Spyros Doxiadis" and with the main goal of reducing risk factors for public health and the indirect relief of hospitals, a series of initiatives are planned as follows: the **National Program for the Promotion of Physical Exercise and Healthy Nutrition**, is scheduled to begin in 2022, the **prenatal screening** for 270,000 pregnant women and **perinatal screening** for 270,000 new-borns is planned over the next 3 years, and the **alcohol prevention programme** (estimated benefit to around 291,000 young people in the 14-24 age group) will unfold in the next years. **SDG 3.2, 3.4, 3.5**
- A set of **mental health structures and services** will be rendered operational by end 2022, for patients with dementia and Alzheimer's disease, patients with autism, patients in the age group of children, adolescents and young adults, for the support of employed and unemployed people, migrants and refugees. A series of projects aiming to promote mental health will be financed under the Recovery and Resilience Plan (RRP); for instance, the development of new mental health facilities and services aimed at ensuring citizens' access across the country and the implementation of actions related to addressing the adverse effects on the mental health of the population due to the pandemic (totalling amount € 55 million - Start of implementation: 2022). **SDG 3.4, 3.8**
- In the context of the National Strategic Reference Framework 2021-27 the following objectives of the ongoing **psychiatric reform** will start to be implemented in 2022: abolition of institutional care, development of community care and promotion of social integration of people with psychosocial disability, improvement of the quality of mental health services and development of tele-psychiatric services and home care. **SDGs 3.4, 3.8**
- Supply of two mobile health clinics (June 2022) that provide age assessment and essential health services to **unaccompanied children**. **SDG 3.8**
- The **national digital infrastructure** is under way to support **oncology patients** throughout their interaction with the healthcare system. **SDG 3.8**

- The development of **National Registers and Codifications**, the **Central Data Repository** and the universal implementation of the **Individual Electronic Health Record** will create a unique network for the exchange of information between doctors and patients, protecting personal data and ensuring medical confidentiality. A strategic plan for interoperability in health services will be finalised by the end of 2022. **SDG 3.8**
- Two new services, which will be supported by digital technology and telemedicine, are to be introduced in the near future. These are the “**home care**” and “**hospital at home**” programmes, which bring health services from hospital to home. In order to promote equitable health coverage and access to quality essential health-care services, 8 reference sites will be established by Q2/2025 so as to provide hospital at home services. In addition, a national registry for patients treated through home care will be set up. **SDG 3.8**
- A substantial reform in Primary Healthcare is in full progress; following the newly introduced legislative framework, 60 local health units will be rendered operational within 2022, while more health units will be upgraded in terms of infrastructure and equipment. **SDG 3.8**
- Adopt measures and actions aimed at implementing the new National Strategic Plan for Road Safety 2021-2030. **SDG 3.6**

SDG 4 Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all



Percentage of population aged 15 to 29 years neither in employment nor in education and training (NEET) by sex



Assessment of progress in relevant SDG indicators

- Over the last decade, the proportion of the population aged 18 - 24 who are early leavers from education and training, has fallen from 13.5% in 2010 to 3.8% in 2020, a year when Greece ranked second best among European Union (EU) Member states.
- In 2020, the percentage of people aged 25 - 34 who have successfully completed tertiary studies (e.g. University, Higher Technical Institution, etc.) was 43.7%, well above the EU average. It is an encouraging increase, compared to 2010 (30.6%), yet recent graduates seem to still face particular employability challenges.
- The percentage of adults aged 25-64 who participate in learning (formal or non-formal, both general and vocational, after leaving initial education and training) has increased from 3.3% in 2010 to 4.1% in 2020, still below the EU average.
- There is still a high proportion of NEETs, despite showing a tendency to decrease, linked to several structural and employability issues as well as persistently low rates of youth employment.

Key challenges

Ensuring quality education and lifelong learning for all constitutes a policy priority of utmost importance at national and international level, as it is inextricably linked to ensuring equal participation in society as well as access to full and productive employment and decent work. The initiatives of the Greek Government that serve this goal are not only related to the particularly high unemployment rate among young people in the country, but also to the country's "brain drain" problem. They are also directly linked to the shortage in basic, soft and digital skills within the education community and labour market. Applying to all education levels, the country has to increase its efforts to guarantee inclusion, in line with the relevant recommendation of the UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

Significant reforms have been introduced to tackle the challenge of insufficient involvement of stakeholders in the design of education and training systems, the deficit in matching qualifications to market needs and the low international competitiveness and visibility of education structures but further actions are needed to achieve better results. Undoubtedly, government initiatives are required to change established negative social perceptions for some educational pathways, namely Vocational Education and Training (VET), which is still considered an option for low-achievement students or for those of low socioeconomic status. To achieve such change, the government is heavily investing in acquiring new state-of-the-art laboratory equipment for VET schools as well as running media and communications campaigns aimed at changing the social perception of VET.

Finally, while important reforms have been introduced to empower schools and educators and transfer competences from the central level of administration to school units, a remaining challenge is the full achievement of school culture in terms of administration and evaluation. Increased accountability systems have been introduced but more time is needed for the entirety of the educational community to fully embrace the utility of such tools. Further challenges include the tackling of social inequalities through education, the need to adopt differentiated teaching pedagogies to meet pupils' specific needs, the encouragement of innovative educational practices, and the further cultivation of soft and digital skills across the student population.

Main policy initiatives and measures

- In order to improve the quality and effectiveness of public education, along with the inclusiveness of the education system, a new law was passed in 2021, titled **Upgrading of the school, empowerment of teachers and other provisions**. The Law seeks to strengthen the autonomy of schools, support the creative initiatives of teachers - giving them more freedom in the organization of teaching (i.e. free choice of textbooks) and strengthen the role of the School Head. **SDG 4.3**
- **The implementation of universal mandatory education from the age of 4** and introduction of English in all public pre-primary kindergartens is linked with broader policy to ensure access to education and more fair and equitable learning outcomes over time. This policy is expected to contribute to the long-term reduction of inequality. **SDG 4.2**
- In 2020, the Government established by law the **National System of VET and Lifelong Learning** with a view to further improving and reforming VET, placing particular emphasis, among others, on apprenticeship for persons with disabilities and/or special educational needs (SDG 4.3, 4.4). Other key reforms in this direction, include: the participation of social partners in the formation of learning modules, the creation of model vocational high schools, the establishment of experimental and thematic post-secondary institutes for VET, the creation of over 200 new job profiles (with particular emphasis on digital and green industries) and the upgrade of all laboratory centres of VET. **SDG 4.4**
- Ensuring equal access for all women and men to technical, vocational and tertiary education is a core priority of the Ministry of Education. It is within this context that a number of initiatives have been taken towards achieving the full and complete implementation of all the **education-related policies embedded in the National Action Plan (NAP) for People with Disabilities**, focusing particularly on accessibility to physical spaces and digital materials for all students across learning groups. **SDG 4.3**

- The Government has put forward a number of specific measures aimed at promoting **inclusive and equitable education**, with a focus on the most **vulnerable students**, including the employment of 4,500 special education teachers as permanent staff, the completion of inclusive Education Guide for schools and the development of curricula for special education schools. **SDGs 4.3, 4.5**
- For the purpose of facilitating the access of **unaccompanied minors to education**, the Government has adopted a series of actions, such as supplementary tutorial courses for children that live in hostels for unaccompanied minors, constant information to the institutions that operate hostels and have in their responsibility or teach unaccompanied minors, activities for the empowerment of hostels' staff that support the unaccompanied minors in the accommodation structures etc. **SDGs 4.1, 4.5**
- The "Pathway to All Children in Education (ACE)" program, implemented by UNICEF in partnership with the Ministry of Migration and Asylum and the Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs, aims to **facilitate the integration of refugee and migrant children in formal education** through the Homework and Creative Activities Centres (HCACs). **SDGs 4.1, 4.5**
- In order to improve the quality and inclusiveness of education and to substantially upgrade the skills of the students, the Government revamped **School Curricula**, placing particular focus to the cultivation of soft and digital skills across all ages and disciplines through the use of innovative digital tools and materials, and educational methods that foster creativity, critical thinking, collaboration, communication and curiosity. **SDGs 4.1, 4.7**
- A systematic effort has been made in the context of the digital transformation of education, with the **supply of technological equipment to schools** and the upgrade of digital infrastructure and connectivity; at the same time, the Government is implementing projects funded by the Recovery and Resiliency Fund (RRF) to further equip schools with interactive whiteboards, robotics and Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) learning infrastructure, development of digital content, etc. In addition, over 500,000 children and young people aged 4-24 have already received a **€200 voucher for the purchase of technological equipment**, based on socio-economic criteria. **SDG 4.1**
- Quality in education is also promoted through the **evaluation of the educational work** performed by school units, which allows them to monitor and improve educational achievement outputs. The evaluation of primary and secondary school teachers has also been established as a necessary means of implementing a strong feedback mechanism and ensuring continuous improvement. Last, a mechanism for evaluating the effectiveness of the education system as a whole has been established, with the launch of an anonymous test to assess performance levels at Greek schools, based on the standards of the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA). **SDG 4.1, 4.4**
- As a further means of promoting equal opportunities for all, the Greek Government also reinforced and expanded the network of **Model and Experimental school units**, which operate as local centres of excellence across the country for all students, regardless of socioeconomic background. **SDG 4.1**
- In **Higher Education**, in an attempt to introduce transparency and meritocracy in the allocation of available resources, State funding is provided based on objective criteria for 80% of the allotted funds (e.g. number of students and staff), while the rest 20% is allocated based on performance to quality indicators (e.g. excellence in research, connection with society / labour market, internationalization). Furthermore, in order to promote internationalization, reverse the effects of "brain drain" and attract foreign students, the Government has further liberalized the legislative framework for Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) to establish educational and research collaborations with foreign institutions as well as providing targeted funding to that end. As a result, international undergraduate programs taught in foreign languages, joint/dual/double degrees, joint research

centres, and other forms of educational cooperation have increased exponentially over the past three years. [SDGs 4.3, 4.7](#)

- Under the European Digital Skills and Jobs Coalition, and in line with the new National Digital Strategy (2020-2025), the Ministry of Digital Governance launched the **National Digital Academy platform**, whereby a plethora of educational opportunities is offered to the citizens, in order to further develop and evaluate their digital skills. [SDGs 4.4, 4.7, 16.10](#)
- Education and awareness raising on sustainable development, climate change and the SDGs is being pursued not only in primary, secondary and tertiary school curricula, but also in the **Military Academies**, where officers are taught relevant courses. [SDGs 4.7, 13.3](#)
- In 2021, the Government initiated the development of a series of cooperative actions with the National School of Judges in order to enhance the quality and enlarge the scope of **education and training of judges and prosecutors**. The first training project, which took place in October 2021, brought together judges and students of the National School of Judges, working under the theme *The rights of persons with disabilities in legal order (civil, penal and administrative approach)*. [SDGs 4.7, 16.3, 16.6](#)
- New provisions and revisions of the legislation, as well as concrete policies and measures, aiming at modernizing and strengthening the **tourism education** and vocational training were introduced in recent years (2018-2021). [SDGs 4.4, 4.7](#)
- Greece as a traditional maritime country has developed a training system ensuring a high-level vocational training for Greek seafarers so that they can fully meet the ever-increasing requirements, dictated both by technological development as well as international conventions' provisions. With a view to further improving, enhancing and modernizing the framework for the organization and operation of **public maritime education**, Greece decided to proceed, over the last two years, to the conduct of a number of specific actions and projects, which foster the digital transformation of the whole maritime education system. In addition, initiatives have been taken towards ensuring the equal access for all women and men to the Merchant Marine Schools, without discrimination related to gender. [SDGs 4.3, 4.4](#)
- In order to ensure equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for persons with disabilities, the legal requirement of being able-bodied so as to attend the **Higher Schools of Dramatic Art**, both public and private, was abolished in 2017. [SDGs 4.5, 4.7](#)
- The 2021 **National Strategy for the Social Integration of Applicants for and Beneficiaries of International Protection** underlines that the educational process is governed by the principle of equal access to quality education, without discrimination and exclusions. In addition to formal education, non-formal education is also provided during the "pre-integration" stage. The non-formal education is holistic and includes, beyond Greek language learning, the familiarization with the European way of life, the principles of democracy, gender equality, sports, as well as special programs on disability, the prevention of domestic violence, and the fight against human trafficking. It should be noted that the access of immigrants and refugees' children to the educational system is supported for over two decades through the establishment and operation of the intercultural schools, reception and tutorial classes, and second chance schools. Since 2019, the **HELIOS** (Hellenic Integration Support for Beneficiaries of International Protection) programme, offers, among other, integration courses to beneficiaries of international protection, which are conducted in the **Integration Training Centres** throughout the country. [SDGs 4.1, 4.3](#)

- A 2020 law provided for an extensive regulation of **VET** and the operation of Manpower Employment Organization's (OAED) Apprenticeship Vocational Education Schools ("EPAS"), Experimental EPAS, and Vocational Training Institutes (IEK). **SDG 4.4**
- Enterprises, cooperatives and municipal and regional enterprises, as well as the public sector enterprises, bodies and organizations engaging in economic activity participate in the **Ergonomic Workspace Arrangement programme**, with a view to hiring persons with disabilities and ensuring their easy access to the workplace. OAED contributes 90% of the cost of ergonomic workplace arrangements (specially adjusted technological facilities, workplace adjustments, special equipment, and purchase of software for persons with disabilities) up to the amount of €2,500. **SDG 4.5**
- Interventions aimed to upskill the low-skilled/low-qualified adults include the 2018-2020 **BASIC - Building Alternative Skills' Innovative schemes Action**, the 2020-2022 **EaSI REFLEX - REcommending FLEXible - learning for low-skilled adults Action**, as well as the 2021-2022 OAED and United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) **partnership Agreement** to implement a project (under the EU Child Guarantee Initiative Preparatory Action) targeted at young people aged 16-24, including adolescents and youth at risk, with a migrant, refugee or minority background, children and young people with disabilities, unaccompanied children, and children with complex needs, with the aim of providing opportunities for basic, soft, and vocational skills development. **SDG 4.4**
- A **new online platform for persons with disabilities "prosvasis.oaed.gr"** has been in operation since October 2021. Particularly user-friendly, the platform was designed so that it can ensure enhanced access to OAED's website content. The platform can be easily accessed by persons with visual difficulties (adjustment of size/colour combinations, text in place of images, conversion of text into speech), hearing difficulties (text of sound files/videos), physical disabilities (keyboard/mouse browsing) and cognitive/mental difficulties (simplified content presentation). **SDG 4.5**
- As a member of the **National Alliance for Digital Skills and Employment**, OAED has embarked on several **partnerships** with internationally renowned **online training providers**, effectively utilizing their state-of-the-art digital infrastructure, organization and professional experience. Through these innovative partnerships, OAED has implemented a number of training programmes focusing on the digital and green transitions, with a view to supporting the unemployed by updating and enhancing their skills. **SDGs 4.4, 17.17**

Best practice examples

Skills Labs

SDGs 4.1, 4.2, 4.7

The Skills Labs is a new, innovative school module, which focuses on the cultivation of soft and digital skills. The Skills Labs' main goal is the cultivation of skills necessary for a rapidly changing world. These skills include both fundamental life skills related to health, safety, and social interactions, as well as more elaborate skills related to education and life-long learning. Particular emphasis is placed on the 4Cs of 21st century skills – communication, collaboration, critical thinking, and creativity – along with digital skills. The Skills Labs was designed to promote and bring into effect the UN Sustainable Development Goals, with particular emphasis to Goal 4.7 and it was awarded the Global Education Network Europe (GENE) Global Education Award (2020/2021). The Skills Labs are focused on four thematic areas (well-being, the environment, social empathy, and innovation). After an initial pilot program in 2020-21, the new module has been introduced in the mandatory national curriculum throughout compulsory education (ages 4 to 15) and takes 10% of teaching time in pre-primary and primary education. Finally, over 75,000 educators (almost 100% of the total targeted number of teachers) have participated in the Skills Labs teacher training program.

Moving forward with an inclusive education system

SDGs 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.5

Inclusion is a top priority for the government and inclusive education is a horizontal principle in all actions of the competent Ministry of Education. Particular emphasis has been placed on students with special educational needs, the provision of high-quality pre-primary education, and students from migrant backgrounds. The Strategic Plan for Equal Access of Persons with Disabilities to Education, under the National Action Plan for Rights of Persons with Disabilities, aims at the equal and inclusive access of students with disabilities (children and young people) in learning communities across all levels of education. It involves supporting activities to respond to their diverse learning needs and pilot projects to boost accessibility, both physical and digital. Furthermore, the extension of compulsory pre-school education from the age of 4 was implemented across the country in 2021-22, assuring equal access to a quality and free education for all students. The provision of high-quality pre-school education is seen as key priority to reduce long-term disparities in learning outcomes and other dimensions. Moreover, in order to ensure that every child in the country enjoys the right to education, the Government has launched policies for the integration into the mainstream education system of children from migrant and refugee backgrounds. To that end, the government has hired over 1500 specialised educators for refugee reception classes and schools, has provided almost 90 refugee education coordinators, has offered interpretation services in 20 languages, and is providing extensive teacher training for education for migrant students. In 2021-22 Greece hit a double record in registration and attendance of refugee and immigrant children in schools, with more than 16,417 children of refugee and immigrant background registered in classes in primary and secondary education.

Forthcoming initiatives

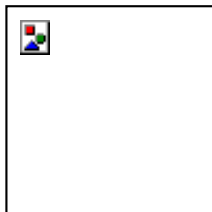
- The Reform “**Child Protection**” is included in the Greek Recovery and Resilience Plan (RRP). The measure consists of a **reform of the curriculum and educational program of infants** aged from 3 months to 4 years aimed to promote their cognitive development, **including early diagnosis of cognitive impairment**. The reform is accompanied by investments in educational material and cognitive development assessment tools for 3,000 childcare centres. The implementation of the reform and investments shall be completed by the end of December 2025. **SDG 4.2, 4.a, 3.4**
- Construction of university halls of residence and other facilities, including research & development laboratories, at the Universities of Crete, Thessaly, and Thrace, through public-private partnerships, following the approval of €190 million in funding by the European Investment Bank in February 2022. This will improve access to higher education by lowering the cost of living of students and upgrade the quality of education provided outside the major urban centres of Athens and Thessaloniki. **SDG 4.3**
- Promotion, through legislation, of **sustainability in higher education** with the creation of a specialized unit for sustainable development in each university. **SDGs 4.3, 4.7**
- A new university reform draft legislation is expected to be adopted by Q2 2022 and to include provisions aiming at enhancing HEIs' autonomy, strengthening connectivity with the labour market and supporting extroversion and internationalization of HEIs. A relevant RRP reform (Strategy for Excellence in Universities & Innovation) that is also going to support the modernization in the area of Higher Education, will soon begin implementation (first calls for proposals are expected by Q3 2022). **SDG 4.3**
- The first year of the new school Curricula pilot implementation is going to be completed in June 2022. The second year of pilot implementation will begin in September 2022. **SDGs 4.1, 4.7**
- Completion of all the education-related actions and sub-actions of the **NAP for People with Disabilities**, placing emphasis on physical and digital accessibility, the creation and piloting of special education learning modules, and the comprehensive collection of statistical data on students with disabilities. New legislative provisions for the education of pupils with disabilities with particular emphasis on inclusive education are expected to be tabled by Q2 2022. **SDGs 4.3, 4.4, 4.5, 4.7**
- Expansion and improvement of teacher training programs and actions promoting **education for sustainable development**. **SDGs 4.7**
- Continuation of **investments in infrastructure for general and special education** as well as VET, placing emphasis on the procurement and installation of digital equipment. **SDGs 4.3, 4.7**
- The first Vocational Training Schools (ESK) are expected to be established by September 2022. The main aim of these schools is to tackle early school leaving, upskill basic skills of compulsory education graduates and care for the inclusion of vulnerable social groups to professional life. **SDGs 4.4**
- An expansion of the network of model vocational high schools, as well as that of experimental and thematic post-secondary institutes for VET is expected by October 2022. **SDGs 4.4**
- Completion of the **digital transformation of maritime education** through specific and multi-targeted projects. **SDGs 4.4, 4.7**
- The action “**Strengthening the social integration of third country nationals**” will promote awareness of the host society on migration and integration, actions of interculturalism and interaction with migrant populations, as well as a vocational training program for beneficiaries of international protection. Key targets include the provision to the beneficiaries of a) learning basic elements of the Greek language, context and culture, as well as the European way of life and institutions, b) job

counselling sessions, c) vocational training, d) internship, e) information sessions with the help of employment consultants about future prospects, as well as f) the possibility of covering the cost of certification of professional qualifications/skills. **SDGs 4.1., 4.3, 4.5, 4.6, 4.7, 8.8**

- The **Integrated Action for Facilitating Job Integration of Refugees** (I.Ref.JOB) is planned for implementation in 2022-2023 and carried out in collaboration with the European Commission and the World Bank; moreover, targeted collaborations are also developed with competent national authorities and stakeholders with a view to exchanging know-how and ideas on the utilization of appropriate innovative practices, methods and tools, such as an assessment tool for the recognition of refugees' prior experience and skills. A pilot intervention is being designed for 1,000 recognized refugees who are registered with OAED. The intervention aims to develop a lasting, effective mechanism (tailored to the needs of beneficiaries and enterprises) of integrating the refugee population into the labour market. It includes a broad set of interrelated actions, based on a customized approach, such as Individual and Group Counselling – Linguistic & Intercultural Training - Vocational Training and Internship – Wage Subsidy. **SDG 4.4, 4.5, 8.3, 8.5, 8.6, 8.7**
- The action “**Promote integration of the refugee population into the labour market**” (to be funded by the Recovery and Resilience Facility), will include 10 distinct sub-projects among which Linguistic and Intercultural training, Active Vocational Guidance, Vocational Training on basic, digital and technical skills, as well as Skills Certification. **SDG 4.4, 4.5, 8.3, 8.5, 8.6, 8.7**
- Two training programmes to be funded through the RRF, include the **Labour force skilling, reskilling and upskilling** through a reformed training model/ Umbrella VET programme (vocational training for 78,000 unemployed people, mainly focused on upskilling or reskilling in basic and advanced digital skills for a diverse set of social groups and sectors), and the **New Strategy for Lifelong Skilling: Modernising and Upgrading Greece's Upskilling and Reskilling System / Horizontal Upskilling Programmes** to targeted populations (tackling the needs for digital, green and other highly demanded skills for, by offering upskilling programmes for 80,000 unemployed people in baseline digital skills, medium-level digital skills, and green skills). **SDG 4.4**
- Implementation of a project funded by the European Commission and supported by the OECD regarding the **development of a national strategy for financial literacy for Greece**. This Project is expected to increase the financial literacy of the whole population in Greece as a way to empower people to make effective financial decisions and use traditional and innovative financial services safely. The ultimate users of the Project outputs will be the individuals, households and businesses in Greece. **SDG 4.6**
- Digital skills, training programs and certification for conscripts during their military service. Moreover, vocational training programs in the army's most required professional specialization, valuable for conscripts' access to the labour market, will be carried out from the newly established Lifelong Learning Centres of the Armed Forces. **SDGs 4.3, 4.4, 8.6**

All Greeks are entitled to free education on all levels at State educational institutions. The State shall provide financial assistance to those who distinguish themselves, as well as to students in need of assistance or special protection, in accordance with their abilities.

SDG 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls



**Difference between average gross hourly earnings
of male and female employees**

	2010	2014	2018
% of average gross hourly earnings of men	15.0	12.5	10.4

**Gender Employment Gap - Difference between employees
and employment rates of men and women aged 20 to 64**



Percentage (%) of women in senior management positions



Assessment of progress in relevant SDG indicators

- As regards to the gender pay gap, the difference between the average gross hourly earnings of male and female employees has declined significantly between 2010-2018 dropping from 15% to 10.4%.
- In a context of an overall low employment affected by the financial crisis, low female employment rates (48.7%, see SDG 8), high female long- and short-term unemployment rates, and their stable significant difference to men's (20% difference in employment), have been persisting issues for the economy since even before the crisis.
- Participation of women in senior management positions was traditionally extremely low, marking around 6% until 2011. An impressive change has been observed since, with a recent decisive support of legislation (2020), which elevated the rate to around 20% for both board members and executives.

Key challenges

Gender equality is a fundamental human right and a prerequisite for sustainable development. Despite the sound institutional provisions in place for decades, the country's actual performance in gender equality shows a discordance with their aims, affecting women's position in society and the economy. During the Covid pandemic, the risk of domestic violence rose while the negative socio-economic consequences on the economy affected women more than men. Longstanding challenges persist, such as the prevention and elimination of all forms of gender-based abuse, sexual and domestic violence, the eradication of harassment or gender discrimination in the workplace, the enhancement of equal pay and participation of women in the labour market as well as in leadership and decision-making processes. Finally yet importantly, gender-based stereotypes have not yet ceased to exist, affecting participation of girls and women in sports and STEM. The Greek Government is aware that efforts on all levels are necessary as inequalities derive from both cultural and systemic functions. Thus, through a new national action plan Greece aspires to address gender-based disparities and multiple exclusions as well as to raise awareness through new paradigms in crucial sectors and age groups.

Main policy initiatives and measures

- Greece introduced in 2016 and 2019 new provisions aimed at **encouraging the participation of women in elections for the national and European parliaments** and by raising the 1/3 quota to 40%. The same percentage is set by a new law passed in 2021 for the **election of local and regional authorities**. Extending participation in the democratic decision-making procedures was also the goal of reducing the voting age from 18 to 17. **SDGs 5.5, 16.7, 5c**
- A 2020 law on Corporate Governance envisages provisions regarding a more comprehensive gender representation in the Board of Directors, by introducing mandatory quotas and stipulates the company's obligation to set diverse criteria for the selection of its directors. It provides for the first time in Greece a **gender quota of at least 25% on listed company boards**. This provision, which was deemed necessary in order to address the under-representation of women in the BoDs, complements the voluntary adoption of the principle of diversity (regarding knowledge, skills, including gender of advisors) by the Greek Code of Corporate Governance. **SDG 5.5, 16.7, 5c**
- Women's participation in decision making in sports clubs/associations is promoted by a 2020 law on sports, which states that in relation to the composition of the management board of the sports clubs, the number of candidates from each gender/sex must be at least equal to 1/3 of the number of the vacant seats for election, including the seat of the president/head of the management board. **SDG 5.5, 16.7, 5c**
- A 2021 labour reform law transposes into national Law the EU Work-life Balance Directive that aims at better supporting a **work-life balance for parents and carers**. It encourages unequal sharing of parental leave between men and women, while introducing paternity leave for the first time and addressing women's underrepresentation in the labour market. The legal framework for parental leave and other provisions and facilities for parents and carers is completed, and workers are pro-

tected from dismissal on the grounds of applying for or taking parental leave. **SDGs 5.c, 8.8, 8.5**

- In 2021, the Government initiated a new legal reform aimed at **reformulating and improving the family relationships**, particularly **between parents and children after spouse separation**. This law reform provides for the active presence of both parents in the upbringing of their children and the fulfilment of their shared responsibility toward them, despite the existence of a separation, divorce or annulment of the marriage, placing particular emphasis on children’s mental health, their ordinary integration into the family environment and the development of their personality. **SDG 5.4, 16.3**
- In 2021, the Government and in particular the Ministry of Citizen Protection adopted a comprehensive **Strategy on Fighting Trafficking in Human Beings 2021-2025**, setting out a number of targeted objectives and priorities aimed at effectively addressing organized human trafficking networks, developing preventive measures, with particular focus on the most vulnerable groups, and strengthening inter-agency and cross-border cooperation. **SDGs 5.2, 16.2**
- In 2021, Greece was one of the first countries to ratify by law the International Labour Organization (ILO) Convention concerning the **elimination of violence and harassment in the workplace** (No. 190). The adoption of this landmark instrument recognizes the right of everyone to work free from violence and harassment, including gender-based (articles 1-23). It introduces new measures and new rights and obligations, including the right of the employee who is subject to such behaviour to leave the workplace for a reasonable period of time, without any salary loss or other consequences, and the obligation of employers with more than 20 staff members to adopt written policies to prevent and combat harassment and violence in the workplace and to handle internal complaints. This protection is afforded not only to employees, but to every person that provides services at the workplace, including independent contractors, interns and volunteers, regardless of the contractual relationship with the employer. The Ombudsman and the Hellenic Labour Inspectorate (“SEPE”) work closely together in order to effectively identify enterprises that violate the principles of equality and non-discrimination. **SDG 5.2, 5c**
- A 2019 law promoting substantive gender equality and combating gender-based violence, was the first attempt in Greece of creating the necessary conditions for the elimination of gender inequalities in all sectors of public, social and economic life. **Gender mainstreaming** and **gender budgeting** were introduced for the first time into a legislative text. All basic concepts, mechanisms, institutions and stakeholders are explicitly clarified, aiming at the implementation of the principle of gender mainstreaming and at preventing and combating violence against women. A **national network for gender-based violence** is established to run by the General Secretariat for Family Policy and Gender Equality and the Municipalities (counselling centres, shelters, a 24-hour SOS 15900 helpline). The National Council for Gender Equality is established as a collective advisory counselling body in order to evaluate and assess the existing gender equality policies. Special provisions have been put in place in the crucial fields of education, labour, mass media and health. **SDG 5.c, 16.1, 16.2, 17.17**
- The General Secretariat for Demography and Family Policy and Gender Equality, which is the principal entity for preventing and combating violence against women, has developed and continues to implement, over the last years, the **National Programme on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women**. A comprehensive network of structures for preventing and tackling all forms of violence against women has been created, including: (i) the national SOS 15900 24-hour helpline; (ii) 43 Counselling Centres throughout the country providing social, psychological, legal and employment support using a gender perspective and legal aid, in cooperation with bar associations; and (iii) 19 Women’s Shelters that provide accommodation and food to women victims of gender-based violence and their children. **SDG 5.2**

- The 2021 **National Strategy for the Social Integration of Applicants for and Beneficiaries of International Protection** seeks to “strengthen the primary, secondary and tertiary prevention of gender-based violence, child abuse and human trafficking, primarily at first reception facilities, with an emphasis on women and children”. In this context, actions are implemented such as (i) workshops on gender equality and the prevention of gender-based violence; (ii) cooperation with the competent authorities for early detection of signs of violence and abuse and referral for intervention; and (iii) development of a holistic support program for the rehabilitation of the victims through the provision of specialized services and their participation in a range of cultural activities and vocational training activities, so as to develop interests and skills. [SDG 5.2, 16.1, 16.2](#)
- Greece’s gender equality goals are depicted in the **National Action Plan for Gender Equality 2021-2025**. The plan complements and builds on the previous ones, taking into consideration the country’s specific needs and the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) effects. Its main priorities are in line with the priorities of the EU Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025, the Council of Europe Gender Equality Strategy 2018-2023 and the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, having as strategic women-empowerment goals the: (i) prevention of violence against women and domestic violence; (ii) equal participation of women in the labour market; (iii) equal participation of women in decision making processes; and (iv) gender mainstreaming in sectoral policies. The National Action Plan went through public consultation so as to have the widest possible consent (Ministries, civil society, academia) and includes 67 actions/measures. 17 Ministries have contributed to its elaboration with their initiatives regarding its strategic axes and their implementation. [SDGs 5.1, 5.2, 5.4, 5.5, 5.c](#)

Best practice examples

Nannies of the Neighbourhood [SDGs 5.4, 8.3, 8.5, 8.8](#)

The Nannies of the Neighbourhood initiative was established by a 2021 law, aiming at promoting equality through work-life balance and at strengthening women’s access to the labour market. The programme is designed to support working mothers to take care of their babies, aged from 2 months to 2.5 years, by giving them access to accredited caregivers and providing financial support to working mothers to cover a part of the childcare cost through a voucher. The goal of the program is twofold. On the one hand, it is to support and facilitate new mothers and guardians to attain their full and prompt reintegration into the labour market, prevention of severe loss of household income and continuation of their professional career. On the other hand, it is to reduce the undeclared work of baby-sitters by encouraging the unemployed women to work as certified caregivers, providing them with training if needed and supporting decent wages.

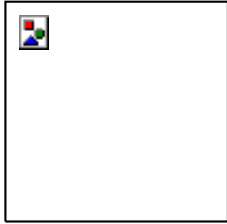
Innovation Centre for Women SDGs 5.5, 5b, 8.2, 8.3, 8.5, 17.16, 17.17

The Centre is a synergy of 20 entities: ministries, research centres, universities, chambers and private companies. Its creation is based on the United Nations model for Sustainable Development. Through a detailed Action Plan the partners will subsist a series of interventions to help women in Greece make the most of opportunities arising in the context of the 4th Industrial Revolution including (i) designing innovative actions in order to attract more women to study in STEM and increase their participation in companies, (ii) creating of a platform for the development of female entrepreneurship that will be based on high technology, guaranteeing conditions for female talent participation in the new environment and (iii) assessing the impact of gender-based policies. The European Centre for Women and Technology (ECWT) will cooperate for its development through the transfer of know-how from countries, such as Norway, with a tradition in female innovation and entrepreneurship. The ECWT is a European multi-stakeholder partnership of more than 130 organizations and a rapidly growing number of individuals representing high-level expertise in women and technology development from government, business, academia, and non-profit sectors working together to measurably and significantly increase the number of girls and women in technology and ICT.

Forthcoming initiatives

- After a very successful among companies pilot program, a rollout of the **SHARE initiative for balancing work and life in companies and the family**, is being planned. As regards the companies, the program comprises interventions to encourage gender-sensitive decisions for work-life balance and best practice exchanges, leading to an Equality Badge (in process) for the workplace. On the family level, the program focuses to highlight the father's role as essential in child rearing, aspiring to achieve equal share in care responsibilities between the parents regarding dependents of all ages and states of health. **SDGs 5.1, 5.4, 5.5**
- Enhancing the work-life balance, female participation in the labour market and the promotion of shared responsibility in the family is pursued by 2 projects to be implemented beginning in 2022: (i) The Project **Creation of Childcare units within large companies** (funded by the RRP and included in the "GREECE 2.0" recovery plan), which offers financial support to companies in order to create childcare units; and (ii) the flagship program called Nannies of the Neighbourhood, designed to support working mothers to take care of their babies, aged from 2 months to 2.5 years by giving them access to accredited caregivers. **SDG 5.4**

SDG 6: Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all



Water exploitation index, plus (WEI+)



Assessment of progress in relevant SDG indicators

- The percentage of people in Greece not having a bath, shower and indoor flushing toilet in their homes is extremely low, at 0.1%, ranking in the 2nd best cluster of countries in the EU and well below the Union's average (1.5%).
- The proportion of population connected to at least secondary wastewater treatment presents a mild but steady increase, approaching a percentage of around 95% in 2018.
- The pressure on renewable freshwater resources due to water demand, measured as the annual average difference between water abstraction and return after use to the environment, is quite high, revealing a situation close to water scarcity in 2017.

Key challenges

Sustainable use of resources, resilience to climate change and environmental protection are key challenges for Greece. In this context, investments have been planned in order to improve water treatment and water infrastructure in general. The percentage of generated wastewater not connected to collecting systems has been significantly reduced while the performance of the water supply services, particularly regarding chronic leakage issues in distribution, is currently being targeted through investments. The restoration of the water bodies to "good status" as provided by the Water Framework Directive (WFD), as well as the reversal of soil erosion and improvement of water use efficiency are considered as important priorities in order, inter alia, to prevent desertification. Greece, also responding to the impact of climate change on water resources, is in the process of modernizing the resources management, enhancing the sustainability of activities and investments in the water supply sector and improving drinking water supply and sanitation. The effective management of urban wastewater also supports the transition towards a circular economy. Furthermore, in agriculture, regional and farm-level water management is being redesigned to include irrigation and drainage, salinity management, rainwater harvesting and crop water management, use of wastewater and conjunctive use of groundwater and surface water. Finally, insularity calls for integrated management of water resources and waste, promotion of a circular economy and sustainable and balanced local economic development.

Main policy initiatives and measures

- In the context of measures to control the spread of COVID-19, the Government emphasized the need to take **urgent action in Roma settlements** (type I and II) as well as to address the serious social consequences that particularly affect disadvantaged and socially excluded Roma communities. Based on these needs, emergency funding of €2,485,000, was approved and targeted at 106 municipalities and 1 region of the country, for the supply of **sanitary material** and other **services**, including information activities on precautionary Covid-19 measures, disinfection and drinking water. It is estimated that approximately 80% of the municipalities took relevant preventive measures. **SDGs 6.1, 6.2**
- The 2nd Update of the **River Basin Management Plans** (RBMPs) of the country's 14 River Basin Districts, covering surface freshwaters such as lakes and rivers, groundwater, transitional and coastal waters up to one nautical mile, is currently underway to be completed within 2022. It will provide the necessary information, the objectives and operational instructions for Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) within a River Basin, in accordance with the provisions of the EU Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC), including at the transboundary level as four transboundary rivers from upstream countries provide approximately one-fourth of the total mean surface runoff of Greece's mainland rivers. **SDG 6.5**
- The 1st update of the **Flood Risk Management Plans** (FRMPs) is underway, and it involves the assessment and management of flood risks, in accordance with the provisions of the EU Directive 2007/60/EC. Based on new data (flood events, forest fires, technical infrastructures, land-uses etc.) that also take into account climate considerations, the 1st update of FRMPs addresses all aspects of flood risk management and establishes the appropriate Programme of Measures, towards, inter alia, the adaptation of water resources to climate change impacts, also in conjunction with the 13 Regional Adaptation Action Plans of the country. **SDGs 6.5, 13**
- The **National Drinking Water Operational Plan** has been approved in March 2022 and is a tool for achieving relevant national targets. Its operational objectives include the assessment of the current situation in terms of water needs, water bodies and water supply projects that are being implemented with funding from the European structural funds and national programs, as well as the creation of a full record of the drinking water providers' proposals on the water supply projects which are considered necessary in the period 2021-2030, in order to meet the quantitative and qualitative criteria of the Drinking Water Directive. It also provides for relevant required horizontal and support measures. **SDGs 6.1, 6.3, 6.4**
- In order to improve further water monitoring and to build consistent time series of data on water abstraction and quality and in accordance with the River Basin Management Plans and the provisions of the WFD, the **National Water Monitoring Network** was recently revised to monitor the qualitative and quantitative status of surface water and groundwater bodies. Based on the monitoring data of the network, an overall assessment of the status of water bodies is taking place and the results are being used for the 2nd Update of RBMPs and the establishment and implementation of the appropriate Programme of Measures for improving water quality. The aim is to unify all relevant water-related databases in the country under one all-inclusive Water Registry, to guide informed decisions and assist a shift in behaviours and in consumption patterns. **SDG 6.3**

- In order to ensure universal and equitable access to affordable high quality drinking water and drinking water services for all, an **Information System** for the annual collection of **operational and financial information of water supply service providers** has been set up and is operational since 2019. Based on the data collected, an **annual report** on the operation of water providers is issued, that includes provisions for the improvement of their performance. In this direction, Greece aims to intensify efforts to further improve the accountability and co-ordination of actors in the water sector as well as the assessment of utilities' performance to increase cost recovery and ensure that water prices cover the full cost of service provision and adequately reflect the environmental and resource cost in water charges. **SDG 6.1**
- Heading to fully abate the release of pollutants from wastewater into the environment and particularly in freshwaters, a key priority with regard to **urban wastewater treatment** is the **completion of urban wastewater management projects** and the increase of the percentage of the population served by urban wastewater collection and treatment infrastructure as well as the implementation of projects for upgrading the existing infrastructure. The majority of the projects are expected to be completed in 2025. The main goal is to achieve full compliance with the requirements of the EU Directive 91/271/EEC to maximize the protection of surface and groundwater and the environment in general. **SDGs 6.2, 6.3**
- With regard to water savings, Greece, as a vulnerable country to the effects of climate change and droughts, places particular emphasis on efforts to complete the related legislative framework to allow for the **reuse of reclaimed water** from adequately treated urban wastewater in the context of a circular economy, aiming at saving water resources. In June 2023, EU Regulation 2020/741 will enter into force, which sets, at European level, the terms and conditions for the irrigation of crops with recovered water from treated urban wastewater. The transposition and implementation of the European regulatory framework is expected to considerably help increase the percentage of treated wastewater used for irrigation purposes in the country, with water abstractions for agricultural purposes remaining one of the key drivers of water demand and consumption in Greece. **SDG 6.4**
- Greece has applied a more sustainable and cost-efficient approach to the **management of water in arid Greek islands** through the extensive use of desalination. Fresh water is made available for all, and is used for drinking as well as for irrigation purposes. Such a policy also promotes sustainable treatment of vulnerable island ecosystems, combats desertification, and halts and reverses land degradation. **SDGs 6.4, 15.1, 15.3**
- In the context of the **National Rural Development Programme (RDP) 2014-2020**, Greece initiates measures that promote, inter alia: (i) the increase of efficiency in irrigation through reduction of water losses and the application of highly efficient irrigation methods, thus reducing pressure of agriculture in surface and groundwater; and (ii) the improvement of water efficiency and savings (reducing water pumped from ground or surface water) at the level of agricultural holdings. **SDGs 6.4**

Best practice example

The 2010 Agreement on the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Prespa Park Area SDGs 6.5, 15, 17.16

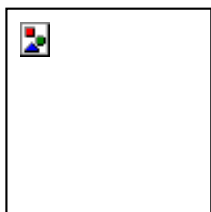
With respect to transboundary cooperation at the sub-regional level (SE Balkans), an important positive development that should be highlighted, regards the 2010 Agreement on the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Prespa Park Area between Greece, Albania, North Macedonia and the EU, that entered into force in May 2019 and has been recently operationalized. The Agreement, which is unique in its kind in our region, provides the necessary institutional framework and directions for multi-stakeholder cooperation and joint activities among its Parties to ensure an integrated protection of the ecosystem and the sustainable development of the ecologically and hydrologically rich and sensitive Prespa Park Area, including the development of integrated river basin management approaches. The Prespa example provides a successful case and a model of transboundary collaboration, for duplication in other areas.

Forthcoming initiatives

- Completion of the 2nd Update of the **RBMPs** and the 1st update of the **FRMPs**, taking into account all new data and considerations, which will enhance the integrated water resources management at all levels. **SDGs 6.5, 13**
- **Water reuse** is expected to considerably increase due to efforts for establishing a new legislative framework and especially with the enactment in June 2023 of the milestone EU Regulation 2020/741 on minimum requirements for water reuse. **SDG 6.4**
- Initiating new policies towards the development of more sustainable energy-efficient **freshwater generation methods** and **water consumption patterns**. **SDGs 6.4, 7, 12, 13, 15**
- Completion of the implementation of measures and actions included in the **RDP 2014-2020**, covering the transitional period 2021-2022. **SDGs 6.4**
- Operationalization and further implementation of the **2010 Agreement on the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Prespa Park Area** between Greece, Albania, North Macedonia and the EU, which entered into force in May 2019 and promotes the cross-border cooperation on integrated water resources management. **SDGs 6.5, 15, 17.16**

The State is bound to adopt special preventive or repressive measures for the preservation of the environment in the context of the principle of sustainable development. Matters pertaining to the protection of forests and forest expanses in general shall be regulated by law.

SDG 7: Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all



Share of renewable energy sources



Assessment of progress in relevant SDG indicators

- The more than doubling of the share of renewable energy sources in gross final energy consumption after 2010 is considered to be a result of combined measures of regulatory and technical nature. Similar distributions and even more steep trends are presented by the share of Renewable Energy Sources (RES) in specific sectors like transport or electricity.
- Final energy consumption demonstrates a reduction during the last decade which could be attributed mainly to the severe economic recession but also (as in the case of the 2019-2020 period of economic expansion) to a higher energy efficiency (as with the adoption of concrete policies in the building sector).
- Greece's energy import dependency shows a steady increase especially after 2013, which is due to the particularly high use of oil products and, to a lesser degree, natural gas, which together account for more than 65% of gross domestic energy consumption.

Key challenges

The transition to a low-carbon energy model is both a challenge and a high priority for Greece. With a history of lignite dependence, Greece originally committed to withdrawing all lignite power plants by 2023, except for one that would stay operational until 2028. This initial plan was further challenged and underwent partial revision after the severe fluctuations in energy stability caused by the war in Ukraine, extending withdrawal by 2 years. The decommissioning of lignite power plants and the closure of the lignite mines are reasonably expected to have effects on the local economies of certain regions and mitigating policies have been designed and scheduled. Security of supply and energy poverty are among the country's priorities.

In this context, Greece accelerates its efforts to increase the share of RES in the electricity system in order to reduce prices and guarantee security of supply. Offshore wind in particular is at early stages, yet a good potential has been identified and is being explored. The promotion of hybrid energy systems with storage devices can also support the decarbonisation of the economy through the collection of excess renewable electricity. At the same time the distribution infrastructure is being re-designed in order to become more environmentally friendly and socially inclusive. Completion of power interconnections with the islands of the Cyclades will be a significant step. Furthermore, Greece promotes electro mobility and "green transport" especially in the two major cities of Athens and Thessaloniki. Sustainable public and private transport require strong investment in order to improve energy efficiency and reduce their heavy dependence on oil.

Main policy initiatives and measures

- After a decade of successful implementation of programmes for energy renovation of residential buildings, a **new enhanced one** was launched in November 2020. It is part of the policies and measures of the 2019 **National Energy and Climate Plan (NECP)**, a key element of which is the improvement of **energy efficiency of the building stock in the residential and tertiary sector**. It aims to optimize the operational energy profile of residential buildings by financing renovations related to energy efficiency. Eligible interventions include: replacement of household frames (windows/doors etc.), installation/upgrading of thermal insulation, heating/cooling system upgrade, hot water system using RES or heat pumps and smart technologies and systems of energy production (thermal and/or electricity). The 2021 edition of the Programme, giving priority to expected level of energy efficiency improvements per application, aims to upgrade the energy efficiency of more than 50,000 households (38% more households than the previous edition of the programme). Moreover, since the public sector covers a major part of the building stock in Greece, a special **programme for public buildings** called "ELECTRA", was launched for the period 2020-2026. **SDG 7.3**
- In 2020, a new law for the **promotion of e-mobility** was passed, which organizes the charging services market and enables the provision of tax-based incentives for purchasing electric vehicles and the installation of charging infrastructure. The "**Go Electric**" **subsidy scheme**, launched for the period 2020-2021, provides economic incentives leading to an increased share of electric vehicles in new vehicle registrations, and efforts are being made to accelerate installation and deployment of public charging infrastructure. Currently all local authorities are preparing their plans for the installation of publicly accessible electric vehicle charging points and soon tenders will be launched for the concession of those points to Charging Point Operators. **SDGs 7.2, 9, 11, 13**
- In order to **address energy poverty and the increasing energy prices so as to ensure universal access to affordable, reliable and modern energy services**, a number of policies and measures have been introduced in 2020 and 2021, including:

- (i) The operation of new electricity markets according to the EU target model, since November 2020, for the design and operation of wholesale and balancing markets. The model will allow energy prices to gradually converge, and supply and demand to be balanced through market coupling, thus reducing energy costs for the benefit of the final consumer, but also stimulating investments.
- (ii) The establishment by law in 2021 of the **market monitoring and surveillance mechanism**, run by the Greek Energy Regulatory Authority in order to ensure that the market operates in a cost-reflective way and is sufficiently competitive.
- (iii) The establishment by law in 2021 of the **Special Account** under the name "**Energy Transition Fund**", which subsidizes the consumption of electricity in the form of discounts to the electricity bill of each beneficiary. Beneficiaries of this subsidy are all the consumers connected in low voltage power grid as well as agricultural enterprises connected in medium voltage. Special care has been taken for consumers under the category of beneficiaries of the Social Household Tariff, a special tariff established in 2010 addressed to vulnerable consumers.
- (iv) The **National Action Plan for Alleviating Energy Poverty**, entered into force in September 2021, as a detailed and binding policy and monitoring framework for abating energy poverty. The Plan integrates the relevant EU Guidelines and provides a mapping and clustering of the relevant measures under three core dimensions: consumers' protection, promotion of RES and energy efficiency interventions. [SDG 7.1](#)
 - Considering Greece's high renewable potential, especially for solar and wind, and taking into account the overarching objective of the country for achieving carbon-neutrality by 2050, the following policies and measures have been introduced to further **promote RES** penetration in the energy mix, including:
 - (i) **The simplification of RES licensing procedure, as well as a new dedicated framework for offshore RES plants.** In 2020, the Government passed a new law on the modernization of the environmental legislation providing for the replacement of the Production License by the Registration Certificate, speeding up the process of submitting a request, and establishing a new Management Information System. A next phase is now starting, with a further digitalization and simplification of the Connection Terms, Installation and Operational License.
 - (ii) **The restructuring and enhancement of the RES and Combined Heat and Power (CHP) Account** which compensates RES producers. In order to ensure financial stability and long-term sustainability of the RES-CHP Account, the Government is currently planning to implement several measures, especially as regards new RES units (i.e. units commissioned after 1.1.2021), including a new scheme of Guarantees of Origin, in line with the relevant EU Guidelines. [SDG 7.2](#)

- The Government committed in 2019 to **fully de-lignitise its energy mix by 2028**, through a front-loaded plan. This goal is reflected in the forecasts of the **2019 NECP**, which sets out the time-frame for shutting down the lignite-fired power plants currently in operation, while ensuring a fair development transition of the affected lignite producing areas. In this context, an Inter-ministerial Committee and a Steering Committee were established for the development of a **Just Development Transition Master Plan** in 2021. Reference to specific financing instruments was integrated and a clear timeline for the implementation of the specific measures was set, along with the monitoring mechanism. Special care is already being given to land repurposing. One of the primary and most important goals is to halt the consequences of unemployment due to de-lignification in the Regions of Western Macedonia and of Peloponnese, and to ensure social cohesion. To this end, four initiatives of a total amount of €107 million have been planned (two of which already launched) in cooperation with the Labour Force Employment Organization, which include, among others, business subsidies programmes for labour relocation, programmes providing work experience to unemployed young people, as well as counselling and training programmes. **SDG 7.2, 8.3, 13.2**
- The **interconnection of the islands to the mainland's power grid**, which is part of the 2019 NECP, as well as of the National Recovery and Resilience Plan (NRRP), concerns relatively bigger islands aiming to deploy their vast renewable energy potential, promote their energy security and downsize CO₂ emissions and energy costs. In 2021, the interconnection of the island of Crete to the mainland's power grid (with Peloponnese) was completed. A second interconnection of Crete (with Attica) is under construction. In addition, islands of central Aegean (Cyclades) are gradually (2017-2024) interconnected to the system, or their existing interconnection is upgraded. For the smaller non-interconnected islands, various tailor-made solutions are implemented, such as the installation of hybrid systems on autonomous islands, storage systems, e-mobility etc., in order to reduce their environmental footprint, or even to test and implement integrated solutions, aiming to make islands 100% carbon free and self-sufficient energy systems. **SDGs 7.2, 7.3, 10**
- In order to promote environmental protection and mainstream the sustainability values in the armed forces, in line with the respective national and EU legislation, as well as the NATO Standardization Agreements (STANAGs), the Ministry of Defence adopted in 2020 an official **Environmental, Energy and Adjustment to Climate Change Policy**, in which a wide range of fundamental environmental principles and priorities of the SDGs are fully integrated and highlighted. **SDGs 7.2, 7.3, 12.2, 12.4, 12.5, 12.8, 13.2, 13.3, 14.1, 15.1, 15.2**
- In an effort to promote sustainable maritime tourism, the Government has taken initiatives towards producing **clean energy at Greek ports** via RES and to provide this energy to yachts and cruise ships, including a proposal submitted for funding in the context of the EU Strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian Region (EUSAIR). **SDG 7.1**
- Alleviate energy poverty through the support of **energy communities of small-scale RES producers and the development of photovoltaics (PVs)**, including a programme made for energy vulnerable households, to be launched by the end of 2022. The programme will aim at minimizing their energy costs, also implementing net metering. This programme will be funded by the EU RRF and will support the development, construction and installation of PVs by municipalities through local energy communities so as to cover the energy consumption of these households. **SDG 7.1**

Best practice examples

"GR-eco Islands" initiative SDG 7.2, 13, 10

GR-eco islands is a strategic initiative of the Greek Government that aims to transform Greek islands into models of green economy, energy autonomy, digital innovation and eco mobility. Key pillars of the initiative that builds on the high renewables potential of Greek islands and takes into account their sensitive natural ecosystem, include: the promotion of renewables and energy efficiency practices, sustainable waste and water management, zero pollution schemes, electrification of transport, the green transformation of agriculture and tourism, and the development of port and other infrastructure through targeted subsidies and custom-made programmes by the Ministry of Environment and Energy and other competent Ministries, under the "umbrella" of the NECP. The first island that has joined this initiative is Chalki (a small island of the Dodecanese), where individual projects and actions are already implemented.

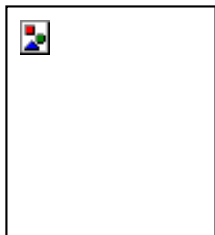
Smart and Sustainable island project on Astypalea SDG 7.2, 13

The Astypalea "Smart and Sustainable Island" project is a highly innovative project built around four key pillars: (i) vehicle electrification, (ii) smart mobility, (iii) charging and energy from Renewable Energy Sources (RES), and (iv) autonomous driving as a future option. Regarding the charging and energy from the RES pillar, the aim is for the island to become completely energy autonomous with renewable energy technologies like wind and solar power. RES alone would cover the additional electricity demand arising from the introduction of e-mobility.

Forthcoming initiatives

- New programmes on **e-mobility**, including three subsidy sub-programmes planned to be initiated within 2022, funded by the EU Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF), planning to (i) procure and install around 8,000 publicly accessible **charging points for electric cars** in urban and suburban locations within cities and in other points of interest such as highways, ports, railway stations etc. and is expected to be completed by end of 2025; (ii) subsidize the replacement of 2,000 old, conventional taxis with zero-emission electric "**Green Taxis**", which is expected to be completed by the end of 2024; (iii) accelerate efforts in introducing **e-buses** to the public fleet, starting from Athens and Thessaloniki. Finally, e-mobility will be promoted also by the new **National Climate Law** (see also SDG 13), which foresees, inter alia, the **sales only of zero-emission passenger cars from the beginning of 2030**. **SDGs 7.2, 11, 13**
- Alleviate energy poverty through the support of **energy communities of small-scale RES producers and the development of photovoltaics (PVs)**, including a programme made for energy vulnerable households, to be launched by the end of 2022. The programme will aim at minimizing their energy costs, also implementing net metering. This programme will be funded by the EU RRF and will support the development, construction and installation of PVs by municipalities through local energy communities so as to cover the energy consumption of these households. **SDG 7.1**

SDG 8: Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all



Real GDP in euro per inhabitant



**Long-term unemployment
of the active population in total and by sex %**

Year	Total	Males	Females
2010	5.2	3.4	7.7
2011	8.0	5.9	10.8
2012	13.1	10.7	16.3
2013	16.7	14.2	20.0
2014	17.5	15.0	20.8
2015	16.4	13.7	19.7
2016	15.4	12.4	19.2
2017	14.3	11.1	18.2
2018	12.5	9.3	16.5
2019	11.3	8.5	14.8
2020	10.5	8.2	13.5
2021	9.2	6.7	12.3

Number and incidence rate of fatal accidents at work



Assessment of progress in relevant SDG indicators

- GDP per capita, after a 6-year plunge during the economic crisis, started to slowly rise in 2017. It still has not reached its pre-crisis levels, the pandemic taking its toll too, remaining lower than the EU average.
- Long-term unemployment at 10.5% is the highest among EU countries and a persisting issue connected to unregistered precarious work, the informal economy and significant strains on social security and public revenue.
- Fatal accidents at work remain on low levels, despite their slight increase in the last decade, from 0.73% (2010) to 0.9% (2019).

Key challenges

The Greek economy faces considerable legacy challenges, caused by the crisis of the previous decade, directly related to low potential growth, not least because of a significant investment gap and adverse demographic developments, including the brain-drain phenomenon observed during the crisis years. Furthermore, despite recent notable improvements, Greece continues to experience vulnerabilities related to high government debt, unemployment, incomplete external rebalancing and non-performing loans. As in other countries, in 2020 the macroeconomic and fiscal outlook were significantly affected by the Covid-19 pandemic. The adverse effect on Greece's output and public finances was stronger than in other countries, due to the higher contribution of contact-intensive services (e.g., tourism) in Greek economic activity. Having said that, the recession recorded in 2020 (-9%) was significantly milder than initial projections, with the Greek economy showing higher than anticipated resilience.

2021 was a year of strong economic rebound: With an 8.3% growth rate, Greece almost fully recovered the output losses sustained in 2020. In the absence of new variants of concern, the negative impact of the Covid-19 pandemic is expected to soften further in 2022, with economic activity supported by consolidating yet still accommodative fiscal policy. Further tourism rebound and the strong boost from the Recovery and Resilience Fund (RRF) are also expected to help sustain the positive growth momentum, despite the adverse effects of rising inflation and the war in Ukraine: According to the EU Commission Spring 2022 forecast, real GDP growth in Greece is expected to be equal to 3.5% in 2022 and 3.1% in 2023. Unemployment, which had hit a record of 28% in the crisis years, is expected to further decline from 14.7% in 2021 to 13.7% in 2022 and 13.1% in 2023. Public debt is also expected to decline further, from 193.3% in 2021 to 185.7% in 2022 and 180.4% in 2023.

In recent years, the Greek banking sector has become significantly more resilient, with the non-performing loans (NPLs) ratio having declined from 43% at the end of 2021 to 12.8% at the end of 2021. Nevertheless, vulnerabilities and challenges are still present, related to the residual stock of NPLs, profitability and asset quality. These restrict the ability of banks to finance the real economy, whereas alternative ways of non-bank financing (capital markets etc.) are still developing.

Finally, and focusing on the labour market, despite constantly increasing participation in recent years, many barriers remain at place keeping a still significant part of the workforce non-active or lagging behind, especially women, youth and vulnerable social groups. To address these long-standing challenges, and in the context of the RRP, the authorities have recently introduced major reforms aiming to improve the relevance and quality of Vocational Education and Training; and enhance the effectiveness of upskilling/reskilling programmes in addressing labour demand needs for the benefit of employers and employees. These and other recently introduced reforms in the overall institutional framework governing the labour market, aim to promote productivity, flexibility, innovation, and inclusivity, in the context of an ever-changing economy for a highly skilled workforce.

Main policy initiatives and measures

- In order to face the adverse **economic and social effects of the Covid-19 pandemic**, in an effective, coherent and integrated manner, the Government has adopted, over the last two years, a comprehensive relief package of fiscal, monetary and financial measures. These measures, include: (i) the reduction of VAT for a number of products and services (i.e. restaurant services, non-alcoholic beverages, non-alcoholic drinks, all passenger transports, sanitary products, dialysis equipment), along with other specific relief measures associated with tax deferrals, enhanced tax refunds and income taxation (fiscal measures), (ii) the provision of refundable prepayment grants, advance payment programmes and State guarantee measures (monetary measures), and (iii) 40% reduction in commercial and primary residence rent, extension of deadlines for expiry and payment of bank cheques issued by affected enterprises and tourism industry, the suspension of performing loan repayments (for the principal amount) for affected enterprises (Banks' decision), the extension of procedures that are completed entirely by electronic means, and the disposal of confiscated ethyl alcohol to produce antiseptics and to the Ministry of Health (financial measures). **SDGs 8.3, 8.5, 8.6, 8.8, 10.4.**
- In 2021, the Government adopted a new coherent and comprehensive legal framework aimed at stimulating **strategic investments and improving the overall investment environment**. This legal framework lays the foundation for the simplification and acceleration of the licensing and implementation procedures related to private and strategic investments, and the provision of the necessary legal certainty for the strategic investors. Key regulatory interventions, include, inter alia: (i) the introduction of the category of strategic investments entitled "Emblematic Investments of Extraordinary Importance", which promote green economy, innovation, research and technology, sustainable infrastructure (hydrogen production systems, wind energy parks, floating photovoltaic parks), competitiveness, low-energy and environmental impact economy; (ii) the inclusion of new areas of business in the categories of strategic investments, including: agri-food, research and development, biotechnology, cultural and creative industry, space industry, digital transformation, cloud computing, data centres, waste management, robotics, artificial intelligence, business parks; (iii) the introduction of specific environmental and urban planning regulations and standards; and (iv) the provision of a number of incentives for sustainable investments, including tax, capital, location and quick licensing incentives. **SDGs 8.2, 8.3, 9.1, 9.4, 2.3, 2.4, 7.1, 7.2**
- Greek authorities are in the process of creating a **mechanism to facilitate the financing of mature private investments** through borrowing from the Recovery Fund, utilizing the maximum permitted lending resources of the Fund. This RRP Loan Facility, through various financial instruments and in cooperation with International Financial Institutions (IFIs), the InvestEU Fund and the Hellenic Development Bank (HDB), will provide loans intended for long-term investment projects (6-12 years), while providing a reasonable grace period. Work is advancing, as the Ministry of Finance has launched the open international call for the selection of commercial banks and has already signed operation agreements with 6 Greek commercial banks, as well as with EIB and EBRD. All the aforementioned banks have published their calls to the wider audience, so they can start receiving proposals. With some optimism, the first disbursement of 500m is expected to be fully utilized (signed with the final beneficiaries) by the end of Q4 2022. **SDG 8.1**
- Greece has established a comprehensive **microfinance legal framework** that provides for the licensing of microfinance institutions, which will provide credit of up to €25,000 to individuals and very small businesses, without the obligation of collateral on the part of borrowers. The aim of the reform is to provide access to funding to those excluded from bank lending. The competent authority for the supervision and licensing of the microfinance institutions is the Bank of Greece. Microfinance institutions are required to be transparent regarding interest rates, duration and overall funding costs, and need to follow some form of corporate governance. **SDG 8.10**

- Launch and implement a number of **reform projects funded by the EU RRF**, which aim, among other things: (i) to simplify and update the legislation for the major tax codes, the customs code and all relevant secondary legal provisions in line with EU best practices; (ii) to support the fight against smuggling, in particular for those products subject to excise duties (tobacco, alcohol, energy) through the modernisation of the Customs' tracking systems, audit processes, and equipment in order to increase the effectiveness of cargo audits; (iii) to ease the administrative burden for businesses and improve tax compliance by promoting and increasing electronic transactions; and (iv) to revise the Greek state aid legal framework and strengthen the capacity of the network of state aid units across Ministries. **SDGs 8.1, 8.3, 16.5**
- Greece has set up the **Hellenic Asset Protection scheme**, which is a systemic and market-based solution for the reduction of non-performing loans (NPLs) from banks' balance sheets. It provides for the securitization of NPLs and the provision of state guarantees to the senior tranches of the securitizations. Hercules I (October 2019 - April 2021) reduced NPLs by €30 billion (40%), with the provision of state guarantees of €12 billion. Hercules has been prolonged for another 18 months (April 2021 - October 2022) and aims to further reduce NPLs of Greek banks by another €30 billion. All systemic banks will achieve single digit NPL ratios during 2022. **SDG 8.10**
- In 2021, the Government passed a new law with a view to ensuring the **Just Development Transition (JDT) of lignite areas** in Greece. This new legislative initiative, which contributes significantly to achieving the national goal of complete decarbonisation of the country by 2028, specifies a wide spectrum of the measures and actions that: (i) facilitate the transformation of the productive model in lignite areas in Greece (Region of Western Macedonia, Municipalities of Megalopolis, Tripoli, Gortynia, Ichalia in Messinia, Regions of the North Aegean, the South Aegean and Crete) by 2028, in line with the revised EU targets within the context of «Fit for 55» package, aiming to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to at least 55% by 2030, and (ii) support the economic regeneration of the transition areas through decarbonisation and the attraction of investments of high added value. The law introduces a system of holistic governance for Just Transition through the establishment of: (i) a Special Agency for the JDT, which undertakes the central planning and programming of the JDT policies, the monitoring and evaluation of the implementation procedures of the projects, investments and JDT development projects, as well as the management and coordination of the utilisation of the available national or European funding sources, and (ii) a company called "Metavasi (Transition) A.E." that will function as a Special Purpose Vehicle focusing on the upgrading and utilisation of the territories in the Decarbonisation Zones, while redesigning and highlighting the opportunities for business growth. The Just Transition Development Plan of lignite areas is built around five development pillars, including: clean energy, industry and trade, smart agricultural production, sustainable tourism, technology and education. **SDGs 8.3, 8.2, 8.9, 7.2**
- The Government has initiated the programme "**Reconciliation of family and professional life**", which aims to provide male and female beneficiaries with hosting and accommodation services to the infants, toddlers and children and persons with disabilities at public and private nurseries and childcare facilities of integrated care, at kindergartens, creative occupation centres and creative occupation centres for children with disabilities. The programme intends to assist the beneficiaries who come from low-income families to keep their jobs on equal terms or enter the workforce, providing at the same time quality care and accommodation to their children, and ensuring equal access of the vulnerable groups (children and persons with disability) to quality social services. **SDGs 8.5, 5.4**
- The Government has adopted a comprehensive and long-term **Tourism Strategy** aiming to create a new model of sustainable, quality tourism, through the diversification of the tourism product and source markets. All initiatives are geared towards increasing Greece's international travel share, mainly through extension of the tourism period, enrichment of the tourism product and improvement of competitiveness, within the framework of the sustainable tourism development model. The four pillars to stimulate tourism development and upgrade: (i) the coherent treatment of infrastructure

and hyper-tourism issues that arise in some popular destinations, (ii) the creation of a crisis management mechanism in relation to the tourism sector, (iii) the digitization of services and (iv) skills development through education. **SDGs 8.9, 4.4, 11.4, 12.b**

- Key priority is the enhancement of authenticity and resilience of the tourism product as well as the upgrade of tourism establishments, by providing high-quality services of low ecological footprint. The initiation of **Destination Management Organizations** aims at the scientific and technical support of the local governments to plan and promote the total tourist product for each destination in the tourist market: attractions, culture, accessibility, facilities, services, products etc. Special-interest tourism plays a key role towards this direction. Actions related to gastronomy, diving, rock climbing and wellness tourism are already taking place. Support of domestic tourism is also a key priority, by boosting demand and extending the tourism season, via the implementation of the subsidised "Tourism for All" programme since 2020. **SDGs 8.9, 11.4, 12.b**
- The Government attributes particular importance to the implementation of development-oriented policies that enhance the competitiveness, innovation, entrepreneurship and sustainable growth of the **Greek shipping industry** and the **Greek maritime cluster**, and ensure the efficient operation of international shipping/maritime markets and the unrestricted provision of maritime transport services, through the adoption of a stable, integrated and coherent legislative framework, and the conclusion of bilateral agreements, Free Trade Agreements between the EU and third countries and multilateral negotiations. **SDG 8.3**
- In the context of the **National Rural Development Programme (RDP) 2014-2020**, Greece has put forward measures, which support investments in the processing, marketing and development of agricultural products (buildings, constructions, machinery, software, certification cost etc.). In addition, the RDP includes measures aimed at promoting the design and implementation of local integrated development strategies, with the participation of stakeholders in rural areas implemented by Local Action Groups - LEADER/CLLD (LEADER programme/Community-Led Local Development). The primary objective of those measures is to stimulate investments for the creation of Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in rural areas regarding agri-food sector, forestry products, tourism activities, other handicrafts sectors, leading to job creation, affecting women and vulnerable groups, and development of the local economy. **SDGs 8.3, 8.5, 9.2, 17.17**
- A 2021 law established the **Hellenic Auxiliary Pensions Defined Contribution Fund** ("TEKA"), which introduces the funded pension scheme to the public supplementary insurance. The reserves of the new fund are estimated to have an escalating positive effect on new domestic investment and consequently on employment by creating, through growth, new jobs. The new scheme is expected to bring future retirees a supplementary pension significantly higher than the benefit they would have received under the current NDC scheme. **SDG 8.3**
- Many business **subsidy programmes** are implemented throughout the country and in areas of high unemployment, aimed at hiring unemployed people, especially from vulnerable social groups, or first recruitment of young people ("First Stamp" programme), as well as supporting new entrepreneurs. At the same time, the Manpower Employment Organization (OAED), implements a pilot micro-finance programme and has updated the curricula of its 50 **Apprenticeship** Vocational Schools ("EPAS") and 30 **Vocational** Training Institutes ("IEK") that are attended by 10,000 students annually. **SDG 8.5, 8.6, 4.4, 4.a**
- New law provisions in 2019 intensify the financial and administrative sanctions against **undeclared work** (fines, compulsory re-inspections and registry of infringing enterprises). **SDGs 8.5, 8.8**

- An important law was passed in 2021 on the **protection of work** and the establishment of an independent **Labour Inspection Authority**, which ratified two International Labour Organization (ILO) Conventions (No 190 Elimination of violence and harassment in the world of work & No 187 Promotional Framework for Occupational Safety and Health), transposed the EU Directive on **work-life balance** for parents and carers, and included many provisions, among them:
 - (i) The **regulation** for the first time of **teleworking**, by ensuring utmost respect for working relationships, employer's compliance with the rules on working hours, respect for the privacy of the teleworker, equipment cost coverage by the employer, prohibition on the use of cameras, a monitoring system of telework in compliance with the personal data protection law, the declaration of workers and their teleworking hours at the ERGANI Information System.
 - (ii) The establishment of the **electronic labour card** as the main working time calculator and working hours compliance monitoring means for workers and enterprises respectively. The card (a) is an innovative tool to monitor undeclared and under-declared work; (b) it guarantees compliance with the working hours of employees and payment of overtime work in accordance with the relevant provisions; (c) it contributes in avoiding unfair competition between law-abiding enterprises and those that apply "black" or under-declared labour market practices; and (d) it makes the inspections conducted by the Labour Inspectorate more effective and rational, and is the key to the fair implementation of reforms, such as the right to disconnect from teleworking, working time arrangement and equalization of overtime in industry and services. **SDGs 8.5, 8.8**
- The **minimum salary and wage** for full-time employment, for white and blue-collar workers throughout the country without any age discrimination, was **increased by 13%** since 2019 and a **further increase of 9.7 % is implemented in 2022**. **SDGs 8.5, 10.1, 10.4**
- New laws and provisions (2018-2021) regulate issues such as the conditions of entry and residence of third-country nationals for the purpose of highly qualified employment, or of intra-corporate transfer, and for the purposes of research, studies, training, voluntary service, pupil exchange schemes or educational projects and au pairing. They also establish a fast-track process for granting a residence permit to third country national students, and set out national long-term visas to third country nationals, either students, who participate in summer education courses, or employees (business executives), who participate in special courses provided by Greek universities. In 2021 a law was passed which sets out a new category of national long-term visa and residence permit to third country nationals who enter Greece as **Digital Nomads**. **SDGs 8.8, 10.7, 4.3**
- New provisions were passed in 2020 and 2021 concerning the **method of calculating the social security contributions** for the main pension of **self-employed persons**, which attempt to address the problems of **social security avoidance and evasion**, such as the reduction in the amount of contributions. **SDG 8.5**
- With support from the Telecommunication Systems Research Institute (T.S.I.), a Greek Government-sponsored independent Research Institute, OAED implements a **Passive Labour Market Policy (PLMP) reform project** in cooperation with OECD, aiming at rationalizing and modernizing the benefits it provides, activating benefit-recipients in the labour market, and enhancing its institutional and administrative performance. **SDG 8.6**

Best practice example

New Development Law - Greece Strong Development SDGs 8.2, 8.3, 8.5, 8.9, 9.1, 9.5, 10, 7, 12, 2.4, 14.4

In February 2022, the Government passed a new comprehensive law, entitled "New Development Law - Greece Strong Development". The primary objective of this flagship legislative initiative is to promote and boost economic development by providing incentives to specific activities and sectors, in order to achieve a wide spectrum of thematic goals related to the SDGs, including: the green transition, the digital and technological transformation of companies, the creation of economies of scale, the support of innovative and sustainable investments and those seeking to introduce new technologies of "Industry 4.0", robotics and artificial intelligence, the strengthening of employment with qualified personnel, the support of new entrepreneurship, the strengthening of less-favoured areas of the country and regions included in the Fair Development Plan, the further development of the sustainable tourism, and the improvement of competitiveness in sectors of high added value. In addition, specific regulations have been introduced that accelerate all procedures regarding the assessment, control, verification and certification of investment plans to be integrated into the established state aid schemes. Particular emphasis is placed on the establishment of state aid schemes for investment projects, which may fall into one or more of the following categories: 1. Digital and Technological Business Transformation, 2. Green Transition - Environmental Business Upgrade, 3. New Business, 4. Fair Development Transition, 5. Research and Applied Innovation, 6. Agri-food Primary Production and Processing of Agricultural Products- Fisheries, 7. Manufacturing - Supply Chain, 8. Business Extroversion, 9. Support for Tourism Investments, 10. Alternative Forms of Tourism, 11. Large Investments, 12. European Value Chains, 13. Entrepreneurship 360o.

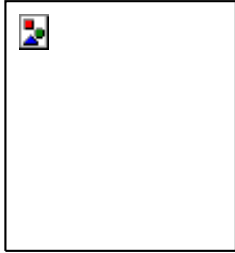
Forthcoming initiatives

- Plan and implement actions and projects supported by the **National Strategy for Research and Innovation (2021-2027)**, paying particular attention to ecological, social, economic and sustainability criteria and factors to be considered in the relevant funding formats and selection procedures. **SDGs 8.2, 8.3, 9.5, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15**
- A **National Strategic Plan for Tourism Development 2021-2030**, under the title "National agreement on sustainable tourism 2021-2030", is unfolding, structured around nine pillars: Product Development & Promotion, Accessibility & Connectivity, Private Infrastructure / Sustainable Management & Development, Public Infrastructure & Destination Management, Collaborative Governance, Human Resources Training and Development, Regulatory & Legislative Framework, Crisis Management and Funding. Various projects are expected to be launched, beginning in 2022, such as the development of an Agri-Food, Gastronomy and Tourism Inter connection System, the Health & Wellness Tourism through thermal spring utilization, Mountain tourism and a research project on the sustainable development of mountain tourism, the Accessible tourism/accessible beaches programme, Diving and underwater tourism, and the Upgrade of tourism ports. **SDGs 8.9, 2.3, 15.9, 9.1**
- New tools are developed and will be implemented in 2022 to effectively measure and monitor **sustainable tourism development**, including: (i) operating a National Observatory for Sustainable Tourism, based on specific indicators and reliable data, (ii) establishing a Research and Monitoring Centre for Coastal and Maritime Tourism in the Eastern Mediterranean, and (iii) developing the National Tourism Satellite Account, providing a solid background for measuring tourism's impact on national economy and employment. **SDGs 8.9, 12.b.**
- Complete the **digitalization of the Greek Shipping Registry** and its services, through IT projects, such as the Integrated Information System for Shipping and the full deployment of the Maritime

Single Window. **SDG 8.3**

- Digitize procedures for the establishment and issuance of **Shipping Company Certificates** and create the appropriate legal framework for the operation of the electronic application of the e-charter party, which is expected to reduce bureaucratic procedures and to facilitate professionals in the sector. **SDG 8.3**
- A number of initiatives aiming to strengthen social integration and provide **training and employment opportunities to migrants and refugees** have been approved and will be implemented in the coming period, as provided for by (i) the 2021 National Strategy for the Social Integration of Applicants for and Beneficiaries of International Protection (“Development of intensive programmes for the facilitation of direct access to the labour market”); (ii) the HELIOS programme (“Pillar Employability”); (iii) the RRF funded action “Promote integration of the refugee population into the labour market”; and (iv) the project “Promotion of employment and entrepreneurship through training and internship of refugee women in productive sectors of the economy”, as integrated in the framework of the operational program “Human Resources and Social Cohesion 2021-2027”. **SDG 8.8**
- The **ratification of the 2014 ILO Protocol to the Forced Labour Convention** is highly prioritized and integrated in the National Action Plan against Racism and Intolerance. **SDG 8.7, 8.8**
- An **updated “Strategic Framework for Active Employment Policies”** is being prepared, which will allow for the planning of active employment policies. The strategic direction for the preparation of the new framework is based on the application of the principles of the European Pillar of Social Rights and the Porto Declaration on social issues (2021). **SDG 8.5**
- Based on the 2020 EU Council’s Recommendation to the Member States as regards the adoption of the “Youth Guarantee” Program, an **update of the National Youth Guarantee Action Plan** is expected. **SDG 8.6**
- Implementation of a project aimed at creating a **Credit Expansion Observatory**, which shall collect detailed data on the liquidity provided by banks to individuals and legal entities, in order to better design and implement targeted public policies that aim to increase access to finance. It shall monitor market liquidity, independently, as well as in relation to credit expansion, in the context of supporting the economy and making the most of the funding tools to meet liquidity needs of individuals and businesses. The project shall also include the design, development and operationalisation of a data collection IT system that shall function as a tool for monitoring credit expansion and improve the readiness of the State and its relevant policies. It should be completed by Q4 2024. **SDG 8.10**
- Creation of the **Central Credit Registry (CCR)**, an information system recording on a granular basis the payment history of each individual loan of the customers of all banks and financial institutions and the types of collateral provided. By increasing information regarding the credit history of potential debtors, the CCR will address the adverse selection problem faced by financial institutions when providing new loans to potential lenders, on which they have incomplete information. This, in turn, will impact positively on the quantity and quality of investment spending. Furthermore, the CCR will have beneficial effects on the degree of competition among financial institutions, resulting in lower cost of capital for Greek firms and individual customers. Moreover, by providing accurate and timely information on individual loans, the CCR will greatly facilitate the ability of investors to price risk in the secondary market for NPLs. The CCR will be hosted in the Bank of Greece, thus supporting its obligations and functions in supervising the financial sector and ensuring financial stability. All these should be concluded by Q4 2025. **SDG 8.1**
- Amendment, by the end of 2022, of the legal framework regarding the **Greek state aid framework** modernisation and the strengthening the institutional setup for state aid control in Greece. **SDG 8.3**

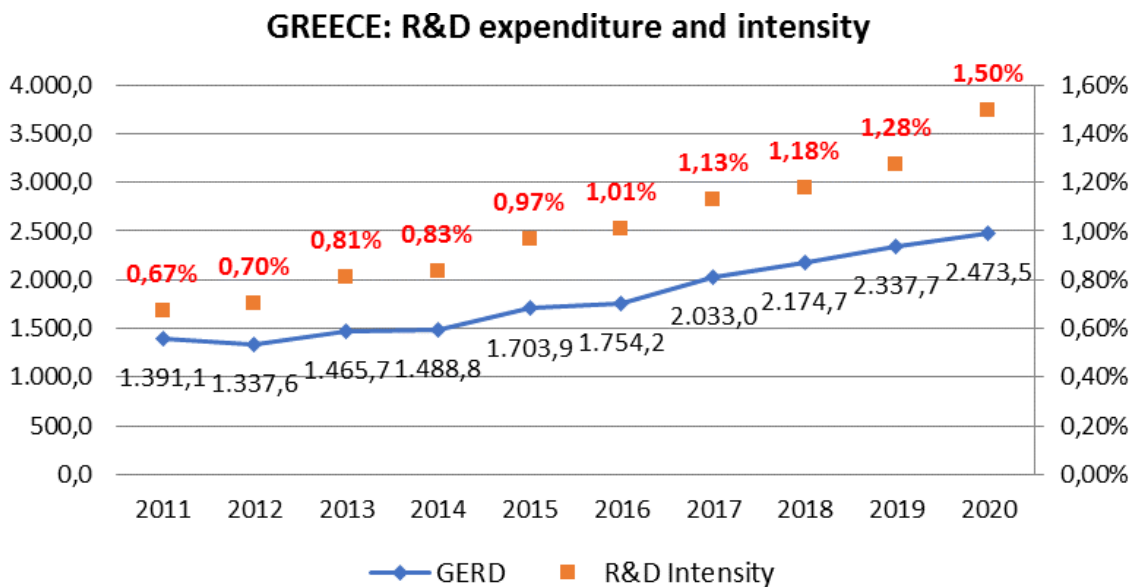
SDG 9: Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation



R&D Personnel by Sector (% of Active Population)

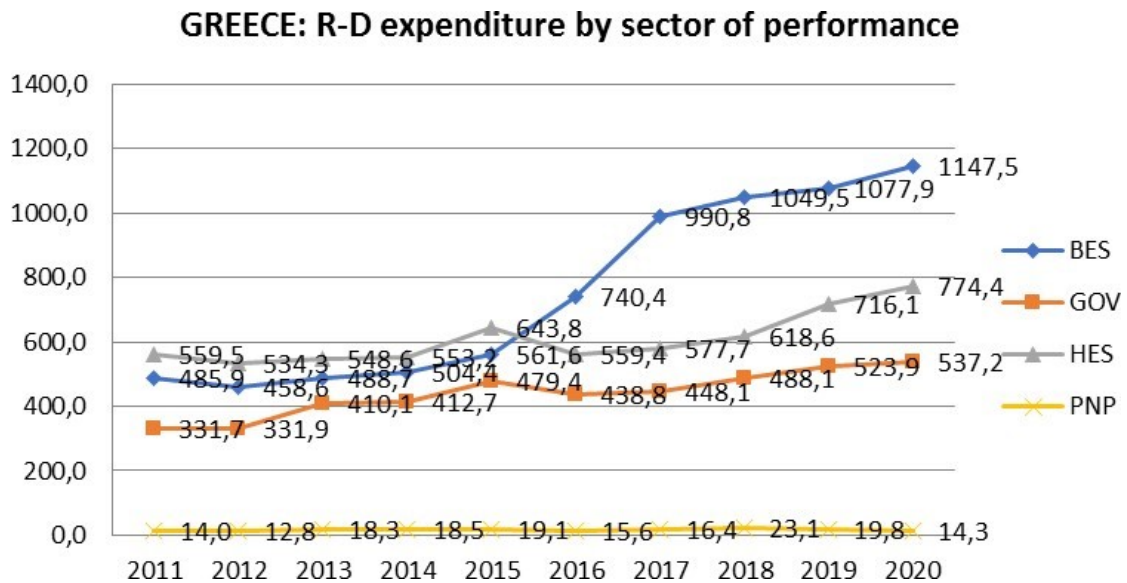


R&D expenditure and Intensity



Source: Ministry of Development and Investments (April 2022)

R&D expenditure by sector of performance



Source: Ministry of Development and Investments (April 2022)

Assessment of progress in relevant SDG indicators

- Continuing its upward trend of recent years, despite a decade of economic crisis, gross domestic expenditure on Research & Development (R&D) by sector in Greece reached 1.5 % of GDP in 2020, a proportion that is 15.3% higher than 2019, with the most performing sectors being the business enterprise sector and the higher education sector.
- R&D personnel in all sectors rose by 62.5% over the last decade. The main actor carrying out research in Greece is the higher education sector, while the share of the business sector is growing. The State is the main actor in the area of research, as universities and technological educational institutes – constituting the major part of the higher education sector – are exclusively public, according to the Constitution.

Key challenges

Building resilient infrastructure is about creating systems that can sustain, adapt, and emerge even stronger from system-wide shocks, especially those caused by climate change. Climate change causes disasters that are closely connected, interact with and feed into inequalities of income and opportunities. In recent years, the substantial impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic have added to the expanding disaster risks, creating significant challenges for critical infrastructure such as hospitals, housing, energy, water, and transport. Many of these infrastructure networks have been in place for several decades, and need replacement or upgrading. In this context, and aiming at the greening of infrastructure, investments are being directed to renovation, energy efficiency and logistics infrastructure systems. Connected to building a resilient infrastructure is the planned development of smart infrastructure, via the digitalization of procedures as well as the promotion of interactive digital services and digital content, leading to an improved business environment and increased foreign investments.

The economic recession kept the industrial investments at a medium level. The Greek manufacturing industry needs to follow international developments, investing in modern technologies, advanced information systems and automation that, in turn, require restructuring of the current operating model as well as upskilling of the human capital. It furthermore calls for a long-term strategy to improve connectivity infrastructure, create collaborative platforms for technological innovation, and improve the regulatory framework. International competition in manufacturing requires reduction of production costs through leveraging advanced technologies, as well as development of innovative high quality products. R&D is an important variable in that respect, and Greece aims to support such expenditures, as well as to improve the overall business environment. Ambitious efforts are also taking place to tackle another major challenge, the reform of public administration particularly as regards the regulatory delivery, both operational and legislative, causing various burdens to the function of the state towards entrepreneurship and consequently investments and job creation.

Main policy initiatives and measures

- Enhancing the sustainability and resilience of the whole logistics sector and providing reliable, effective and fully integrated logistics services lie at the core of the priorities of the Greek Government. It is within this context that Greece has adopted a **National Logistics Strategy**, supported by an Action Plan that charts the resources needed to achieve its vision and medium-term objectives. The **Action Plan for Logistics**, which is currently under revision, includes the following actions: (i) assessment of the environmental impact and publication of the output, promoting in this way the monitoring and reporting of the environmental performance of logistics operations, logistics providers and commercial companies; (ii) development of city logistics services, which aims at promoting environmentally friendly practices and sustainable City Logistics in the field of Urban Transportation and Distribution; and (iii) renewal of the road haulers' truck fleet, aiming at the exploration of alternative funding options by the Greek State for the purchase of new technology trucks. **SDGs 9.1, 9.4, 9.5, 8.2, 8.3, 11.2, 11.6, 13**
- In 2021, the Government adopted, by a ministerial decision, the **Digital Transformation Book 2020-2025**, which introduces the new National Digital Strategy. The Digital Transformation Book outlines the main guidelines, procedures, principal governance model, basic implementing means and key strategic pillars on which the whole digital transformation of the economy, society and public administration is based. It describes, in detail, a great number of horizontal, sectoral and short and long-term projects, as well as interventions and actions - with a focus on the technological infrastructure of the State, including the areas of education, training and digital skills development -, which aim to contribute significantly to the effective and integrated implementation of the new National Digital Strategy 2020-2025. **SDGs 9.1, 9.4, 9.5, 4.4, 4.7, 8.3**
- Greece remains committed to the objectives of the **European Gigabit Society** and has already drawn up a plan for the promotion of broadband, which is constantly updated. At the same time, the Government designs, evaluates and implements all required actions based on the country's

peculiarities. Two policy initiatives that pertain to Greece's geography and are running successfully, include the: (i) **Rural Broadband internet**, a national initiative, with the objective of developing and operating high-speed public broadband infrastructure in "white" rural and island areas of the country, and (ii) development of a network of **submarine cables connected to the Greek islands**. As high-speed connections are vital for the development of the local economy (tourism, telemedicine, remote education, e-government services), the development of modern underwater fibre cables for island interconnection will address a significant barrier to the availability of high-speed broadband services to end-users, both fixed and mobile. [SDGs 9.1, 9.4, 8.3, 11](#)

- A **National Broadband Plan (NBP)** is in place, which provides the roadmap for broadband development in Greece. It reflects our vision "Not to Leave Anyone Behind" by bridging the digital divide, promoting digital inclusion and providing a secure broadband environment, able to support social and economic development in the whole Greek territory at an equal and equitable basis. In addition, the development of broadband networks at speeds of 1Gbps is considered the main enabler that will facilitate the completion of the 400 projects included in the Digital Transformation Book (2020-2025), which also reflects our vision to make Greece a Smart Nation. The NBP specifies the framework of public and private contribution to broadband development and its targets are in line with DAE 2020 and Gigabit Society 2025 as well as with the WSIS Action Lines and will be updated according to the progress of European targets. It entails (i) legislative and regulatory interventions and (ii) public policies for broadband infrastructure deployment. [SDGs 9.1, 1.4, 5.b](#)
- In order to promote the **expansion of broadband access** as well as stimulate the demand, a public intervention of 50 million EUR public funds is presently running and it concerns a demand voucher scheme, the Superfast Broadband that subsidises citizens to obtain a new broadband connection (or upgrade an existing one) to at least 100Mbps, readily upgradable to 1Gbps. Additionally, a 2017 law, which transposed the EU Broadband Cost Reduction Directive, streamlines the licensing procedures, thus providing a functional framework for broadband development. [SDGs 9.1, 1.4, 5.b](#)
- The Government seeks to create new infrastructures and services, to promote digital inclusion of the people with specific needs, reducing the digital divide and enhancing Capacity Building. A recent example is our public **centralized IoT Platform**, the tender of which is ongoing. This platform will provide the necessary infrastructure to stakeholders, to develop solutions for Smart Cities and well-being, providing the required security, heterogeneous technologies and architectural solutions, to achieve economies of scale and synergies for the benefit of citizens from the implementation of IoT. At the same time, the development of such solutions with a Greek added value will be supported, using this single centralized platform with open standards and increased cybersecurity, providing access to multi users, and accelerating the time required for implementing IoT applications. [SDGs 9.1, 1.4, 5.b](#)
- Greece has entered into force in 2021 primary and secondary legislation for the introduction of **super-deduction for tax purposes of qualifying SME expenses for green economy and digitalisation investments**. The reform, which is fully in line with EU State aid rules, consists of tax incentives for super-deduction of expenses to strengthen investment by small and medium-sized enterprises, in equipment related to climate change adaptation, the promotion of circular economy, and digitalisation (the full implementation of the tax incentives of the reform shall be completed by 31 December 2024). [SDGs 9.4, 13.2](#)
- In 2021, the Government initiated a **Strategic Plan and National Map for the Implementation of Building Information Modelling (BIM)**, which seeks to enhance the digitalization of the construction sector and the use of BIM in public construction projects. This initiative plays an instrumental role in improving the quality of the public estate and the sustainable competitiveness of industry. [SDG 9.4](#)
- For Greece, the investment in science, research, technology and innovation is a key national strategic priority for a sustainable development model that is socially, financially and environmentally

sustainable, and is based upon highly skilled workforce and novel, innovative ideas. Based on the key objectives and thematic priorities of the National Research and Innovation Strategy for Smart Specialisation adopted in 2015, a number of innovative interventions and programmes covering all the economic, social and environmental aspects of sustainable development have been financed during the programming period 2014-2020, under the coordination of the General Secretariat for Research and Innovation of the Ministry of Development and Investments. Currently, the Government is in the process of planning the new **National Strategy for Research and Innovation 2021-2027**, which places particular emphasis on the following priority areas: Agri-food Chain - Life Sciences, Health, Medicines - Digital Technologies - Sustainable Energy - Environment and Circular Economy - Transport & Supply Chain - Materials, Constructions & Industry - Tourism, Culture and Creative Industries. **SDGs 8.2, 8.3, 9.5, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15**

- In 2021, the Government initiated a **National Strategy for Industry**. The actions of the Strategy under development will contribute to the development and transition to green and digital development, to productive and industrial transformation, and to the design of financial and other support tools. Additionally, the National Strategy aims to strengthen the growth potential of the industry and to increase its footprint in the Greek economy and society. The strategy is based on five (5) key productivity pillars, which it recognizes as the key characteristics of a successful economy. These are Innovative Ideas, People, Infrastructure, Business Environment and Areas, on which the main pillars of the Industrial Strategy were built in order to be in line with the country's vision for a complete overhaul of the domestic economy. **SDGs 9.2, 9.3, 9.4, 9.5, 7.2, 7.3, 8.2, 8.3, 12.2, 12.5, 13.2**
- **Business environment's simplification** and upgrading in quality and safety is another core priority of the Greek Government, which is substantially supported by the national Recovery and Resilience Plan (RRP). This policy consists of both legislative and implementation measures, addressing: (i) simplification of licensing procedures for economic activities; (ii) new institutional framework for the inspection of economic activities and products; and (iii) legislative initiative for the simplification of licensing procedures for starting new businesses. **SDG 9.3**

Best practice examples

“Smart Bridges” investment under the RRP SDGs 9.1, 11.2

Most of the country’s bridges were built in the 1950s and 1980s and are now theoretically nearing the end of their operational life. Small design loads combined with the uncontrolled passage of increasingly heavy vehicles and extreme environmental effects due to climate change are factors that have further contributed to the reduction of bridge strength and make many of them “quasi-safe” to operate. It is therefore clear that the safe use of bridges requires an immediate assessment of their structural and operational adequacy, mainly in terms of their mobile operating loads, based on modern procedures and methodologies of immediate evaluation (Smart Assessment Procedures or “SAP”). The aim of the project is the intelligent provision of preventive maintenance services of bridges in various regions of the country. This information will be recorded and processed by specialized engineers in order to improve the safety level of the bridges and prevent future accidents. The project should be equipped with special load measuring systems and sensors / optical fibres that will measure the displacement of the bridges in real time with modern and accepted technological methods. This information will be recorded and processed with special algorithms that calculate the strength of the bridges.

“Flood mitigation projects” investment under the RRP SDGs 9.1, 6.5

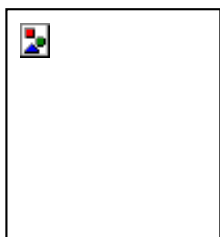
The project encompasses a set of multi-purpose investments aiming at limiting flooding risks, providing water for irrigation purposes in drought areas during the summer and enhancing surface water management efficiency in several areas in Greece. The total cost of the project is € 130.7 M and it has been initiated during 2021 and will be completed by the second quarter of 2025. Furthermore, it is expected to deliver positive environmental impact, including climate change adaptation benefits, as for the time being, irrigation water in the areas of interest is yielded from groundwater bodies, with intense drilling leading to salinization and lowering of the aquifer, putting water resources under significant stress. Through the optimization of surface waters’ management and water abstraction, the project will contribute to better control of underground waters resulting in water resources sustainability. In addition, taking into account that more than half of the annual precipitation occurs in winter, while during summer precipitation is quite negligible, better water management will build long term climate resilience.

Forthcoming initiatives

- Completion of a wide range of innovative and **sustainable aviation infrastructure, motorway and railway projects** across the entire territory of Greece, which increase the connectivity and security of the whole transport system, contributing to the citizens’ quality of life, environmental protection (electro mobility) and the national economy. **SDGs 9.1, 9.4, 11.2, 11.6**
- **Investments in public infrastructure** (airports, ports, rail network, public transport), which contribute to mobility and improve the competitiveness of the tourism sector, in terms of sustainability and digitalization, creating a sustainable and competitive framework for development. **SDGs 9.1, 9.4, 11.2, 11.6, 8.9**

- Improving the **institutional framework for the development and operation of Business Parks** and **fostering the creation and development of new, green and innovative business parks** by providing financial support for: (i) the establishment of new facilities; (ii) the expansion of existing industrial parks to meet the needs of adapting to the strategy of Industry 4.0; and (iii) the conversion of informal industrial complexes into technologically smart, environmentally sustainable and innovative industrial parks. **SDG 9.2**
- Support for the **acceleration of investments in smart manufacturing**, by providing financial support to very small, small and medium enterprises of the Greek industrial ecosystem, for improving their technological infrastructure and upgrading their productivity equipment through the use of modern smart technologies. **SDG 9.2**
- **Elaboration of an Action Plan for the strengthening of the Supply Chain**. The main goal is to transform the country into a centre of assembly, final processing and packaging so that the supply chain will have a positive impact on the growth and GDP of the country. **SDG 9.1**
- Full implementation, by 31 December 2024, of the reform regarding **super-deduction for tax purposes of qualifying small and medium-sized enterprise (SMEs) expenses for green economy and digitisation investments**. **SDGs 9.4, 13.2**

SDG 10: Reduce inequality within and among countries



Income share of the bottom 40% of the Population - % of Income



Assessment of progress in relevant SDG indicators

- The ratio of total income received by the 20 % of the population with the highest income to that received by the 20 % of the population with the lowest income, has shown a downward trend since 2018 reaching 5.23 in 2020, lower than at the beginning of the economic crisis (2010).
- In 2018, the income share of the bottom 40% of the population exceeded the rate of 2010 (19.8%) and remains above 20%.
- First-instance decisions to asylum applications have, lately, been significantly accelerated in order to handle the backlog and rose from 876 in the first 5 years (2011-16) to 9,771 between 2017-2020. There are still pending cases, which tend to be gradually covered unless there is significant increase in incoming applications.

Key challenges

With a view to reducing inequality, Greece adopts policies and measures to enhance the capacity of its social state to promote social inclusion. As regards disability, a chronic lack of policies on independent living, employability and early childhood intervention is now being addressed aiming to solve accessibility and infrastructure problems for the physically impaired, to avoid institutionalization, delays in service delivery, bureaucracy and complex procedures, to shape attitudes, to overcome stereotypes and barriers towards inclusiveness and to advance independent living. Another challenging field and a top priority for Greece is child protection and development where long-standing disparities in quality and quantity of nursery care services, belated diagnosis of learning disorders and a heavy and obsolete institutional care have until recently been unfavourable to children's rights and prospects. In addition, regarding Roma, Greece focuses on tackling their multi-level social exclusion and discrimination and promote coexistence and participation. The measures focus on improving their access to education, employment and health care, as well as tackling poor living conditions and discrimination. Regarding the relatively low diversity awareness, Greece seeks to promote diversity within organizations and eliminate gender, ethnicity and sexual orientation inequalities, especially in the job market. This is deemed necessary, together with active inclusion policies where needed, particularly as the country has been receiving successive waves of mass immigration for almost a decade, developing a risk to expand the poor and socially excluded strata in pandemic-affected conditions.

Main policy initiatives and measures

- Greece has taken initiatives, which seek to successfully address the "accessibility gap" brought about by the remoteness and insularity faced by the Greek island inhabitants. In this regard, measures have been put forward with a view to continue to implement the **Transport Equivalent for all island residents and freights**, which is a rebate mechanism to treat islander's transport costs inequality, improving mobility and better island accessibility. As the majority of products and services have to be transported to the islands, prices are considerably higher, adding to the cost of living in insular territories. The reduced freight costs as well as the lower commuting and travel expenses for the local residents are expected to stimulate growth and job creation in these regions with greater social inclusion and environmental sustainability. **SDGs 10.3, 8.3**
- The Strategy for social inclusion and the fight against poverty and the National Plan for the protection of Children's Rights (2021) are commitments to reduce child poverty, to guarantee that every child has access to free health services, education, childcare, housing and adequate food, to apply guardianship to unaccompanied minors refugees, to simplify adoption procedures, to ensure independent living and avoid deinstitutionalization for people with disabilities, to provide a safety net against deep poverty by the constitutionally guaranteed social solidarity income (GMI), to provide decent housing for vulnerable groups and for persons aged 67 years and over with low or no income. **SDGs 10.2, 10.3, 10.4, 3.4, 4.1, 4.2, 4.5**
- In the period 2019-2020, amendments on the provisions of the **Code of Greek Citizenship** were introduced provided for a more objective, transparent and faster acquisition of Greek citizenship by those who fulfil the legal requirements, by restructuring the procedure of naturalization, introducing practices of public access to information, such as (i) an online platform, (ii) the recording and publication of the procedures, (iii) the digital monitoring of all the cases, (iv) the publication of a digital guide and (v) an online "bank" of topics concerning the naturalization of alien citizens of non-Greek origin. **SDGs 10.7, 10.2, 16.6, 16.10**
- Facilitating safe, organized, and regular migration and developing efficient migration policies is the principal objective of the Greek Ministry of Migration and Asylum (MoMA), which was reorganized by a presidential decree in 2020, so as to improve the coordination and interconnection of services and promote the coherence and synergy of the policies pursued. At the same time, the implementation

of new IT tools facilitates the management of applications for resident permits and other such processes and services. Apart from the internal institutional and organizational restructuring, it should be noted that Greece is giving due importance to the transnational cooperation for an orderly and safe migration, by implementing bilateral agreements with major countries of origin of migrants. **SDG 10**

- A 2019 law provides the opportunity to **all beneficiaries of international protection to participate in programs of social integration** that are being organized by the competent authorities. **SDG 10**
- In order to support **unaccompanied children an innovative project of mentorship** is designed and implemented. The mentors act as role -models for unaccompanied children by providing individualized guidance in every step of their journey; including reception, accommodation, education, ensuring children's smooth transition to adulthood as well as their integration into the labour market. The project is implemented for the first time in Greece and led by former unaccompanied children, who reside in Greece and faced similar difficulties and challenges in the past. **SDGs 10.2, 4.1, 4.7, 8.5**
- The access of **vulnerable social groups to employment programmes** was facilitated in 2021 by provisions such as the inclusion of women who are victims of gender-based violence and domestic violence in the list of these groups, a subsidy increase, and a simplification of the participation criteria concerning the hiring of persons with disabilities, former prisoners, former drug addicts, and young offenders or youth in social peril, including women facing increased labour-market accessibility obstacles, victims of trafficking and transsexual people. **SDG 10.2, 8.5**
- Provisions, adopted in 2019, reform in a substantial way the legal framework concerning the community-based services for persons with disabilities. As regards the availability of the supported homes, and within the scope of deinstitutionalization, Public Legal Entities and non-profit organizations certified to provide social care services, may now establish **Supported Living Homes for Persons with Disabilities**. **SDG 10.2, 1, 11**
- The 2020 law on **insurance reform** and the **digitalization of the National Social Security Fund** ("e-EFKA") contributes to a fairer and more effective social security system, in line with the requirements of the modern digital era, through the integration of the system and the digitization of the pension award process, cultivating insurance consciousness and consolidating feelings of security and trust in employees and pensioners. The country's insurance system becomes accessible to all citizens without discrimination and exclusion, and provides for the weak, restoring insurance justice to all those who contribute for many years of work to the social security system. **SDGs 10.4, 16.10**
- The **National Action Plan (NAP) for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2020)** is implemented horizontally in accordance with the United Nations guidelines and the particular remarks from the country's examination in the 22nd session of the UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. The Committee made recommendations, indicating the need to incorporate the rights model into legislation and practice, the obligation to develop a clear national strategy and action plan and the revision of the terms of reference for persons with disabilities in legislation. Responding to them, the NAP comprises six Pillars and thirty Objectives, which are further broken down into projects and actions with a clear timeline and specific actors, covering a wide range of policy areas. This is a dynamic text that will be constantly enriched, updated and specialized, based on the results of an ongoing consultation. **SDG 10.2, 4.5, 8.5, 11.2, 11.7**

- The **National Deinstitutionalization Strategy and the Action Plan for its implementation** describes the social welfare reforms that aim in particular at promoting and developing a solid legal and economic framework, which also addresses the needs of children with disabilities, adults with disabilities and the elderly. Deinstitutionalization and the prevention of institutionalization **include the Personal Assistant**, the development of accommodation structures for people with disabilities, the development of a **pilot program of professional foster care for children with disabilities**, the development of a short reception unit for people with disabilities, the establishment of a mobile support unit for families with disabilities, the development of creative employment centres and the creation of day care centres for the disabled. **SDG 10.2, 8.5, 11.2, 11.7, 4.5**
- There are several benefits for persons with disabilities from different public bodies with different conditions and procedures each time. In most cases, the procedure provides for the submission of documents (such as the disability certification document). Therefore, it is not easy for people with disabilities to know all these procedures in order to be able to apply. The **Disability Card** will integrate all benefits for the disabled from all institutions. Beneficiaries will be able to enjoy these rights and benefits upon presentation of the Card, without having to demonstrate their disability certification each time. **SDG 10.2, 4.5, 8.5, 11.2, 11.7**
- There are **9 financial aid schemes for persons with disabilities**, complementing the provisions of the social security funds, which cover all types of disabilities. Eligibility is subject to certain preconditions that concern mainly the disability rate and the employment and insurance status. In addition, other programmes are implemented every year, such as a **camping programme** for Persons with Disabilities, as well as a programme of **free or reduced travel ticket** with public transport and long distance buses for Persons with Disabilities is implemented. **SDG 10.2, 11.2, 11.7**
- The new **National Roma Strategy and Action Plan 2021-2030** is the result of an in-depth study and long participatory process, involving all relevant ministries and stakeholders, as well as Roma representatives. It has been set under public consultation with the civil society and relevant stakeholders at national, regional and local level. The overall strategy and action plan sets measurable indicators to be complemented by a monitoring mechanism, so as to enable the continuous evaluation of the achievements or setbacks and the necessary adjustments of the actions. It comprises **4 pillars** (i-Prevention and fight against Roma poverty and social exclusion; ii-Enhancing equal access of Roma to basic services and goods [education, employment, health, social care and housing]; iii-Preventing and combating stereotypes and discrimination against Roma; iv- Promoting the active participation of Roma in social, economic and political life) and a total of **27 Thematic Measures**. Particular emphasis is placed on Roma empowerment, especially of Roma youth and women for their professional, social and personal development and enhancement of civic competence and engagement in the local communities. Specific actions are foreseen to promote **active participation of Roma in social, economic and political life**. The issue is also addressed within the Roma Platform actions of the National Contact Point for Social Inclusion of Roma, working closely with Roma and non-Roma communities in order to create a culture of dialogue and develop capacities, synergies and cooperation at local level, enhancing Roma participation and involvement in all aspects of social life. **SDGs 10.2, 10.3 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 11, 16, 16.7**
- **Roma Branches established in Community Centres of municipalities** hosting significant rates of Roma, provide reception, support and interconnection services at local level, as well as individualized support to Roma in all fields of social integration (access to primary healthcare, school enrolment and attendance, renewing of unemployment cards and receiving Minimum Guarantee Income). Roma are offered counselling and psychological support, primary health care services and targeted actions for education, tackling school dropout and promoting literacy, as well as actions to promote their employment integration and social inclusion. The **Roma mediators** play a key role in the smooth operation of the Roma branches of the Community Centres acting as a bond between the local Roma communities and the Centres. Today 62 Roma Branches operate in Municipalities throughout Greece, while their contribution to the social inclusion of Roma at local and regional level is considered particularly important. **SDGs 10.2, 10.3, 16.b**

- Aiming at reducing inequalities, the first-time **National Strategy for LGBTQ+ Equality (2021)** is based on the principle of equality, on the prohibition of sexual orientation and gender identity discrimination and on enhancement of social inclusion. LGBTQ+ people face significant problems daily in almost every aspect of the public sphere, among others when visiting the health services, contacting the police and all public administration, adapting to working environments and going to school. Most of their reported difficulties are based on either stereotypical discrimination or lack of institutional provisions. Consulting closely with their representatives, the Government deemed it important to treat the systemic malfunctions that demote them to second-class citizens and ensure protection of their rights while building LGBTQ+ inclusive societies. **SDGs 10.2, 10.3, 16.1, 16.3, 16.9**

Best practice examples

Personal Assistant for People with Disabilities SDGs 10.2, 5.4

The Personal Assistant for People with Disabilities is a particularly important service for the promotion of deinstitutionalization and independent living, as well as for the avoidance of the marginalization of persons with disabilities. This service is established for the first time in Greece in 2021 and will begin in 2022 implemented on a pilot in selected areas of the country. It involves training and registration of professional helpers who will assist the disabled to achieve independent living while at the same time they will offer responsibility relief to their families. Traditional carers, mainly women, will be able to participate too. The pilot programme will be implemented in two phases, each one for 1,000 beneficiaries, and its rollout will be planned after a necessary evaluation.

Social Mediation and Preventive Security Training for Police Personnel SDGs 10.2, 10.3, 16.7, 16.b

The programme began in 2020 and is targeted to areas of the country hosting significant rates of Roma populations, in the regions of Attica, Central Macedonia, Thessaly and Crete. The core of the intervention involves the police personnel who come in direct contact with the Roma communities within their daily tasks. Planned activities include: (a) Field study in order to identify the specific special needs of intervention in matters of preventive security and specific target to investigate the attitudes / perceptions of the local Roma communities regarding the police and vice versa, (b) Training of front-line police personnel on issues of social mediation and preventive security, with the active participation of experienced Roma social mediators and with the aim of promoting appropriate preventive mediation tools, (c) Pilot test of trained police officers for the purposes of preventive mediation and practical use of related tools during the execution of daily police work. The action is expected to contribute to the enhancement of social dialogue and the proactive promotion of Roma social inclusion by enhancing mutual awareness and understanding among local Roma and non-Roma communities and the civil protection services, with a special focus on combating stereotypes and discrimination against Roma and improving Roma relations with public services.

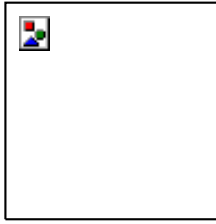
Forthcoming initiatives

- A new **codification of national migration legislation** is underway and expected to be finalized by the end of 2022 and a new revision of the regulatory framework regarding migration for employment and migration for investments is under consideration. Also, further progress on the use of IT tools for the submission of applications for residence permits and the full digitalization of the migration archives is planned. **SDGs 10.7, 8.8**
- The **Migrant Integration Centres** were established by law in 2016 and operate as branches of the municipal Community Centres, providing a wide range of services to third-country nationals. So far 10 such centres are in operation, and their increase to 32 is under consideration. **SDG 10.2**
- The **Ministry of Migration and Asylum** in collaboration with the European Social Fund (ESF) and the Hellenic Agency for Local Development and Local Government, has designed the project “**Enhancing intercultural mediation services in municipal Community Centres and Migrant Integration Centres**”. The project is co-financed by the ESF through eight (8) Regional Operation Programmes (Eastern Macedonia and Thrace, Attica, Western Greece, Epirus, Thessaly, Central Macedonia, Crete, and Central Greece) and is being implemented by the Hellenic Agency for Local Development and Local Government. The first 34 Intercultural Mediators attended a specialized training programme and have started providing intercultural mediation services at 32 municipalities. The project will run until August 2023. **SDGs 10.2, 17.17**
- A Technical Support programme funded by the European Commission’s Directorate-General for Structural Reform Support (DG REFORM) will run in 2022 for the **establishment of a permanent procedure for the integration of third country nationals in the labour market**. The aim is to find ways to connect immigrants, asylum seekers and refugees with the labour market, by matching their educational and professional skills with available jobs, and it is expected to address the following tasks: (i) planning a database in order to register the skills and qualifications of immigrants, asylum seekers and refugees; (ii) mapping of immigrants and refugees’ skills and education background; (iii) organizing campaigns so as to inform about the new initiative; (iv) better understanding of the potential migrant and refugee capacity; (v) outreaching in companies and employers to scan the labour market and workforce needs; (vi) matching skills and qualifications with available job opportunities. **SDG 10.2**
- The “**Diversity awareness**” project is funded by the RRP and included in the “GREECE 2.0” recovery plan, with the objectives of developing a concrete mechanism that can monitor the progress and assess on an annual basis the data related to equality and discriminations, enhancing the role of the **Equality Observatory**, creating a working group that will review best practices and standardised methodologies, raising employees’ awareness of discriminated groups and avoiding discrimination in the way they approach and communicate with these groups, integrating a culture of openness and adaptability to diversity, and encouraging organizations to recruit and utilize executives belonging to discriminated groups. The project starts in 2022 and the goal is to train 1,600,000 employees by the end of 2024, with priority given to those employed in front office positions and managerial roles. The budget is around €47 million. **SDG 10.2**

Article 21 of the Greek Constitution

People with disabilities have the right to benefit from measures ensuring their self-sufficiency, professional integration and participation in the social, economic and political life of the Country.

SDG 11: Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable



Number and incidence rate of road accidents



Percentage of people living in overcrowded household by income situation in relation to the risk of poverty threshold

Year	Below 60% of median equivalised income	Above 60% of median equivalised income	Total
2010	34.7	23.2	25.5
2011	35.8	23.2	25.9
2012	39.4	22.7	26.5
2013	42.0	22.9	27.3
2014	43.1	22.9	27.4
2015	42.0	24.3	28.1
2016	42.2	25.0	28.7
2017	43.7	25.3	29.0
2018	44.2	25.7	29.2
2019	45.7	25.0	28.7
2020	43.9	25.8	29.0

Assessment of progress in relevant SDG indicators

- Between 2010 and 2020, the total percentage of people living in overcrowded households by income situation in relation to the risk of poverty threshold shows an upward trend, mainly due to the economic crisis and the deep recession. More specifically, in 2020 the total population living in overcrowded households reached 29.0%, well above the EU average of 17.8%, while the corresponding percentages for the non-poor and poor population amounted to 25.8% and 43.9%, respectively.
- The total percentage of people living in households suffering from noise presents a reduction from 23.2% in 2010 to 20.1% in 2020.
- The impressive decrease in the number of people killed in road accidents continues for the last decade in Greece, reaching its lowest level in 2019, at almost half.
- In the last decade, the reduction in use of private vehicles and fuel consumption heating due to the economic crisis in parallel with the use of alternative fuels for vehicles and the waste management, had a significant impact on the reduction of the air pollution by particulates. In this way the annual trend of PM 10 and PM 2,5 concentrations continue at steady state without significant variations, after the sharp increase in 2013.
- Recycling rate of municipal waste is increasing over the last years, reaching 21% of total waste generated in 2019. This moderate progress has been achieved due to new policies and regulations aiming at increasing waste recycling and introducing extended producer responsibility schemes. There is still much to be done so that the upward trend continues.

Key challenges

Urbanization poses great challenges for Greek cities, such as environmental degradation, air and noise pollution, heat-island effects, habitat fragmentation, loss of ecosystem services, pressures on urban security and energy poverty. Many cities, including its capital, need more green public spaces. The economic crisis has largely affected the citizen's quality of life, raising housing and cohabitation issues for many, while mass migration waves posed new management challenges to the country. Lately, the Covid-19 pandemic has dramatically affected people as well as city routines. Seeking to establish more sustainable city and community lifestyles, the country's decision to promote sustainable mobility focuses on the promotion of alternative means of transport, walking, bicycling and public transportation instead of the use of private vehicles and the construction of additional road infrastructure. Since in the new era of climate crisis, growing urban areas are expected to relate to bigger scale disasters and stress, investing in prevention, adaptation and recovery from shocks and stresses through institutional reforms and medium- to long-term resilience policy planning and implementation is a set of important priorities. On the other hand, environmental and spatial/urban legislation in Greece is traditionally characterized by complexity and ambiguities, increasing the administrative burden on citizens and businesses. This is why regulatory modernization, simplification and codification are underway in order for new local urban plans to promote sustainable economic activity and the protection of the environment.

Main policy initiatives and measures

- Within the continuing programme for energy renovation of residential buildings, a special sub-programme is being implemented aiming to help people from the lower economic strata adapt their dwellings to climate change conditions through a range of improvements including -inter alia- replacement of household windows/doors, installation/upgrading of thermal insulation and heating/cooling system upgrade. The programme is designed to protect the financially weak by demarcating a budget of €100 million for energy poor households, setting a higher subsidy rate of 75% and providing a state guarantee for up to 80% of a bank loan they may ask to get in order to be able to cover their private contribution. **SDG 11.1**

- The Government in collaboration with UNHCR and NGOs currently active in the field related to children protection and rights launched a Mechanism to rapidly identify **unaccompanied children who are homeless or living in insecure conditions** and provide safe and secure accommodation and support. In a second phase, the unaccompanied children are transferred to long-term accommodation, based on a formal assessment of the child's needs, background and options available in Greece. The Mechanism also includes a 24/7 telephone hotline for identifying and tracing children in need. **SDGs 11.1, 10.2, 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.5**
- The Government has designed and implemented a new policy aimed at enhancing the capacity of **long-term accommodation for unaccompanied minors**. To that end, the increase of accommodation places in hostels and semi-autonomous living apartments reaches 62% since November 2019 and 2,242 places. In 2022, 450 new hosting positions will be created for unaccompanied children). **SDGs 11.1, 10.2, 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.5**
- Another important policy focusing on age-related needs of unaccompanied minors up to 12 years old is the promotion of alternative care and particularly foster care, as they will be included in the **national registry for children aiming to be eligible for the matching foster care process** as followed through the national platform for adoptive and foster families ("anynet").
- Infrastructure improvement in Roma settlements & Temporary relocation. With regard to the issue of housing - improving living conditions, the Government has intensified the efforts to raise awareness and activate local authorities, in order to promote relevant relocation interventions or improvement of living conditions in Roma communities according to local needs. The improvement of living conditions concerns personal-hygiene and environmental infrastructure and facilities, such as public baths and areas for the cleaning of clothing and other related interventions. Pursuant to the current legislation, the Committee for Temporary Relocation of Special Social Groups, set up at the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, examines Municipalities' requests for relocation of Roma communities to properly organized premises in order to ensure decent living conditions. In this context, a **pilot social housing temporary relocation of 56 Roma families** (approx. 370 persons) from the Pelekas settlement in the Municipality of Katerinihas been initiated. The project with a budget of €5,000,000.00 is co-financed by the Financial Mechanism of the European Economic Area. It includes installation of basic housing equipment, (e.g. household appliances, refrigerators, cookers, washing machines, air-conditioners, solar panels, etc.), regular consultation sessions with Roma families on the status of the housing and infrastructure development and support, as well as complementary activities supporting the physical relocation of the 56 families to the newly constructed housing units. Complementary social services include the establishment and staffing of a **Study Centre for primary school pupils**, the organization of cultural, athletic and other social activities, decided upon after **consultations with the beneficiaries** on their current needs. **SDG 11.1, 11.6, 11.7, 10.2, 6.1, 6.2, 4.1, 4.5, 4.6, 17.17**
- In order to secure affordable transportation for all, tickets in public and private (intercity) transport are subsidized for social groups such as students of all educational levels, persons with disabilities, citizens aged 65 and over and the unemployed. **SDG 11.2**
- The expansion of existing or construction of new metro lines in Athens and Thessaloniki, which is underway, will improve accessibility, reduce traffic problems in several densely populated suburbs connected to the above metropolitan areas, as well as increase safety and quality of services to the passengers. Moreover, a "road safety upgrade investment" within the RRP framework will contribute to the restoration of the road network as it includes interventions to approximately 7000 points on the national or regional road network or at the pavements throughout the territory. **SDGs 11.2, 3.6**

- The Government passed in 2020 a new law on the **modernization of the Spatial and Urban Planning legislation**, which promotes transparency of data and information, in combination with a rational, coordinated and integrated spatial and urban planning system. In this regard, the full digitization of the Greek territory in terms of land-uses, protection status, type of industrial and other activities allowed, facilitates the planning and authorization of new investments across the country, while ensuring the protection and management of the natural environment in a more sustainable and effective way against urban sprawl and other pressures from economic activities, in line with the national climate change adaptation and mitigation objectives. **SDGs 11.3, 11.5, 11.6, 11.7, 11.a, 11.b, 14, 15**
- Greece places particular emphasis on spatial planning through the elaboration and implementation of an integrated **National Spatial Strategy** that constitutes the 'spatial depiction' of the principles of sustainable development, balancing economic and social activities to ensure protection of the natural environment, thus linking all SDGs in actual terms. The National Spatial Strategy aims at safeguarding economic and social cohesion, amending geographical imbalances and spatial inequalities, ensuring sustainable management of natural and cultural resources as well as promoting coherence and complementarity of activities (e.g. residential areas, production areas and free space in off-plan areas) in time and space, at all levels, i.e. local, regional and national. The principles of the National Spatial Strategy, are therefore, fully taken into account in the elaboration of the following plans, at five different levels: (i) the **Special Spatial Planning Frameworks**, which are sector-specific, at the national level; (ii) the **Regional Spatial Planning Frameworks**, which cover the totality of the Greek administrative and geographic regions, at the regional level; and (iii) the **Maritime Spatial Frameworks** for the marine areas of the country to be soon developed, also at the regional level. Spatial planning at the local level corresponds to urban planning, which is carried out through the (iv) **Local Urban Plans** and **Special Urban Plans**, regulating the sustainable spatial development and organization of the territorial area of one or more Municipal units; and the (v) **City plans** for the specification and implementation of the provisions of the Local Urban Plans at city or settlement level regarding land-uses, building regulations, allocation of open or public spaces as opposed to built up areas etc. In this context, five Special Spatial Planning Frameworks and nine out of the twelve Regional Spatial Planning Frameworks have been approved, completed or updated, aiming to reconcile nature protection with economic development, and the rest are underway. **SDGs 11, 17.14**
- With the aim to **complete the urban planning of the country by 2026** to reach a full coverage of the Greek territory from the current 20% coverage, most of the necessary technical specifications have already been issued (i.e. Local Urban Plans, Special Urban Plans for decommissioned lignite producing sites in line with the objective of a full delignitisation of the energy mix by 2028, building co-efficient reception zones etc.), while the remaining Technical Specifications are expected in the coming months (for settlements' boundaries, special local plans and the existing road network in off-plan areas). All above mentioned studies that aim to integrate the planning system in Greece and promote the digitalization of the Greek territory with urban plans for the 75-80% of the Greek territory by 2025, form an important part of the National Recovery and Resilience Plan. **SDGs 11.3, 11.6, 11.7, 11.a, 11.b**
- In order to promote urban accessibility, new legislation was passed in 2020 and 2021, making **"Urban Accessibility Plans" compulsory** for all large and medium-sized municipalities. The specifications and technical instructions have already been issued, providing the necessary framework for the preparation, examination, characterization, monitoring and supervision of the above plans. Local authorities are expected to make the necessary assignments in 2022 in order to complete the development of the plans by the end of 2023, as required by law. **SDGs 11.3, 11.7**

- The Government attributes great importance to the promotion of **sustainable urban mobility at local and regional level**, which serves the needs of citizens for better quality of life and safe mobility and contributes significantly to sustainable transport of goods into the urban and suburban fabric. In this regard, in 2021, the Government decided to establish by law a comprehensive framework regarding the uniform preparation, examination, monitoring and supervision of **Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans (SUMPs)**. According to this legislative initiative, all regional authorities and municipalities of more than 30,000 inhabitants are required to prepare a SUMP. **SDGs 11.2, 11.3, 11.6, 11.7, 3.6, 7.3, 9.1, 13.2**
- As railways are the backbone of sustainable transport, efforts are being made to upgrade existing infrastructure and construct new one. The new Tithorea-Lianokladi-Domokos double track high speed line, 106 km long, was completed in 2018, the new double railway line in Kiato-Diakopto-Egio section, 71 Km long, was completed in 2020, and six more such railway projects all over the country are under construction, to be completed in 2023. In addition, the construction of a new metro line (4) has begun in Athens (30 km long, with 36 stations), and the extension of metro line 3 will be completed in 2022, reaching a total number of 27 stations. The new metro line in Thessaloniki is expected to be ready for operation in 2023. **SDGs 11.2, 9.1**
- For the purpose of protecting and safeguarding the cultural and natural environment, Greece has launched the **Archaeological Cadastre**. This is an Integrated Information System for the systematic recording, documentation, digitization and management of archaeological, administrative and geospatial data related to the country's immovable monuments and sites, including underwater antiquities. The Cadastre provides the foundation on which a monitoring system for the impact of climate change on cultural heritage is to be built, so as to mitigate the various risks that threaten cultural heritage. **SDGs 11.4, 13.1**
- The Government has introduced new provisions in the Road Traffic Code aimed at covering the proper use of **micro mobility vehicles**, called Personal Light Electric Vehicles. In addition, in order to boost "active human-powered mobility", provisions that promote alternative forms of movement (pedestrian and bicycle) including traffic signals, as well as new road signs for cyclists have been included in the Road Traffic Code. Furthermore, with a view to enhance the safety of alternative modes of transport, a new framework is planned for violations of the Traffic Code with severe sanctions, especially for the protection of vulnerable road users, such as cyclists. **SDGs 11.2, 11.6**
- "**Xenokrates**" is the code name for Greece's **National Comprehensive Emergency Plan**. It assigns responsibilities, sets forth lines of authority and organizational relationships, and outlines how actions will be coordinated. This basic plan is complemented by several hazard-specific annexes, which address unique response details. Until 2019, only Wildfire, Fixed Site Hazardous Materials Incident and Mass Fatalities Incidents had been developed. Since July 2019, the Greek Civil Protection agency has developed annexes for Earthquakes, Volcanic Eruptions, Floods, Winter Storms and Hazardous Materials Transportation Accidents, substantially expanding the country's response and short-term recovery capabilities. Each annex was developed using risk management principles to assign priorities and resources, thus ensuring unity of effort among all levels of government and all elements of the community. **SDGs 11.5, 11.b, 13.1**

- The Government has put forward measures and actions, which promote the establishment, operation and exploitation of **airports on water bodies**. Hydroplanes can be the versatile, alternative choice for the transport of people and goods, considering the insular character of Greece and in particular, the transport and transit needs of the remote islands of the country that seasonally are lacking connection with the mainland. **SDGs 11.2, 11.a**
- The **AEGIS National Program for Civil Protection** is a €1.71 billion program, co-funded by the European Investment Bank, the European Union Recovery and Resilience Facility, and the 2021-2027 National Strategic Reference Framework. Its purpose is radically upgrading the country's disaster risk management capabilities. AEGIS funding is geared towards four main pillars. The first is an improvement of existing infrastructures, facilities, and equipment. The second pillar involves the procurement of public works equipment and early warning systems, including weather stations, weather radar systems, river gages, seismometers, as well as data analytics solutions based on artificial intelligence and machine learning. The third pillar encompasses the procurement of a wide range of fixed-wing aircraft and helicopters for a variety of missions, such as personnel transport, aeromedical evacuation, and airborne warning and control. It also includes the procurement of mobile Emergency Operations Centres, GPS-based fleet management systems and communications systems. The last pillar is specific to disaster response resources and includes the upgrade of existing and procurement of new firefighting aircraft, fire/rescue vehicles, police vehicles, Bailey-type bridges, PPE, and field hospitals. The Armed Forces contribute with personnel, assets, and infrastructure to disaster and emergency relief, both domestically, as well as within the framework of the RESCUE programme. **SDGs 11.5, 11.b, 13.1**
- **RescEU is a new European reserve of resources** which includes a fleet of firefighting airplanes and helicopters, medical evacuation airplanes, and a stockpile of medical equipment and field hospitals that can respond to health emergencies, and chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear incidents. Greece has been one of the strongest advocates in favour of rescEU and one of the first European countries to participate in the reserve. Because of the growing risk of wildland fires across Europe, a rescEU transition fleet of firefighting aircraft was co-funded by the European Commission, with Greece being one of the first six countries to participate in the rescEU transition fleet. In addition, Greece has offered to host additional rescEU wildland firefighting capabilities in the future. In addition, the European Commission created a strategic rescEU medical reserve and distribution mechanism under the umbrella of the EU Civil Protection Mechanism. The reserve enables the **swift delivery of medical equipment** such as ventilators and personal protective equipment. Greece is one of 9 EU Member States to currently host this strategic stockpile. **SDGs 11.5, 11.b, 13.1**

Best practice examples

The Antonis Tritsis Programme

SDGs 11.2, 11.3, 11.4, 11.6, 11.7, 11.b, 3, 4, 6, 7, 9, 12, 14, 17

Greece has initiated an innovative and comprehensive programme called Antonis Tritsis that aims to promote and implement an integrated strategic plan supporting sustainable development and social solidarity at local and regional level. The Programme is launched by the Ministry of the Interior and implemented by the local and regional authorities. It intends to strengthen sustainable urban investment in urban areas across the country through the promotion of the three dimensions of sustainable development. All the Calls of the Programme are based on a coherent legal framework, in line with relevant EU legislation, and aim to achieve, in an integrated and balanced manner, the UN Sustainable Development Goals. It includes actions for social protection and cohesion, schemes to improve water and wastewater, waste management, road safety and climate resilience, smart city schemes, flood protection, earthquake protection in schools and improving public health measures against Covid-19. In addition, the Antonis Tritsis Programme includes, among others, plans to invest in exploitation of geothermal fields, renewable energy sources, smart distribution, storage, and energy consumption systems. The new sustainable urban investment initiative will scale up priority investment including urban regeneration and increase renewable energy use to improve the quality of life of local residents and attractiveness for business and tourism.

Housing and work for the homeless

SDGs 11, 10, 1, 3, 8

The "Housing and work for the homeless" is a housing-first inspired programme for persons and families experiencing homelessness. It has been implemented since 2015. During the period 2018-2020, 410 households joined the program and the total number of beneficiaries is 630, among which single parent and Roma families and a total of 160 children. The program has been reformed in 2020 aiming to act as a permanent housing and reintegration policy for the homeless. It is repeated every two years with a total budget of €10 million (state budget funding) and today it provides the following services for about 600 households: (i) Rent subsidy up to €250 per month to one person households and €350 for multi-person households for a period of 24 months, (ii) One-off allowance of 1,000 and up to €1,300 for household equipment, (iii) One-off allowance of €1,000 and up to €1,300 for household bills, (iv) Counselling and social support, (v) Work subsidy (full minimum wage covering) for a period of 12 months, (vi) Non wage subsidy for another –consequent- period of 12 months, (vii) Subsidy for training and working skills building and (viii) Linkage with complementary social services and allowances during the program (especially GMI) and after exiting the program (housing allowance). In the forthcoming period (2022-2024), 556 households will enter the program with a total number of beneficiaries estimated at 883 persons.

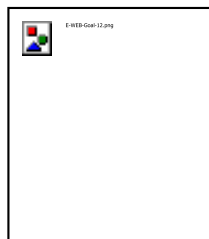
Forthcoming initiatives

- The “**Social Housing for the most Vulnerable Groups**” programme is scheduled to be funded by the Resilience and Recovery Fund. The program will cover the renovation costs for 100 houses of very low-income households in the Municipalities of Athens and Thessaloniki, as well as the cost of professionals with technical expertise to support the implementation. The legal framework is to be enacted, setting the terms and conditions e.g. eligibility criteria for beneficiaries, duration of entitlement, accompanying services, requirements for homeowners etc. The objective of the program is to act as a pilot project towards the development of a social housing policy for vulnerable groups, aiming to reduce homelessness in large urban areas by building up networks between private homeowners and local social services. **SDG 11.1**
- Cities’ adaptation to climate change is planned in 16 selected urban areas of Greece, of special cultural and/or historical importance, that can function as “urban landmarks” or reference points of the urban space or within the urban space or in coastal residential areas implementing also measures of prevention (taking into consideration the country’s commitments to the European Green Agreement). These interventions may include, indicatively, projects and measures for: (i) reduction of the thermal islands, (ii) protection of the coastal zones endangered by the rise of the water level (alteration), (iii) protection from extreme weather phenomena (e.g. floods), (iv) increase of resilience of urban areas through green and digital transition, by encouraging the use of renewable sources and the reuse of natural resources, the energy management of building stock and public space (bioclimatic design), the protection of urban biodiversity, the promotion of clean and circular economy and clean transport, etc. Ambitious investments, totalling at 1.035 billion EUR, are designed to improve the quality of urban space and attract new functions of economic activities while making a positive impact on the natural environment of urban centres, creating new jobs and achieving significant energy savings that will lead to a low carbon economy. **SDGs 11.3, 11.4, 11.5, 11.6, 11.7, 11.b**
- Put forward measures and actions which promote further the implementation of the **National Spatial Strategy**. In particular, the completion of the **Local Urban Plans** and the **Special Urban Plans** as incorporated in the context of the National Recovery and Resilience Plan, will promote an **integrated planning system** in the country and the digitalization of the Greek territory. **SDGs 11.3, 11.6, 11.7, 11.a, 11.b, 17.14.**
- The obligatory **implementation of the Urban Accessibility Plans** for all large and medium-sized municipalities by the end of 2023 will provide universal access to safe, inclusive and accessible, green and public spaces, in particular for older persons and persons with disabilities. **SDGs 11.3, 11.7**
- Promote and implement the **Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans (SUMPs)** at local and regional level. **SDGs 11.2, 11.3, 11.6, 11.7, 3.6, 7.3, 9.1, 13.2**
- Renewal of the **public transport fleet** in Athens and Thessaloniki, promoting the gradual transition to electro mobility. **SDGs 11.2, 11.6**
- Complete a number of **sustainable railway projects** across the country. **SDGs 11.2, 9.1**
- Establish and operate new **airports on water bodies**. **SDGs 11.2, 11.a**
- Improvement of the existing and enforcement with new infrastructure regarding Civil Protection Authorities. Upgrade the existing firefighting aerial means, vessels and motor vehicles, along with the provision of new contemporary ones. Early warning system’s upgrade with the procurement of new equipment and its interconnection with AI. **SDG 11.5**

Article 21 of the Greek Constitution

The acquisition of a home by the homeless or those inadequately sheltered shall constitute an object of special State care.

SDG 12: Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns



Recourse productivity and domestic material Consumption (DMC)



Assessment of progress in relevant SDG indicators

- The resource productivity and domestic material consumption, in euros per kilogram, has generally shown an increasing trend since 2010 to date, mainly due to the introduction and the implementation of a framework of tools and incentives for the adoption of sustainable practices, based on advanced technological capacity, resource efficiency and reduced waste.
- The generation of waste excluding major mineral wastes by hazardousness, in kg per capita, is generally increasing for the hazardous and decreasing for the non-hazardous, from 2010 to 2018.
- The use of circular material has been increasing in recent years mainly due to the implementation of the National Strategy for the Circular Economy, which is in line with the European Strategy and introduces a framework of tools and incentives for the sustainable management of resources, the development of cyclical entrepreneurship and the promotion of cyclical consumption.

Key challenges

The promotion of sustainable consumption and production patterns is a common issue for European Union (EU) countries. This is the reason why an extensive range of policies on sustainable consumption and production, including energy and resource-efficient economy, circular economy, waste prevention and recycling, have been proposed at the EU level and to a great extent have already been adopted at the national level. In Greece, in specific cases like that of the single-use plastics, the relevant legal framework was enacted well before the EU directive transposition deadlines. Nevertheless, systemic issues remain, mainly linked to waste management practices and circular economy. Greece brings to landfill a significant part of its municipal waste but aims at improving reuse and recycling, in line with the circular economy principles. The country is currently accelerating its pace and carrying out significant investments and reforms in order to meet its post-2020 targets. Concerning the relatively low circularity of the economy a newly adopted action plan aspires to accelerate its development. Finally, the promotion of a more sustainable lifestyle requires a reorientation of communication and education towards enhancement of smarter consumption, focusing on increasing awareness on the environmental effects of production and consumption choices.

Main policy initiatives and measures

- In 2021, a law was passed (transposing EU Directives), establishing an **integrated framework for waste management**, and promoting the implementation of the principles of circular economy in Greece. In the context of this legislative initiative, and in line with the approved **National Waste Management Plan 2020-2030** and the new **National Waste Prevention Programme 2021-2030**, waste hierarchy is promoted in practice, i.e. waste prevention, reuse and recycling (to reach 55% in 2025 and 60% in 2030 including bio-waste), while, in parallel, measures for the reduction of landfilling have been adopted. Several reform measures support the ambitious targets set for increasing recycling and reducing landfilling, such as the implementation of the **"Pay As You Throw"** scheme, the application of the landfill-fee from January 2022, the expansion of the extended producer responsibility schemes with new categories of products (i.e. pesticides' packaging, furniture, mattresses, waste from greenhouses, fishing gear, smoking products) and the promotion of the separate collection of waste. Particular focus is given to **food waste**, where measures are adopted and incentives are provided for encouraging food donation and redistribution in order to reduce food losses along the whole production and supply chain, by 2030, and reduce by 30% food waste per capita in relation to food waste produced in 2022 at retail and consumer level. In addition, the new legislative framework supports the implementation of innovative approaches for further promoting recycling and re-use by sorting at source, active citizens' engagement and awareness-raising towards more sustainable consumption patterns, at the local/municipal level, through the establishment of the **"Green Points"** and the **"Reuse Centres"**. These new units/facilities aim to minimize waste production by enabling any interested entity or person to either dispose waste for recycling or products for re-use, giving a practical example of how to apply the principles of circular economy in everyday life, while also simplifying related administrative procedures. Finally, priority is given to the expansion and enhancement of the interoperability of the various digital platforms and registries, in order to facilitate data collection and the monitoring of waste management and tracing of waste. **SDG 12.3, 12.4, 12.5, 11.6**
- With regard to **plastic pollution**, Greece has incorporated in its national **legislation**, in October 2020, the **EU Single Use Plastics Directive**, much earlier than the date of entry into force of the Directive (July 2021) due to the importance attached to the **reduction of plastic waste** generated at source, and to the promotion of more sustainable and reusable materials. The law aims to prevent and reduce plastic pollution, especially in the sea, and to promote the transition to a circular economy with innovative and sustainable business models, products and materials. The implementation of the law is expected to have a considerably positive outcome on urgently addressing plastic marine litter that negatively affects marine ecosystems and important economic activities in Greece, such as tourism and fishing. The law is guided by the principles and objectives of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs, having a direct contribution to the achievement of SDGs 12 and 14. Certain measures

and targets at national level are set, in line with the overall objectives of the EU's waste policy, and Greece is committed to reduce the consumption of the most environmentally damaging single use plastic products, in particular single-use plastic beverage and food containers, at least by 30% by 2024, and at least by 60% by 2026 compared to 2022, and to promote more sustainable materials and alternatives. **SDG 12.4, 12.5, 14, 11.6**

- Under the coordination of the Ministry of Environment and Energy, Greece elaborated and, after an extensive public consultation, adopted, in November 2021, a new **National Circular Economy Action Plan** with a corresponding Roadmap, anchored at the 2018 National Circular Economy Strategy. The Action Plan, already approved by the Council of Ministers and about to be adopted by a legislative act, supports the shift towards a circular sustainable development model and ensures that the regulatory framework is streamlined and fit for this purpose, and that new opportunities from the transition are maximized. The new Plan includes a set of concrete actions to be implemented over the period 2021 – 2025 through increased cross-sectoral arrangements, and is building on recent national legislation. The opinion of the National Council for Circular Economy (a board of involved national professional producers' associations) and of the Interministerial Committee for Circular Economy have been taken into account in drafting the new Circular Economy Action Plan, ensuring a whole-of-government and a whole-of-society approach. The Plan includes an analysis of the key entities in charge for the implementation of each one of the actions foreseen; it encompasses production, consumption, waste management as well as horizontal issues related to governance and administration; it focuses on products and services with a high circularity potential such as electronics and ICTs , batteries and vehicles, packaging, plastics, textiles, construction and buildings, food waste, and water use. The Plan is also coupled with an operational part where provisions for the monitoring of its implementation are analysed as well as with a presentation of the matching funding sources for its timely delivery. **SDGs 12.5, 12.1, 12.2, 12.4, 12.6**
- In 2021, the Government issued the **National Plan for the promotion of Green Public Procurement (GPP)**, for a three-year period, **2021-2023**. This National Plan aims at establishing and implementing a minimum level of green criteria in public procurement of products, services and projects, promoting green business practices and "greening" the public sector. It also aims at gradually increasing GPP in certain sectors of goods, services and projects and widely integrating the concept of life-cycle cost estimation in public procurement of products. In parallel, its implementation will support awareness raising and a new culture in procurement policy, by promoting the environmental and cost benefits from GPPs. **SDG 12.7**
- The Government has adopted measures and actions aimed at encouraging and facilitating the reduction of wastes and the **recycling in yachting and ports**. **SDG 12.5.**
- The Government has put forward actions, which contribute to the **digital transformation of all the driving license procedures**, regarding the driver's license renewal, duplication, and replacement - «going from paper to paperless». **SDG 12.5.**
- In the context of the European Project "LIFE PROWhIBIT", Greece puts forward actions aimed at preventing, detecting and disrupting **environmental waste crime** by introducing smart Information technology (IT) systems along with the implementation of respective environmental legislation and standards. **SDG 12.4, 12.5**
- Concerning waste management, the National Plan "ANTIPAS", to phase down the **use of dental amalgam**, was adopted in 2021 and started to be implemented. Furthermore, an Integrated Waste Management Framework has been established and a Joint Ministerial Decision is expected soon, which will define precisely the specific measures and conditions for the management of medical waste. **SDG 12.4, 12.5**

Best practice example

LIFE IP project Circular economy implementation in Greece (CEI-Greece) SDG 12.5, 12.3, 12.4, 12.8

The integrated LIFE IP project "CEI-Greece", with the Ministry of the Environment and Energy as its coordinating partner and a wide multi-stakeholder consortium, aims to make a decisive contribution to the implementation of the National Waste Management Plan 2020-2030, the National Waste Prevention Programme 2021-2030 and the National Circular Economy Strategy.

Project actions include the implementation of pilot projects of separate waste collection and pay-as-you-throw systems, the organization and operation of separate collection and re-use centres, the development and operation of circular economy systems, capacity building through dedicated thematic seminars tailored to the needs of all stakeholders and distance training, awareness raising, information and dissemination of project results through the organization of regional information days and conferences, and, finally, the mobilization of financial resources.

With regard to improving awareness, the project foresees, inter alia, a food waste prevention forum (SDG 12.3), with ultimate aim to establish a National Voluntary Agreement, as well as a national Circular Economy repository. The project's implementation was launched in November 2019 and is expected to be completed by 2027.

Forthcoming initiatives

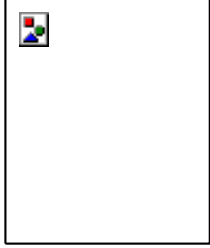
- New measures will be adopted for the **reduction of food waste** by 30% until 2030, in addition to innovative approaches for the promotion of recycling and re-use at source, as with the establishment of **Green Points** and **Reuse Centres** at the local level, and the expansion and enhancement of the interoperability of the various digital platforms and registries, in order to facilitate data collection and the monitoring of waste management and tracing of waste. In this regard, new cooperative actions are to be developed between the competent line Ministries and services with a view to effectively reducing food waste, including in the fresh fruit sector. **SDGs 12.3, 12.4, 12.5, 11.6**
- A platform with guidelines for cities to adopt and follow circular economy principles in all their functions and work-cycle will be developed, with the view to assist the implementation of the **National Circular Economy Action Plan** at the local level. This **Guide to Circular Cities** will aim to close down material loops in the urban context, minimize waste production and reduce resource extraction, lower emissions, protect and enhance biodiversity and reduce social inequities in line with the SDGs (linking SDG 11 to SDG 12). The Guide will aim to assist cities to assess, prioritize and catalyse different circular actions extended beyond the economic sphere that can be applied to different city assets, engaging all local stakeholders, covering areas such as waste management, water resources and water demand, energy requirements, housing, urban mobility, re-use of consumers' goods, circularity in local businesses etc. **SDGs 12.5, 12.1, 12.2, 12.4, 12.6**

Article 5 of the Greek Constitution ■ Article 24 of the Greek Constitution

The protection of the natural and cultural environment constitutes a duty of the State and a right of every person.

All persons shall 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 accepted principles of morality.

SDG 13: Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts



Greenhouse gas emissions - index, 1990=100



Index of greenhouse gas emission intensity of energy consumption

Year	Greenhouse gas emissions intensity of energy consumption (Index, 2000=100)
2010	94.7
2011	96.3
2012	93.4
2013	93.3
2014	89.5
2015	85.2
2016	81.6
2017	83.0
2018	81.4
2019	74.9

Assessment of progress in relevant SDG indicators

- Greenhouse gas emissions' trend shows a decrease over the period 2010-2019. This development is mainly due to the economic downturn, but also to the impact of mitigation actions like increasing Renewable Energy Sources (RES) share, energy efficiency and improving public transport.
- Greenhouse gas emission intensity of energy consumption index presents a significant reduction throughout the period between 2010-2019, highlighting among others, the achievement of an energy mix of lower emissions and the more efficient use of energy.

Key challenges

Preventive policies and actions are urgently needed in order to address the great challenge of climate change and its impacts. Particularly in Greece, climate change has led to more frequent and severe weather phenomena, such as floods, extreme heat and intense snowfalls. According to recent data, during 2021 more than 1.3 million acres were burnt as a result of devastating forest wildfires across the country, while an equally large area (1.5 million acres) was burnt during the period of the last 8 years (2013-2020). According to scientific evidence, these devastating wildfires were a consequence of drought and heat for a long period, not only in Greece but throughout the Mediterranean. Extreme high temperatures were observed during summer 2021, being the highest ever recorded. Exacerbating its effect, during autumn 2021 and winter 2021-2022 floods and intense snowfalls were recorded in areas that had been previously devastated by the summer 2021 wildfires, such as Northern Evia and Attica. Hence, actions that could strengthen resilience and adaptive capacity to climate-related hazards and natural disasters, should be prioritized and reinforced. Accountability and a clear distribution of the roles and responsibilities for all the authorities involved, including the availability of qualified personnel and of the necessary means and equipment, are prioritised as key components of success. The growing importance of technology in disaster management and disaster risk reduction must also be acknowledged. Finally, public awareness-raising on climate change is an important issue that is planned to be addressed through targeted initiatives for different age or social groups, including children.

Main policy initiatives and measures

- The first **National Energy and Climate Plan (NECP)** of Greece was adopted in 2019. It is a strategic plan comprising a detailed roadmap for achieving concrete Energy and Climate Goals by 2030. Through the 2019 NECP, Greece has set ambitious targets such as: (i) reduce total Greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, excluding those from Land Use, Land Use Change and Forestry by 56% from 2005 levels (42% from 1990 levels); (ii) reduce non-European Union (EU) Emissions trading system (ETS) emissions by 36% from 2005 levels, more than twice the reduction required by EU legislation; **(iii)** raise the share of renewables in gross final energy consumption to at least 35% (61-64% of electricity final consumption to be from renewables); and (iv) achieve 38% improvement of energy efficiency. The main pillars of the NECP are: (i) the significant reduction of greenhouse gas emission and phasing out the lignite power plants by 2028; (ii) the increase of the share of RES in the gross final energy consumption; and (iii) the improvement of energy efficiency in all sectors of economy. The NECP is currently **under revision** with an implementation period up to 2030, in order to be consistent with the new ambitious emission reduction targets set by the European Climate Law and the National Climate Law. A planned analysis of synergies between mitigation and adaptation policies and measures is expected to feed into the update, addressing, inter alia, how climate change may affect energy supply, how proposed measures can increase resilience of the energy system, and an assessment of co-benefits such as for thermal management of buildings. **SDGs 13.2, 7.2, 7.3**
- The **National Long-term Strategy for 2050**, to meet the Paris Agreement commitments and the Energy Union objectives, has been in place since 2020, for the evaluation of alternatives and sustainable transition paths to a climate-neutral economy by 2050. The analysis of solutions and indicative pathways aims to assess the possibilities for the transformation of the energy system at national level. All the scenarios are analysed under the provision of full implementation of the National Energy and Climate Plan and the achievement of the relevant targets by 2030. **SDGs 13.2, 7.2, 7.3**
- The first **Climate law** of Greece was adopted by the parliament in May 2022, after an extensive public consultation, and it provides a coherent framework for improving the adaptation and climate resilience of Greece and ensuring the climate neutrality of the country by 2050. Measures and policies are foreseen to enhance climate change adaptation, intermediate targets are set for the reduction of net anthropogenic greenhouse gas emissions, a carbon budget mechanism is foreseen for key sectors of the economy, and indicators are set for monitoring and evaluating the progress of the

relevant objectives. The establishment of a governance and participation system for climate action is also anticipated. The time span of the law's implementation stretches up to 2050. [SDG 13.2](#)

- The National Adaptation Strategy (NAS) endorsed in 2016 is delivered through 13 **Regional Adaptation Action Plans (RAAPs)**. Each RAAP examines the potential measures/actions included in the NAS based on the particular regional circumstances, priorities and needs and includes specific adaptation actions per sector. Drafts of the 13 RAAPs have been concluded. It is expected that the majority of the RAAPs will have been endorsed by mid-2022. The RAAPs contribute towards strengthening the climate resilience and adaptive capacity of the 13 Greek Regions. [SDG 13.1](#), [13.2](#)
- The Government has adopted a number of **tax-related actions and measures**, which promote and support the transition to a greener economy, including those related to personal income tax and corporate income tax. [SDGs 13.2](#), [8.3](#)
- The Hellenic Civil Aviation Authority's Environmental Protection Sector has devised and submitted to the International Civil Aviation Organization a **National Action Plan for Reducing CO2 Emissions produced by aviation activity** (State Action plan on CO2 Emissions Reduction), which includes a number of applied and planned policies for the next three years. [SDG 13.2](#)
- In order to promote environmental protection and mainstream the sustainability concepts in the armed forces, in line with the respective national and EU legislation, as well as the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) Standardization Agreements (STANAGs), the **Ministry of Defence** adopted in 2020 an official **Environmental - Energy and Adjustment-to-Climate-Change Policy**, in which a wide range of fundamental environmental principles and priorities of the SDGs are fully integrated and highlighted. In addition, the Greek armed forces are implementing a full revision of the Health and Safety Measures Plan in the event of an emergency or natural disaster, so as to include **specific provisions for people with disabilities** (employees or visitors). [SDGs 13.2](#), [13.3](#), [7.2](#), [7.3](#), [7.](#), [12.2](#), [12.4](#), [12.5](#), [12.8](#), [14.1](#), [15.1](#), [15.2](#)
- Greece's first **National Risk Assessment and National Disaster Risk Management Plan** were completed in 2021. An identification and analysis of the challenges related to disaster risk management was followed by a multi-hazard National Disaster Risk Management Plan, with time-bound goals and targets, investment priorities and potential funding mechanisms. [SDG 13.1](#)
- Greece's **112 Emergency Communications Service** was launched in January 2020 and has vastly improved emergency communications in the country. This new service brings together a unified, multi agency public safety answering capability with a nation-wide, integrated public alert and warning system. In the last two years, incoming communication capabilities have expanded from just phone calls to also include text messages (SMS), emails, fax and eCall communications. Network-based location is provided for both landline and cellular calls, whereas Advanced Mobile Location & Emergency Location Service (AML/ELS) was activated in 2021. The integrated public alert and warning system GR-Integrated Public Alert and Warning System (IPAWS) is a comprehensive and coordinated system that can be used by Civil Protection Greece to deliver effective life-saving information to the public. Alert messages are delivered through multiple communications pathways with a view to reaching as many people as possible to save lives and protect property. Since it was launched, GR-IPAWS has been used to issue about 200 alerts for wildland and urban fires, earthquakes, tsunamis, Mediterranean hurricanes and Covid-19. [SDG 13.3](#), [11.5](#), [11.b](#)

Best practice examples

1. National Adaptation Strategy - LIFE-IP “AdaptInGR” SDGs 13.1, 13.3, 17.17

The integrated LIFE IP project “AdaptInGR - Boosting the implementation of adaptation policy across Greece”, with the Ministry of the Environment and Energy as its coordinating partner and a wide multi-stakeholder consortium for its implementation, aims to catalyse the implementation of the National Adaptation Strategy and of the 13 Regional Adaptation Action Plans (RAAPs). It also aims to build capacity for coordinating, prioritising, monitoring and mainstreaming adaptation policy actions, including by developing pilot projects in priority sectors for selected regions and municipalities. It has produced open climate projection geographic information system (GIS) data and maps and has launched a series of regional workshops for key regional adaptation stakeholders to raise human and institutional capacities for adaptation. It has also developed educational material for primary and secondary school teachers and started implementing a series of regional training seminars for teachers, as well as a series of regional public informative events (info-days), in order to improve education and awareness-raising for adaptation. Furthermore, it is undertaking a thorough adaptation analysis of the most climate vulnerable sectors (water, biodiversity, agriculture etc.) and has started building a national adaptation monitoring and evaluation mechanism to further support integration of adaptation into sectoral national policies, strategies and planning. Moreover, the project aims to support cooperation with countries from the Balkans and the wider Mediterranean area especially with regard to developing compatible approaches for climate projections, assessments as well as on the monitoring and assessment of policies’ implementation. The project started in 2019 and is expected to be completed in 2026.

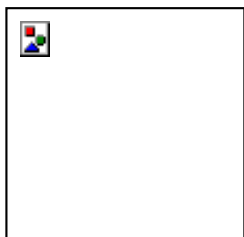
2. Greek initiative on the protection of cultural and natural heritage from the impacts of climate change SDGs 13.1, 13.2, 11.4, 17.16, 17.17

Cultural and natural heritage is increasingly vulnerable to the adverse social and environmental effects of climate change. Greece has been at the forefront of the ongoing endeavour to protect natural and cultural heritage from adverse climate change impacts, as asserted by the Greek Prime Minister’s statement at the Climate Action Summit in New York (September 2019). Greece, one of the first countries to ratify the Paris Agreement and repository of a wealth of cultural heritage from antiquity to modern times, deeply concerned about the serious threat that climate change poses to cultural and natural heritage, has taken the initiative to organize an International Scientific Conference, in Athens (Zappeion, 21-22 June 2019) with a view to raise awareness on this alarming matter. The Conference that gathered more than 300 world-renowned scientists and state representatives from over 40 countries, aimed at promoting an international framework in order to strengthen cultural and natural heritage resilience to climate risks. The Conference’s unanimously adopted Conclusions were subsequently circulated as an official document of the United Nations (UN) General Assembly. They also formed the basis of the Greek proposal “Addressing climate change impacts on cultural and natural heritage”, which was launched, with the supporting partnership of United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), at the UN Climate Action Summit (September 2019), in New York. The UN Secretary General, Mr. António Guterres, has included in his Climate Action Summit Report the Greek proposal as one among the ambitious ones. In the context of this proposal Greece invites the UN member states to support the protection of cultural and natural heritage from the impact of climate change by mainstreaming this initiative into climate change policies and processes, in line with the related Paris Agreement objectives and commitments, and the SDGs, and taking into account relevant policies and recommendations by UNESCO. The scope of the initiative is to accelerate global action, before the damage to our common heritage becomes irreversible, and assess the relevant mitigation and adaptation/resilience issues and good practices in the fields of climate change and cultural heritage, including impacts on small island states. So far, more than 100 UN member states and many Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO) and other organizations have expressed their support to this initiative. As the next steps of the initiative included the formation of a follow-up committee, a Flexible Mechanism has been set up with the participation of Greece, UNESCO, United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the World Meteorological Organization (WMO). Moreover, for the implementation of the Initiative and in order to support the work of the Flexible Mechanism, a Coordination Unit (CU) has been established, by decision of the Greek Prime Minister, in early 2021. The CU located in the Academy of Athens, aims, inter alia, at raising awareness, facilitating and enhancing the efforts of the supporting States in a coordinated manner and bridging scientific knowledge and climate adaptation tools.

Forthcoming initiatives

- In order to be consistent with the new ambitious emission reduction targets set by the European Climate Law and the National Climate Law, the **revision of the National Energy and Climate Plan (NECP)** is anticipated, with an implementation period up to 2030. A planned analysis of synergies between mitigation and adaptation policies and measures is expected to feed into the update, addressing, inter alia, how climate change may affect energy supply, how proposed measures can increase resilience of the energy system, and an assessment of co-benefits such as for thermal management of buildings. **SDGs 13.2, 7.2, 7.3**
- Develop the **National Action Plan for Cultural Heritage and Climate Change (NAPCHCC)**, to be fully implemented by 2050, with the setting of interim targets to be achieved every 5 years. The NAPCHCC will be the National Adaptation Strategy for Cultural Heritage and will be incorporated into the National Adaptation Strategy for Climate Change. **SDGs 13.1, 13.2**
- Implement the proposal submitted by Greece to the EU Recovery and Resilience Fund entitled **"Tackling the threats of climate change to the long-term viability of cultural sites of tourist and economic significance"**. **SDGs 13.1, 13.2, 11.4**
- Implement a series of EU legislative proposals adopted within the context of the **European Green Deal and the 'Fit for 55 package'**, which set, among other things, quantified goals regarding the share of sustainable aviation fuel with the conventional air fuel, and specific targets for supply of electricity to stationary aircraft. **SDGs 13.1, 13.2, 7.1**
- Integrate the core dimensions of sustainable finance and the key aspects of sustainability and green transition in the design of the **Greek Capital Market Development Strategy**, which is currently under development. **SDG 13.2.**
- Implementation of a **reapproved technical support scheme according to Regulation (EU) 2021/240 (TSI Regulation) for green taxation**. Deliverables of this project are expected to include -an up-to-date diagnostic report describing and assessing policies and legislation, a comparative analysis and best practice examples from other EU and non EU countries, recommendations on the mix of different measures towards a green taxation, including incentives and subsidies to support those affected by the changes and alleviate energy poverty, a better understanding and evaluation of the state-of-play in terms of policies, legislation as well as the socio-economic context, proposal of an impact assessment methodology and an outline of a raising awareness strategy. **SDGs 13.2, 7.1**
- Greece is considering and has requested technical support, by the European Commission DG REFORM and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), on the flagship project **"Bridging the climate financing gap with public policy instruments"**, which aims, inter alia, to support EU Member States in reviewing regulatory policies to channel financing towards climate mitigation and adaptation, in line with the goals of the European Green Deal. The project is expected to start running by Q2 2022. **SDG 13.2**
- The Ministry for Climate Crisis and Civil Protection aims at developing a series of actions related to education, in cooperation with the Ministry of Education. The inclusion of climate change related education subjects to schools starting with early education and the development of an interactive centre where civil society will be able to visualize and "feel" the challenge of climate are at the core of its educational approach. **SDGs 13.3, 11.5, 4.7**
- Further elaboration of Greece's 112 **Emergency Communications Service** using a new digital system of Civil Protection and Artificial Technology. **SDG 13.3**

SDG 14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development



Bathing sites with excellent water quality by locality



Assessment of progress in relevant SDG indicators

- The Surface in km² of marine sites designated under Natura 2000 presents a sharp increase in 2016 and continues at almost the same level from then to 2020. The total marine area currently included in the Natura 2000 network covers approximately 19.6 % of national territorial waters, an important increase compared to the 6.12% of territorial waters that were originally designated.
- The proportion of coastal bathing sites with excellent water quality is in the range of 97% of total reported bathing waters since 2014, making Greece one of the top three countries in Europe for the excellent quality of its bathing waters. The establishment of the Bathing Water Identity Register, a network collecting data from approximately 1,400 coasts across the country, has helped to improve quality.

Key challenges

The protection of coasts and marine waters faces complex and multifaceted problems as the marine and coastal environment is under severe pressure from both land and ocean-based pollution sources. For Greece, a marine and insular country, investment in marine biodiversity and ecosystems is essential, not least because the high number and touristic activity of the islands render effective controls over pollution and overfishing difficult. An effective response to this adverse situation calls for political, legal and technical actions to conserve coastal communities and marine natural resources and alignment with the EU Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) by eliminating illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing. Responding to the issue of invasive alien species, reducing unwanted catches, restoring stocks and promoting an economically viable and competitive fishing and fish processing industry, as well as a sustainable aquaculture, are policy priorities. Furthermore, the promotion of the Blue Economy, through developing offshore renewable energy, preserving biodiversity at the coastal areas and decarbonizing maritime transport, is an essential priority for achieving the objectives of the European Green Deal, while it contributes to a green and inclusive recovery from the pandemic.

Strengthening the protection and management of the country's marine biodiversity remains also a challenge, for which important interventions are underway. Towards this, the completion of the new Maritime Spatial Planning, along with the timely implementation of the Integrated Maritime Policy in the Insular Territory, will contribute to sustainable development in marine areas and coastal zones, via the organization of human activities, while protecting the marine environment and biodiversity. Additional challenges are the mapping and demarcation of all protected marine areas of Greece as well as the drawing up of the relevant management plans, in line with the European Biodiversity Strategy.

Main policy initiatives and measures

- The legal framework for the **Maritime Spatial Planning** in Greece has been set up by a 2018 law, transposing the relevant EU Directive, and providing the scope, objectives, procedure and structure of Maritime Spatial Planning as the tool to achieve the sustainable development of marine life, of maritime areas and the sustainable use of marine resources, in line with UNCLOS. It consists of a **National Maritime Spatial Planning Strategy (NMSPS)** and **Maritime Spatial Plans**. By a 2020 law on the Modernization of Spatial and Urban Planning Legislation, the Maritime Spatial Plans have been included functionally in the regional level of the Spatial Planning System in Greece and were renamed to "Maritime Spatial Frameworks". The 2020 Law also includes significant amendments on the previous framework, such as the decoupling of land coastal zone planning from maritime spatial planning. The NMSPS determines the strategic directions towards sustainable development; it is harmonized with the EU Marine Strategy Framework Directive aiming at achieving good environmental status (GES) of the marine environment, and indicates the priorities for the elaboration of Maritime Spatial Frameworks. Moreover, it sets goals focusing on the promotion of the **Blue Economy** and integrates the political framework and the current legislation introduced by the EU Green Deal, taking into account the New EU Strategy on Adaptation to Climate Change.

The Ministry of Environment and Energy is the competent authority for the implementation of maritime spatial planning in Greece, and for the achievement of the objectives of MSP, it cooperates with the Ministry of Maritime Affairs and Insular Policy, which is responsible for the Integrated Maritime Policy in the *insular territory* of Greece, with emphasis on small islands and islands facing multiple challenges. The first draft version of the NMSPS has been completed; it is now open to an online public consultation and is expected to be enacted in July 2022. Within the context of cross-border cooperation, strengthening existing regional partnerships, Greece participates in the transnational project MSP-MED "Towards the operational implementation of MSP in our common Mediterranean Sea" and in the transboundary INTERREG V-A Greece - Cyprus 2014-2020 Project THAL-CHOR 2: "Cross-Border Cooperation for Maritime Spatial Planning implementation". **SDG 14, all targets.**

- Greece is firmly committed to the protection, conservation and restoration of its marine ecosystems. In order to safe-proof marine ecosystems, Greece has already (since 2018) expanded marine protected areas of the NATURA 2000 network, in its territorial waters, to **19.6%**, overshooting SDG 14.5 by a safe double margin. In order to further safeguard its rich marine biodiversity and explore possibilities to **expand the coverage of marine protected areas** in line with the collective EU target of 30% of land and sea areas under legal protection (EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030), the Ministry of Environment and Energy has launched a call for tender for the project "Mapping of marine habitats" within the framework of the Operational Programme "Transport Infrastructure, Environment and Sustainable Development". The project which is crucial for enriching our knowledge in this field, has an estimated budget of €15 million, and it entails the **mapping of habitats in all the marine protected areas of the NATURA 2000 network.**

Other initiatives in this field include the participation of Greece in a transnational initiative of the Berne Convention for the Protection of the *Caretta caretta* sea turtle, the formulation of National Action Plans in the framework of the integrated LIFE IP NATURA project "Integrated actions for the conservation and management of Natura 2000 sites, species, habitats and ecosystems in Greece", for marine species (Cetaceans: *Tursiops truncatus*, *Phocaenaphocaena*), for *Caretta caretta* and for

Monachus monachus seal. **SDGs 14.2, 14.5**

- Greece is taking **initiatives to address the issue of invasive alien species in the marine environment** (and on land). A Joint Ministerial Decision was published in 2021 under the title "Measures for the implementation of EU Regulation on the prevention and management of the importation and spread of invasive alien species", and a co-financed project titled "Compilation of a list of invasive species and organization of a methodology for the assessment of their risk" is being implemented since February 2021. It includes proposals for the management and continuous monitoring of the most dangerous invasive species for marine biodiversity. The project has been included in the Operational Programme "Transport Infrastructure, Environment and Sustainable Development 2014-2020". Due to the significant interaction of Invasive Alien Species with Fisheries, the General Directorate of Fisheries of the Ministry of Rural Development and Food already implements actions within the Operational Program "Fisheries and Maritime 2014-2020", which are implemented in parallel and in collaboration with the actions implemented by the Ministry of Environment and Energy, and aimed at tackling the effects of the most harmful alien species on fisheries. **SDGs 14.2, 14.4, 15.8**
- In 2021, the Government passed a major law reform, which lays the foundation for the elaboration of a **National Strategy for Integrated Maritime Policy with regard to insular territories** and the development of an 'insular dimension' in EU policies. By merging maritime economy with insularity, the Ministry of Maritime Affairs and Insular Policy seeks to adopt a comprehensive and coherent action plan with the view to address the specific features and the highly diversified island economic and social space, setting innovative and far-reaching sustainable development policies and objectives related to ports and maritime transport, critical infrastructure and water resources management, island production patterns, employment and investment in the blue economy, as well as maritime surveillance and maritime safety. **SDGs 14.2, 8.3, 9.4**
- Greece attributes particular importance to the integrated implementation of the **EU Common Fisheries Policy (CFP)**, in the context of the **Fisheries and Maritime Operational Programme 2014-2020**, co-financed by the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund. The CFP, which applies the precautionary and ecosystem-based approach to fisheries management, aims at the sustainable exploitation of marine biological resources, in order to restore and maintain fish stocks at levels higher than those that enable continuous maximum sustainable yield. Its ultimate goal is to ensure that fisheries and aquaculture activities contribute to the creation of long-term evergreen and sustainable environmental conditions, which are essential for economic and social development. It also aims to increase productivity, towards a reasonable standard of living for the fishing industry, to stabilize markets, as well as to ensure the availability of fishery resources. It is within this context that Greece promotes the adoption of a comprehensive framework of regulatory and policy measures, which contribute, inter alia, to:
 - (i) The gradual elimination of discards, through the implementation of targeted management plans, and the reduction of unwanted catches.
 - (ii) The rational management of fish stocks and the protection of the marine environment, in line with EU environmental legislation, taking into account the socio-economic consequences in the sector, such as e.g. special measures for the protection of sensitive fish species.
 - (iii) Ensuring the conditions for the creation of an economically viable and competitive fisheries and the fish processing industry.
 - (iv) Adjusting the fishing capacity of fishing vessels and their fishing opportunities to achieve economically viable fishing fleets without overexploiting the marine biological resources.
 - (v) Promoting the development of sustainable aquaculture, which supports the security and safety of food resources and employment, ensuring a decent standard of living for those dependent on

fishing activities, promoting inshore fishing activities, taking into account its socio-economic aspects, and enacting a ban on fishing activities for specific gears and specific areas (Posidonia meadows).

- (vi) Implementing of the National Action Plan for Small-scale Fisheries, as reflected in the text "SSF facing the goals and principles of the CFP - Sailing towards 2020", the "Multiannual National Strategic Plan for the development of aquaculture in Greece, 2014-2020", and the National Action Plan for a "System of control, inspection and enforcement of compliance with the rules of the CFP". **SDGs 14.2, 14.4, 14.5, 14.6, 14.b, 14.c**

Best practice examples

"Fish for Litter" and "Adopt a beach" examples of initiatives from stakeholders and private entities SDGs 14.1, 14.2, 14.4

Enaleia (port level initiative): Enaleia is a non-profit social enterprise tackling two directly related problems for the marine environment: the reduction of fish stocks and plastic marine pollution. It entails teaching sustainable fishing practices that preserve local fish populations and, at the same time, remove the mounds of plastic that pollute the world's seas, adapting the fishing industry to a green future for sustainable marine ecosystems. In this context, the Mediterranean CleanUp project aims to clean the seas, protect the marine environment, empower local fishing communities and integrate the collected marine plastic litter into the circular economy, reassuring that they will not re-enter the sea. Enaleia's work builds on a strong network that includes all relevant stakeholders to tackle marine pollution and overfishing problems, from local fishermen to recycling/upcycling partners. It operates at port level by: (i) appointing a port manager at each site responsible to collect the amounts of marine plastic bycatches that each fishing boat brings to the port, (ii) sorting marine litter according to type, (iii) storing litter in special containers placed at each operational location, and (iv) channelling the biggest portion of the collected plastic for recycling or upcycling into new products through the network's certified manufacturing partners, integrating it into the circular economy.

Enaleia is operating in several ports in Greece and Italy, collaborating with hundreds of fishermen. Through Enaleia's activities: more than 180,000 Kg of plastic have been removed from the sea; more than 20,000 Kg of used nets have been collected to prevent sea pollution, which were used to create more than 260,000 pairs of socks; more than 400 fishing boats participate in the action of cleaning the sea from plastic; extra income was created for more than 1,300 professional fisherman; 270 seaside professional fishermen have been trained in sustainable fishing techniques while 114 unemployed people were trained in professional fishing. Enaleia's founder has been awarded as one of the UN Environment Program's (UNEP) seven Young Champions of the Earth for 2020.

Project PARALIES (beaches): Launched in summer 2021, is an initiative aiming at cleaning marine litter and protecting the ecosystem of beaches against waste pollution. It focuses on mobilizing private companies with an increased environmental and social sensitivity to take part in the project by adopting a beach for the entire summer period. The project had been running from 5.6.2021 (World Environment Day) until the weekend after 17.9.2021 (World Clean-up Day). Over this period, eight popular beaches in the Attica Region were adopted by seven Greek companies, including two of the largest companies in the energy sector.

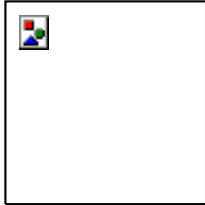
In the context of the project, specific actions were performed at beach level on a daily basis, by specially trained personnel for the purposes of the project, including: (i) daily clean-up of the beaches to prevent the accumulation of new entry waste as well as the clean-up of the 'historical pollution' of marine litter already accumulated on the beach, (ii) application of a separate collection scheme for the recyclable waste generated by visitors, on site, and (iii) awareness raising and information of visitors on the impacts of waste disposed intentionally or accidentally, at the beach, on the coastal and marine ecosystems.

During the first year of its implementation, 1.68 tn of plastic, 0.54 tn of paper, 0.44 tn of aluminum and 0.99 tn of glass were separately collected and channelled to recycling facilities, while 2.96 tn of mixed waste were collected and directed to safe final management. Regarding non-recyclable waste, 670 Kg of marine litter were collected in total, corresponding to 118,851 pieces, the majority of which consist of cigarette butts (44,680 pieces), plastic fragments of size less than 2.5 cm (48,820 pieces) and plastic straws (14,766 pieces). The project's implementation, which will be expanded to more beaches in 2022, has so far contributed to the prevention of additional waste entering the coastal and marine environment of the adopted beaches, while the collection of marine litter substantially assisted the remediation of the beaches and the removal of accumulated pollutants over previous years. Its awareness raising component has a multiplying positive impact towards the change of consumption and behavioural patterns of the citizens with regard to waste prevention and recycling.

Forthcoming initiatives

- The Government has concluded with the drafting and public consultations of the **National Maritime Spatial Planning Strategy (NMSPS)** with the view to ensure the sustainability of marine areas and resources which is expected to be endorsed within 2022. **SDG 14 (all targets)**
- A call for tender has been launched for the project "**Mapping of marine habitats**" within the framework of the Operational Programme "Transport Infrastructure, Environment and Sustainable Development". The project, which is crucial for enriching our knowledge in this field, has an estimated budget of €15 million, and it entails the mapping of habitats in all the marine protected areas of the NATURA 2000 network. **SDGs 14.2, 14.5**
- A specific plan is underway aiming at tackling the effects of the most harmful **alien species on fisheries**. **SDGs 14.2, 14.4, 15.8**
- Implementation of the "**Multiannual National Strategic Plan for the development of aquaculture in Greece, 2021-2030**", establishment of new **Multiannual Plans**, including **specific conservation and protection objectives** and measures based on the ecosystemic approach, to address specific fisheries problems, and implementation of the **National Action Plan for Small-scale Fisheries**, as reflected in the text "SSF in Greece: A pillar of development under the Common Fisheries Policy with a horizon of 2030", prepared in 2021. **SDGs 14.2, 14.4, 14.5, 14.6**

SDG 15: Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, halt and reverse land degradation, and halt biodiversity loss



Surface of terrestrial sites designated under Natura 2000



Assessment of progress in relevant SDG indicators

The surface of terrestrial sites designated under Natura 2000, has increased in the last decade, because of the consistent transposition and application of the relevant European Union (EU) law and its constant monitoring and updating at national level.

Key challenges

The loss of biodiversity and forest areas has intensified over the past decade. Recurring devastating wildfires in Greece have rendered the need for halting deforestation and combating desertification even more pressing. The country is now reinforcing the overall plan in order to strengthen the protection and management of the natural environment and biodiversity. Among its priorities are measures focused on specific challenges, including the development of a national reforestation plan, the enhancement of mitigation capabilities, as well as of the coping capacity of the disaster response mechanism, the completion of the nationwide project of forest maps ratification and the development of initiatives to safeguard Greece's mountains.

The law on biodiversity and the National Biodiversity Strategy are sound and comprehensive, yet more steps need to be taken towards their full implementation. In addition, according to reports on the conservation status of habitats and species covered by the Habitats Directive of the European Commission, more Mediterranean habitat types and species need to reach a good conservation status. Invasive alien species are an important issue to address, the current plan being to enhance the efforts to establish surveillance systems and official controls to prevent the introduction and further expansion of these species, in line with the respective EU Regulation.

Main policy initiatives and measures

- In 2020, a new **law on the modernization of the environmental legislation** was passed, allowing for the practical implementation of green growth objectives and aiming at simplifying environmental licensing procedures, ensuring enhanced natural protection, incorporating EU standards for NATURA 2000 protected areas, promoting environmentally friendly waste management and strengthening forest protection. A new entity, the **Natural Environment and Climate Change Agency (NECCA)** of Greece, was established, which is supervised by the Ministry of Environment and Energy and is responsible, inter alia, for coordinating and supervising the management bodies of the several protected areas of the country, through a multi-stakeholder consultative approach, ensuring a more effective conservation status. This new governance scheme will strengthen biodiversity protection and conservation in Greece, as NECCA will have improved access to financial resources, improved scientific and administrative capacities for implementation of management plans and for research and filling-in data gaps as well as a greater potential for substantial cooperation with local communities and partners and with international agencies. It will also enable a more efficient interaction and cooperation between management bodies and, thus, possibilities for experience and knowledge sharing. In parallel, the same law determines and clarifies the protection status within NATURA 2000 sites, dividing them in zones, in which land-uses and allowed activities are determined in line with the level of protection required and the special characteristics of each distinctive area. This will allow for protection that is more effective as well as for economic development of the network's areas, based on the principles of sustainable development. **SDGs 15.9, 15.1, 15.5**
- In order to complete the management plans for protected areas, the project **“Development of Special Environmental Studies and Management Plans for Natura 2000 sites”** is implemented. The legislative framework on biodiversity in Greece sets out the requirements for the demarcation of protected areas and the definition of land-uses as well as allowed activities within them. In order for the required Presidential Decree to be issued for each protected area, it is necessary that a **Special Environmental Study (SES)** is prepared for each site defining conservation terms. As of December 2021, the first batch of SESs, those for the NATURA 2000 sites of Crete, Peloponnesus and Evros, have been completed and put under public consultation. Moreover, Greece aims to **reformulate the National Biodiversity Strategy and its Action Plan (NBSAP)** in 2022 as soon as the post-2020 global biodiversity framework (GBF) is adopted at international level. The updated NBSAP is envisaged to last until 2030 in order to be aligned with the EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030 and the new GBF. **SDGs 15.1, 15.5**
- Conservation status assessment is an essential tool for setting species and habitat conservation objectives, priorities and measures as well as for strengthening and updating the planning of national nature protection policies. In order to assess the conservation status of the protected terrestrial and marine species and habitat types of national and EU interest, through field work monitoring, a call for tender has been launched for the Project **“Supervision and evaluation of the conservation status of protected species and habitats in Greece”**, within the framework of the Operational Programme “Transport Infrastructure, Environment and Sustainable Development 2014-2020”. The monitoring program is implemented: (i) in areas beyond the competence of the existing Management Bodies of Protected Areas of the NATURA 2000 network sites, as well as (ii) in areas beyond the NATURA 2000 network. **SDGs 15.1, 15.5**
- The development of a **National Reforestation Plan** for the country is a key priority. The Plan is incorporated in the National Recovery and Resilience Plan and will constitute a coordinated framework with localised spatial actions and projects to strengthen the national forest balance with multiple and measurable environmental and social benefits, which will contribute to climate change mitigation and adaptation, and biodiversity protection. The National Reforestation Plan aims at: (i) contributing to the EU Forest Strategy, (ii) restoring forest ecosystems and halt biodiversity loss, (iii) regulating carbon gas emissions, (iv) protecting human infrastructure from natural disasters, and (v) promoting jobs creation and employment. The Plan also includes policies related to alternative energy supplies, frugal use of timber and promotion of food production in forests. More than 20 million

trees are expected to be planted throughout the country by 2026, the Plan's completion year, with emphasis on the affected areas of the devastating forest fires of summer 2021. A pilot project was launched in 2021 and the main project will start in 2022. **SDG 15.2**

- The **ratification of forest maps** is a basic infrastructure tool useful not only for Forest Services but also for the national economy, as the digitization of space (forest areas in particular) facilitates the planning and authorization of new investments across the country, while ensuring the protection and management of forest areas in a more sustainable and effective way against pressures such as urban sprawl and forest fire. Forest maps represent the areas where forest law applies, ensuring transparency. Main benefits from this project include ensuring the preservation of forestland as a natural and social resource as well as creating a reliable cadastral system and protecting public property. Moreover, real estate transactions are more secure, promoting social confidence between the state and citizens, and the environmental information is widely spread to the public and can be retrieved using web-based applications. The ratification procedure started in 2017, and forest maps for 55% of the country were uploaded for public consultation and were ratified. At the same time, the maps for the rest of the country were produced. As provided by a law adopted in 2020, maps for the whole country were revised and, along with newly produced ones, were put to public consultation. By the end of July 2022, ratification of the 99% of the publicly presented forest maps will be completed and approximately 90% of the country should have ratified forest maps. **SDG 15.2**
- In the framework of the country's obligations under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Kyoto Protocol, Greece is required to calculate and report the emissions and removals of CO₂ and other greenhouse gases from various categories of land, including Forest Lands, and for various actions, like Afforestation, Reforestation and Deforestation. To implement this, an Inventory and Monitoring System of the country's forests and forest areas is required. This can be established through the installation of a permanent network of sampling points in all forest areas, which will measure the necessary data for the calculation of CO₂ emissions / removals from aboveground and underground biomass. The **system of inventory and monitoring of forests and forest areas to meet the country's obligations and formulate a strategy for their adaptation to climate change and its mitigation** will be implemented by ten sub-projects through the Operational Programme "Transport Infrastructure, Environment and Sustainable Development 2014-2020". The starting year of the tender process was 2021 and the implementation period is until 2023, with provisions for extension. **SDGs 15.2, 13.1**
- Greece has adopted an integrated legislative and policy framework regarding sustainable use of water resources and protection of water against **pollution by nitrates of agricultural origin**, and the determination of **geographical boundaries of high-productivity agricultural lands**. The primary objective of this framework is: (i) to update the existing code of good agricultural practice for the protection of waters against pollution by nitrates of agricultural origin, and (ii) to lay the foundation for the adoption of policies and measures aimed at protecting and preserving high productivity rural land by defining its geographical boundaries and improving existing legislation in order to avoid its loss and degradation, in line with the relevant obligations agreed at national, European and international level. **SDGs 15.1, 2.3, 2.4**
- Within the framework of the **National Rural Development Programme 2014-2020**, Greece has initiated a number of actions and measures, which contribute substantially to: (i) the afforestation and creation of forest areas; (ii) the prevention and rehabilitation of forest damage due to forest fires, natural disasters and catastrophic events (construction - restoration of fire protection roads, construction of water supply points, forest management actions, mountain anti-corrosion and anti-flood works); and (iii) the conservation and protection of the wild bird fauna, whose habitat is closely connected with the agricultural land. **SDGs 15.1, 15.2**

- The management of the **construction of public works** is done in an **environmentally friendly way**, based on the conclusions of the environmental impact studies. For every project, technical solutions are selected such as: tunnels constructed with cut & cover or underground excavation instead of big trenches, bridges instead of large embankments, technical transits for the fauna of the area, most notably the area of protection of the wolf in Sterea Ellada, construction of flood preventing works to protect both the railway project as well as the surrounding area, restoration works of the affected areas (sound barriers protecting the urban environment from noise, urban renewal after the project completion, urban planning arrangements, and planting works to restore the areas neighbouring to the projects). During the construction stage, special attention is attributed so that the project contractors take all the necessary measures in order to protect the environment and prevent pollution, such as: the disposal or borrowing of materials is carried out in areas where the environmental licenses foreseen by the applicable legislation have been obtained. These areas are restored after the completion of the project. Steps are taken to prevent contamination of the soil and groundwater (recycling of lubricants and rubber), and measures are adopted to prevent the disruption of the neighbouring urban areas (minimization of dust and sound pollution). **SDG 15.9**

Best practice examples

1. The LIFE-IP 4 NATURA project SDGs 15.1, 15.2, 15.4, 15.5

The LIFE-IP 4 NATURA project “Integrated actions for the conservation and management of Natura 2000 sites, species, habitats and ecosystems in Greece”, is the most important nature conservation project over the past decades in the country. It constitutes the first centrally coordinated initiative to implement the Greek Prioritized Action Framework (PAF) on a national, regional and local scale and aims to substantially enhance Greece’s nature conservation framework while ensuring compliance with the EU nature legislation. That is why the project’s framework cohesively integrates actions covering all aspects of nature protection: policy, economy, society and science. With a consortium of twelve partners coordinated by the Ministry of Environment and Energy, the project’s main objectives include: the implementation of 10 Action Plans for habitats and species of Community interest listed in the Birds and Habitats EU Directives, the pilot implementation of Management Plans in Natura 2000 sites and the fine-scale mapping and assessment of ecosystems and their services at national level. Its successful implementation will result in a substantial improvement of habitats’ and species’ favourable conservation status in the country by creating new protection and management tools and promoting the opportunities arising from the harmonious coexistence between man and nature. The project started in 2018 and is expected to be completed in 2025.

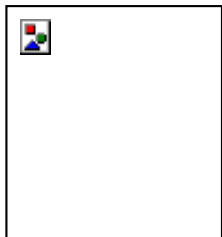
2. “Untrodden Mountains” initiative SDG 15.4

Through the “Untrodden Mountains” initiative, a special protection status for mountain areas of particular natural and cultural importance for the country is created, by their designation as strictly protected areas, where man-made interventions such as road construction and any type of building activity are prohibited, so as to prevent an important threat to biodiversity, which is the ecosystems’ fragmentation. The first six areas to be included in the initiative are: White Mountains (Lefka Ori) in the island of Crete, Saos mountain in the island of Samothrace, Smolikas and Tymfi mountains in Epirus, Taygetos mountain in the Peloponnese and Hatzi mountain in Thessaly. A legislative adoption of the initiative is under way. At the same time, data for another 55 pristine mountain areas are collected for the initiative’s expansion. Regarding mount Olympus, the highest mountain in Greece, which is of particular natural, cultural and historic value for the country and globally, a legal framework for its designation as a National Park and the definition of protection zones, land-uses, conditions and permitted activities has already been adopted.

Forthcoming initiatives

- Aiming at the conservation and restoration of terrestrial ecosystems and the protection of biodiversity and natural habitats, the project “**Development of Special Environmental Studies and Management Plans for Natura 2000 sites**” will be unfolded and a reformulation of the **National Biodiversity Strategy** and its Action Plan is anticipated. **SDGs 15.1, 15.5**
- The development of a **National Reforestation Plan** will constitute a coordinated framework of actions and projects aiming to restore the forest ecosystems and halt biodiversity loss. In particular, the restoration of 16,500 hectares of degraded forest ecosystems all over Greece will be concluded by Q2 2023. **SDG 15.2**
- The forthcoming **revision of the Forest Maps** for all the areas of the country will ensure the protection and management of forest areas in a more sustainable and effective way against pressures such as urban sprawl and forest fire. **SDG 15.2**
- The materialization of the “**Untrodden Mountains**” initiative will provide for a special protection status for mountain areas of particular natural and cultural importance, by their designation as strictly protected areas. **SDG 15.4**
- The complete implementation of measures and actions included in the **National Rural Development Programme 2014-2020**, covering the transitional period 2021-2022, will contribute to the fight against forest and biodiversity loss. **SDG 15.1, 15.2, 15.a, 15.b**
- The **wildland firefighting capabilities** will be substantially strengthened by establishing a new unit of 500 forest firefighting commandos by Q2 2022, as well the enhancement of firefighting vehicles, airplanes and helicopters. **SDG 15.2**

SDG 16: Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels



Standardised death rate due to homicide by sex



Assessment of progress in relevant SDG indicators

- Since 2010, the homicide rates are declining, and in 2019, the country fell below the EU average among the safer ones in Europe.
- Government total expenditure in law courts, returned to its pre-crisis level in 2018 and remains above €61 per inhabitant, though it is noteworthy that significant investments are underway.
- According to the international Perception of Corruption Index of Transparency International, Greece is steadily improving its place, having moved up 22 places since 2011 (80th) and 9 places since 2018, being currently at the 58th place (2021) in the list of 180 countries.

Key challenges

Over the last three years, Greece has launched a wide range of initiatives, from policies to action plans, innovative methods and tools, in order to address key challenges in crucial areas. Among these is the improvement of the accountability mechanisms within each public administration body and promotion of collaboration and transparency between various state institutions and stakeholders for the enrichment of democratic consultation and decision-making processes. In addition, a single Independent Authority - the National Transparency Authority - was established and several relevant initiatives were undertaken aiming at the detection and prevention of corruption and the promotion of public accountability. In the area of human rights, the sufficient protection of children constitutes one of the most persisting challenges for Greece as lack of substantial care, efficient and friendly services and a comprehensive plan for their well-being lead to children's rights violations, frequent institutionalization and exposure to risk.

Furthermore, the justice system constitutes a major systemic challenge for Greece, since it is associated with significant costs and delays mainly attributed to rigid procedures and inadequate use of Information and Communication Technologies. Citizens and investors face hurdles when dealing with litigation, despite the deployment of various simplification measures. Legislation is fragmented and critical statistical data is missing, while excessive legal production at European Union level imposes an extra burden to administration that sometimes results in unfavourable court rulings and penalty payments. In addition, new or persisting forms of delinquency, such as the increase in cases of gender and domestic violence, youth violence and sports hooliganism constitute important issues to address.

Main policy initiatives and measures

- The **new corporate governance framework** in Greece was enacted by a 2020 law in Greece, which regulates affairs of listed companies/societies anonymes, targeting explicitly on internal control mechanisms, conflict of interest prevention, the compliance function, amelioration of the governance culture of the Greek companies and optimization of their operation. **SDG 16.7, 5.5, 5.c**
- In line with the UN Security Council Resolutions on Women, Peace and Security (WPS), Greece finalized, under the coordination of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, its first **National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security (NAPWPS)** which is to be adopted shortly. The NAPWPS puts forward a wide spectrum of actions and measures under the following pillars and priority areas: (i) prevention of armed conflict and of any form of gender-based, sexual and domestic violence, sexual exploitation and abuse, (ii) gender-equal representation, participation and leadership in decision-making, (iii) protection of women and girls from gender-based, sexual and domestic violence, including sexual exploitation and abuse, and from other violations of international humanitarian law and international human rights law, (iv) relief and recovery of the survivors of gender-based, sexual and domestic violence, and (v) promotion of the United Nations Agenda on Women, Peace and Security (WPS) at bilateral, regional, multilateral level. In order to enhance policy coherence, the NAPWPS is fully aligned with the National Action Plan on Gender Equality, which has been renewed for the period 2021-2025. **SDGs 5.1, 5.2, 5.3, 5.5, 16.1, 16.2, 16.3, 17.14**
- In 2021, the Government adopted a number of legislative initiatives on matters, such as: (i) the modernization of the recruitment system in the public sector and the strengthening of the Supreme Council for Personnel Selection (ASEP); (ii) the internal audit system of the public sector; and (iii) the institutional framework of teleworking and provisions for the human resources of the public sector, that clearly aim directly at building more **effective, accountable and inclusive institutions**. **SDG 16.6**
- A 2018 law and its 2020 amendment reformed the institutional **framework for fostering and adoption** and implemented important innovations concerning - among others - the creation of the digital National Registries of Minors, Prospective Foster Parents and Prospective Adoptive Parents, and the digital interconnection between them. The aim of the reform was to ensure that all children coming under state responsibility have equal access to a family and home, foster or adoptive. **SDGs 16.2, 10.2, 10.3**
- The adoption of **National Standards on Institutional Care Units** managed by private law entities provides for measures promoting foster care and transformation of large-scale residential institutions into alternative care models run in a high-standard, child-friendly framework. **SDGs 16.2, 10.2, 10.3**
- Greece has developed, in line with EU secondary legislation, a new comprehensive legal framework on the protection of natural persons, regarding: (i) the **processing of personal data** and the **free movement of such data**, and (ii) the **processing of personal data by competent authorities** for the purposes of the prevention, investigation, detection or prosecution of criminal offenses or the

execution of criminal penalties, and on the free movement of such data. This new legal framework also improves the regulatory regime governing the establishment and functioning of the Personal Data Protection Authority, which is a constitutionally guaranteed independent public authority assigned with the task to supervise the implementation of the whole regulatory measures concerning the protection of individuals from the processing of personal data, as well as the exercise of other relevant responsibilities. [SDG 16.3, 16.6](#)

- Ensuring the right to public access to information and protecting fundamental freedoms is a key priority of the Government firmly adhered to the legislation and the operation of public administration in Greece. Constitutional provisions (art. 5.1, 5a), ratification of international conventions (United Nations Economic Commission for Europe Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters, Aarhus Convention), and national legislation, including the transposition of EU directives (law 4727/2020 on digital governance), shape the recent operating framework of a **digital governance rooted in the principles of transparency, equality, protection of personal data and accessibility**, which provides for a unified digital portal of public administration as the central point of entry and reference for information and digital services and includes the most frequent or important citizen's transactions with the state. The law also states that all public sector websites should offer free and unrestricted access sites to citizens for the purpose of informing about public policies, actions or programs that are designed and implemented. A special emphasis is put on accessibility so that people with disabilities, as well as the inhabitants of insular and mountainous regions, are able to communicate digitally with public sector authorities and make use of the benefits of digital services for local development. [SDG 16.10](#)
- Policy initiatives on digital governance, established by law, include the: (i) **Digital Accessibility**, regulating the accessibility requirements of the websites and mobile applications of public sector bodies; (ii) **Open Data**: extending the principles of open availability and re-usability of documents, information and data that are either in the possession of public bodies, or funded by public resources; (iii) **Digital Transparency** - The Transparency (Diavgeia) Programme, which obliges all government institutions to upload their acts and decisions on the Internet, otherwise they are not valid; (iv) creation of the **National Register of Procedures** that aims at recording, mapping and modelling the administrative procedures of the State in a transparent way, while there can be no deviation from any competent public authority in the implementation of the registered procedures; and v) establishment of the **Register of Greek Public Administration Websites** that is fully accessible to the public authorities and legal and natural entities via the Unified Digital Portal of Public Administration (GOV.GR). [SDGs 16.6, 16.10](#)
- Throughout the period 2018-2021, Greece successfully implemented its National Anti-Corruption Action Plan (NACAP) with the country steadily improving its global ranking in the CPI Index of Transparency International. In 2019, Greece radically restructured the domestic anti-corruption framework. According to the provisions of the Executive State law, five audit entities and a coordination anti-corruption body merged into a single, independent **National Transparency Authority (NTA)** with the mandate to detect, prevent and raise awareness against corruption as well as promote transparency and public accountability. In the **corruption detection pillar**, NTA prioritized the standardization of the Audit process and launched an integrated complaints-management system parallel to the introduction of innovative risk-based audit tools to modernize the audit framework and enhance the effectiveness of investigations. Coordination at the national level has also improved with the establishment of the National Coordination Audit Body, a collective body bringing together every inspection, audit and anti-corruption agency operating at the national level. In the **corruption prevention pillar**, NTA is currently implementing the National Integrity System, a key structural reform that, apart from regulatory interventions, in key policy areas (lobbying, conflicts of interest etc.), includes a) a network of Integrity Advisors b) codes of professional conduct and codes of Ethics to promote the values of integrity and ethical behaviour across public administration and c) capacity building through training and raising awareness initiatives. In addition, the Internal Control System, includes the establishment of internal audit units in Ministries, local government entities, universities, hospitals and independent authorities. At the same time, a series of **awareness-rai-**

ing initiatives targeting primary and secondary education students was launched. For this purpose, disseminated relevant educational material on integrity and ethics was developed through a technical assistance project with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. **SDGs 16.5, 16.6, 16.7**

- In 2021, Greece entered into force primary and secondary legislation for the modification of the Income Tax Code and the introduction of tax incentives to increase **electronic transactions and tax compliance**. The reform consists of measures such as the reduction of the taxable amount up to €5,000 for making payments for certain types of expenditures with electronic means, and tax incentives for paying with electronic means services received from doctors, dentists, veterinarians etc. **SDGs 16.6**
- A **National Anti-Money Laundering /Combating Finance of Terrorism (AML/CFT) Strategy and an Action Plan to address ML/TF risks** has been set out by the Strategy Committee and in 2019 FATF placed Greece in regular monitoring, thus reflecting the country's improvement efforts. Since then, the Government has been adopting a coherent and integrated legal framework for a robust and resilient financial system. The transposition of the Fifth Anti-Money Laundering Directive (EU) 2018/843 and the introduction of law 4734 in 2020, further improved the national anti-money laundering/countering the financing of terrorism framework (AML/CFT). The new provisions further expanded the scope of obliged entities, indicatively, financial institutions, accountants, tax advisers, providers engaged in exchange services between virtual currencies and fiat currencies, custodian wallet providers, persons trading or acting as intermediaries in the trade of works of art. All along the new rules, the use of digital mechanisms is encouraged. The scope and the obligation for registering in the Central Beneficial Owners Registry has also been expanded to include legal persons/legal entities that are active and taxed in the territory. The General Secretariat of the Economic Policy of the Ministry of Finance and the general secretariat of Information Systems of Public Administration of the Ministry of Digital Government are taking all necessary safeguards to protect personal data and to prevent by design data leakage. Specific criteria and safeguards regarding the transactions with third countries characterized as high risk from the European Union have also been determined, so as to facilitate the transaction monitoring performed by the obligated entities. In addition, in order to prevent and tackle effectively money laundering and the related financing of organized crime and terrorism, Greece proceeded, in the context of transposing Directive (EU) 2018/1673, to the adoption of a coherent legal framework aimed at combating money laundering by criminal law. Finally, by transposing the 2019/1153 Directive, Greece enhanced the relevant legal framework aimed to lay down rules facilitating the use of financial and other information for the prevention, detection, investigation or prosecution of certain criminal offenses. **SDGs 16.4, 16.5, 16.6**
- Greece has developed a comprehensive **Anti-crime Policy Program** for the period 2020-2024, based on a number of targeted and measurable objectives, which seek to enhance crime prevention and effectively address serious and organized crime at national, regional and local level. This Program is complemented and supported by the **Strategic and Operational Program of the Hellenic Police (2021-2025)**. In addition, the Branches of the Hellenic Police Headquarters issue special annual Operational Plans and Action Programs, guided by the objectives and priorities of the Strategic and Operational Program of the Hellenic Police. **SDGs 16.4, 16.5, 16.2, 3.5, 5.2, 8.7**

- Complying with European Commission's recommendations, Greece appointed a **focal point** for monitoring the application of the **EU Charter of Fundamental Rights**. Its purpose is to ease the flow of information and the diffusion of best practices on the Charter and to coordinate capacity-building efforts in the country. The initiative was welcomed by organizations working in the field. **SDG 16.10**
- Greece re-established the **National Council against Racism and Intolerance** in an effort to tackle racism and discrimination (on grounds of race, ethnic/national origin, colour, citizenship, religion, language, disability, sexual orientation and gender identity), xenophobia, antisemitism and intolerance. In December 2020, this unique body adopted the National Action Plan against Racism and Intolerance and has been monitoring ever since the progress made towards the achievement of the defined goals and outcomes. **SDGs 16.1, 16.2, 16.3, 5, 10.7**
- Greece has elaborated and presented a **Guide on the rights of victims of racist crimes**, including definitions, victims' rights, a manual on racist crimes and a list of organizations dedicated to supporting victims. The Guide was compiled pursuant to the EU project "Developing a comprehensive strategy against racism, intolerance and hate crime" that is funded by the Rights, Equality, Citizenship 2014-2020 Programme and implemented by the Ministry of Justice in cooperation with the Hellenic Parliament. **SDGs 16.1, 16.2, 16.3, 5.1, 5.2, 10.7**
- Important principles governing children's wellbeing were addressed in the **National Action Plan for Children's Rights 2021-2023**, a horizontal strategy already being implemented. Amongst the provisions defined therein, special emphasis is given to facilitating children's access to justice (child-friendly justice). In view of the above, the Ministry of Justice participated in a broad consultative process, organized by the Council of Europe with the purpose of forming a new Strategy for the Rights of the Child. The consultation involved national governments, international organizations, civil society organizations and, last but not least, 220 children from 10 member states. **SDGs 16.2, 16.6**
- An initiative related to child-friendly Justice is the Assessment of the **child friendliness of the Justice system** by the Ministry of justice (MoJ) in partnership with UNICEF. Based on the results of this assessment, the MoJ is planning to draft an Action Plan on improving the child friendliness of the Greek Justice system. **SDGs 16.2, 16.6**
- **Protective custody of unaccompanied minors deprived of safe or known accommodation, has been officially abolished**, by adopting new legislation in 2020. According to data provided by the relevant Authorities, in December 2020, just before the legislative amendment, the average waiting time for the referral of an unaccompanied minor to an accommodation facility was 9.2 days for Unaccompanied Minors (UAMs) in "protective custody". The Government's initiative went beyond the adoption of the measure, by ensuring its successful implementation. In this context, the Government introduced the National Emergency Response Mechanism for UAMs living in precarious conditions. The mechanism is implemented in cooperation with the UNHCR, Child Protection agencies, as well as the Prosecution and Police Authorities. For the purpose of its operation, a 24/7 telephone line is activated, where cases of unaccompanied minors, homeless or in precarious living conditions, are referred and guidance is provided to transfer them to accommodation facilities appropriate for minors. In addition, new accommodation places are created. As a result, the protection and safeguarding of UAMs is secured, while ensuring the full and effective enjoyment of all the children's rights. **SDG 16.2**

- The framework of operation of the **Migrant and Refugee Integration Councils (SEMP)** is provided for by a 2018 law. A SEMP can be found by a Municipality Council's decision, and it consists of 11 members (appointed by the Municipality Council), who may be municipality counsellors and representatives of organizations for migrant and refugee issues or immigrants and refugees who are permanent residents of the specific municipality. It serves as a counselling body on migration and refugee issues, supports the integration of third-country nationals in the local community and conducts activities that enable civic participation. **SDG 16.7**
- Greece has created a central information system consisting of individual applications (subsystems) to support the **operational functions of the civil and criminal courts**. The project's objective is to accelerate justice delivery and improve the quality of services offered by the judicial system to citizens, professionals and public entities. Key features of the project include the electronic deposition of documents, online case tracking, online applications for issuing certificates and interoperability options between courts and various national and international authorities, including the Ministry of Justice. **SDGs 16.3, 16.6**
- In 2020, the **Office of Collection and Edit of Judicial Data (JustStat)** was established with a view to increasing the effectiveness and efficiency of justice. The main objective of this independent Office is the systematic collection of statistics concerning both traditional and alternative dispute resolution procedures. JustStat will be supported by an integrated information system that will enable prompt decision-making and justice optimization through the collection, processing and provision of reliable data. **SDGs 16.3, 16.6**
- Greece has adopted a number of legislative measures aimed at accelerating the **judgment of pending cases** regarding debt settlement, ensuring the **reasonable duration of civil litigation**, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, and promoting the **digitization of civil justice**. In addition, Greece has proceeded, over the last years, to the **reform of the main codes of legislation**, including the Penal Code and the Code of Criminal Procedure, with the intention of resolving significant interpretative difficulties and problems encountered in the administration of justice, thus increasing the citizens' trust in the state and applying correctly the legal rules. **SDGs 16.3, 16.6**
- After being reinstated by a new law in 2019, **Mediation in Civil and Commercial Disputes** seems to constitute a culture change in resolving disputes that aims towards expediting legal proceedings and offering a rather fast-track enforceable title to the counterparties. It is worth noting that the number of Mediators appointed by the Central Committee had reached 1.893 in the first and second quarters of 2021, showing an impressive increase of 2.266% compared to the first and second quarters of 2020. **SDG 16.3**
- In 2020, the **National Crisis and Hazards Management Mechanism** was established by law, with the aim to restructure the **General Secretariat for Civil Protection** (a.k.a. Civil Protection Greece), upgrade the civil protection volunteering system and reorganize the Fire Service. New structures were created, including the Hazard Mitigation Fund, the Centre for Crisis Management Studies, and the Civil Protection Science Board. It should be noted that the Civil Protection Greece was instrumental in the early response to the Covid-19 crisis and remains a key player in the ongoing multilateral response. **SDGs 16.6, 3.3, 6.3, 11.5, 11.b, 13.1, 13.2, 13.3, 15.2, 15.b**
- In 2021, the **Ministry for Climate Crisis and Civil Protection** was established by law, with the aim to upgrade disaster risk management and connect climate change adaptation and prevention with disaster risk reduction, giving renewed impetus to hazard and disaster management. **SDGs 16.6, 6.3, 11.5, 11.b, 13.1, 13.2, 13.3, 15.2, 15.b**

Best practice examples

Independent Office for Minor Victims - House of the Child SDGs 16.3, 16.6, 16.a

After many years of discussions, a novelty for the Greek legal system was put into operation, namely the Independent Office for Minor Victims (Houses of the Child), located in Athens. The main purpose of these specialized Houses is to facilitate the judicial examination of children who were victims of sexual violence and abuse and sexual violence. This is considered as the optimal - and common - practice in Europe and worldwide, because it gives the opportunity to the minor victims to be examined in specifically designed, child-friendly areas, by expert scientists. Furthermore, special video recording systems are in place that allow children to give a single testimony to the authorities. In this way, the discovery of the truth is ensured without re-traumatizing the victims.

Setting up rules for influence activities SDGs 16.6, 16.7

Two distinct legislative initiatives ensure and increase integrity, transparency and accountability in the exercise of influence activities, for the first time. The first one addresses several aspects of the communication and cooperation between the state institutions and representatives of interest groups (stakeholders). Exercising influence is internationally recognized as an act of participation in the decision making process. A new form of democratic consultation is preceded, where the public and private sector comply with the relevant European Regulation. The new law settles the basis for transparency and accountability on behalf of the interest groups that are assigned to a Transparency Register - publicly accessible via the digital government platform "gov.gr" - and are subject to scrutiny. As far as the second legislative initiative is concerned, the Greek Government establishes a solid framework for the function of civil society organizations and the protection of voluntary work. All civil society organizations are registered to a Public Database where they are able to receive grants from various funding sources up to €50,000 on an annual basis and at the same time, they can apply for a Special Register having access to no-limit government grants. Moreover, tax incentives provided to civil society organizations along with the protection of volunteers rights lay down the necessary conditions for the enrichment of democratic consultation and decision-making process.

Forthcoming initiatives

- The **first National Plan against Child Sexual Abuse** (2022) aims to safeguard the health and dignity of children-victims of an underreported crime. It identifies critical systemic failures and presents measures to prevent, locate, report, treat and take to justice incidents of sexual abuse and exploitation of children. Special care is foreseen for the victims through a child-friendly justice approach, institutional obstacles are set to prevent predators from working with children in all possible sectors and essential protocol revision is put forward in order to ensure timely response that does not cause further victimization and risks. The overall threefold aim of the Plan is to a) minimize the incidents, b) maximize reporting, working towards the protection of children from all forms of violence and c) raise awareness on the crime's prevalence and specifics. **SDGs 16.2, 16.3, 16.6, 5.2**
- Based on the findings of the external evaluation and the lessons learnt, Greece designed the **National Anti-Corruption Action Plan (NACAP) 2022-2025** in consultation with major stakeholders from public and private sector as well as with civil society organizations and non-governmental organizations. The new Action Plan sets clear strategic objectives, incorporates international best practices and builds synergies across public administration, prioritizing targeted interventions in high-risk areas prone to fraud and corruption i.e. health, public finances, investments etc. In February 2022, the NACAP 2022-2025 was officially approved by the Council of Ministers in line with international recommendations as a structural part of the National Strategy against Corruption. **SDGs 16.5, 16.6, 16.7**
- Implementation of two key actions included in the Annual Action Plan of the Ministry of Interior for 2022 that aim to strengthen and enhance **multilevel governance**. The first refers to a forthcoming law that will redistribute responsibilities vertically among the three tiers of government (national, regional, local). Consultation of the central government with the unions of the regions and municipalities will take place and the findings of experts and independent studies will also be taken into account. The second action refers to an attempt at rationalizing, i.e., making more efficient and coordinated, the framework of responsibilities across the three tiers of government. A thorough analysis and a detailed mapping of the current allocation of competencies in each sector of policy will take place, leading to a respective amendment of the legal framework by Q3 2022. **SDGs 16.6, 17.17**
- Preparation and implementation of key laws, regarding: (i) the reform of the institutional framework of the **National School of Judges** adopted in 2021, focusing on the organization and operation of the School, and the selection, education and training of future and acting judicial officers by the end of 2022; (ii) the amendment of the institutional framework governing the **Juvenile Probation and Social Welfare Services** of the Ministry of Justice (2022); (iii) the adoption of the new Code of Organization and **Functioning of Courts and Judicial Officers** (2022); and (iv) the strengthening of the institutional framework governing the **assets' declaration** (2022). **SDGs 16.3, 16.6**
- Transposition of EU legislation on: (i) combating **terrorism**, (ii) combating **fraud and counterfeiting of non-cash means of payment**, and (iii) the **protection of persons who report breaches** of European law (2022). **SDGs 16.3, 16.4, 16.5, 16.6**

- The approval of the National Anti-Corruption Action Plan (NACAP) 2022-2025 by the Council of Ministers once a year and the adoption of a Steering Committee responsible for the design, evaluation and monitoring of the actions, according to the provisions of a newly adopted Law, implies a strong political commitment which ensures transparent procedures. For the current year, the NACAP is expected to be published soon and will include a list of 129 actions. **SDGs 16.5, 16.6, 16.7**
- Launch of interdisciplinary **seminars** that will take place in December 2022, initiated by the Ministry of Justice in cooperation with the National School of Judges, on the **child-friendly justice** and the **rights of children that are victims of criminal acts**, based on the respective guidelines issued by the Council of Europe and the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights. **SDGs 16.1, 16.2, 16.3**
- Within 2022, a number of actions and measures are to be adopted with a view to support the implementation of: (i) the **National Action Plan for the protection of Children's Rights 2021-2023**, including important priorities on child-friendly justice and (ii) the **National Action Plan against Racism and Intolerance 2020-2023**. **SDGs 16.2, 16.3, 16.6, 10.2, 5.1, 5.2**
- Combat illicit trafficking in firearms through common European actions of Europol's EMPACT - FIREARMS priorities during 2022. **SDG 16.4**
- Under the Anti-money Laundering reform, the contract award for the platform that will collect the statistical data held by national competent authorities (i.e. judicial, supervisory and law enforcement) is expected to take place in Q3 2022. **SDGs 16.4, 16.5, 16.06**

SDG 17: Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development



General government gross debt



**Official Development Assistance as share
of gross national income - % of gross national income (GNI)**

Year	O.D.A.
2010	0.17
2011	0.15
2012	0.13
2013	0.10
2014	0.11
2015	0.12
2016	0.19
2017	0.16
2018 ^b	0.13
2019	0.18
2020	0.18

(b: break)

Assessment of progress in relevant SDG indicators

- Following a decade of fiscal crisis coupled with the recent Covid-19 pandemic, the general Government gross debt reached the level of 200% of the country's GDP.
- The EU, its 27 member countries and major financial institutions (Team Europe) are global leader donors yet the official development assistance from Greece is at the lower side of the spectrum as a result of the country's 12-year economic downturn.

Key challenges

In today's critical times, both globally and especially for Europe, which is facing the war in Ukraine and a growing humanitarian and refugee crisis as a result thereof, Greece is responding to the Ukrainian refugee crisis, through additional financial commitments in order to be able to continue its support of much-needed resources to recurring humanitarian crises in, inter alia, Afghanistan, Yemen, Haiti, the Sahel, Ethiopia, Myanmar and the Horn of Africa. Furthermore, the impact of conflict in Ukraine is especially severe on food security, energy, the natural environment as well as the socioeconomic environment in many parts of Africa and the Middle East, and the needs for humanitarian assistance are expected to escalate in the coming months.

For Greece, addressing effectively the critical challenges associated with the achievement of the SDGs, including sustainable and resilient recovery from the enormous social and economic effects of the pandemic crisis, climate change, depletion of natural resources, green and digital transition, social inequalities, and sustainable and inclusive growth, requires coherent, coordinated, cross-sectoral and forward-looking public policies on sustainable development to be adopted and implemented at international, national and local levels. Moreover there is a need and opportunity for synergies and cooperation among all levels of interested parties and the government in order to deepen the implementation of the SDGs in the whole of society, to promote accountability and efficiency and to develop the tools, processes and mechanisms that can ensure the integrated and continuous incorporation of high-quality, reliable, disaggregated and quantified evidence and data in the whole policy cycle.

Main policy initiatives and measures

- Greece has been a member of the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) since 1999. Total **Official Development Assistance** (ODA) of Greece (bilateral and multilateral ODA) in 2020 amounted to 325.44 million USD reaching 0.18% of Gross National Income. In order for ODA to have an impact, Greece focuses on areas where it has competence and experience. **SDG 17.2, 10.b**
- At international level, Greece has donated over 4 million doses of COVID-19 vaccines, through bilateral agreements, to Albania, Armenia, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Egypt, Gabon, Ghana, Iran, Jordan, Kenya, Libya, North Macedonia, Rwanda, Tunisia, Ukraine, and Vietnam. The vaccines delivered, serve as an example of solidarity of Greece to its partner countries and of commitment to share resources to fight the COVID-19 pandemic. Moreover, Greece offered almost 6 million doses of COVID-19 vaccines, 4.3 million of which were immediately donated, via the European Union COVAX mechanism, to Djibouti, Ethiopia, Indonesia, Kenya, Laos, Nigeria, Pakistan and Syria, thus contributing to the full vaccination of approximately 17% of the combined population of these countries. **SDG 17.16, 17.9, 3.8, 3.b, 16.6**
- In accordance with the "Executive State" law adopted in August 2019, the General Secretariat of Coordination of the Presidency of the Government has been entrusted, inter alia, with the task of ensuring the **effective coherence and coordination** of the whole Government work, including all public policies and legislative initiatives that are inextricably linked to the SDGs, along with developing and proposing horizontal and cross-sectoral public policies. **SDGs 17.14**

- Over the last two years, Greece has established, within the Presidency of the Government, monitoring mechanisms, tools and processes that foster the integration of **reliable data and high-quality quantified evidence** in the whole policy cycle, including the planning, design, formulation, implementation and evaluation of public policies and reform measures closely associated with the SDGs (i.e. Annual Action Plans of the ministries, Regulatory Impact Assessments accompanying legislative proposals, policies and programmes against the COVID-19 pandemic). **SDGs 17.18, 17.19, 16.6, 16.7**
- The Government is currently implementing a **green budgeting, performance budgeting and spending review reform**, which is expected to increase and enhance transparency, coherence, resilience, efficiency and inclusiveness in public financial management. The adoption of a performance and green budgeting approach for all central administration units contributes also significantly to the effective and efficient implementation and monitoring of many horizontal and crosscutting policies of the State and the General Government entities, thereby promoting public accountability and policy coherence for sustainable development. **SDGs 17.14, 16.6**
- The private sector is anticipated as the main driver for broadband development in Greece. The 2017 award winner **Rural Broadband project**, a 160M€ budget project, has been implemented in a **Public-Private-Partnership scheme**. It has a geographical span covering almost 45% of the Greek territory (geographically) in white Rural Areas, covering the population with services of minimum 30Mbps and providing broadband connectivity to 5,077 villages/settlements that corresponded to 525,287 inhabitants of rural and insular areas of the country. **SDGs 17.17, 9.1**

The **flagship Ultrafast Broadband (UFBB) project**, that is presently in the contractual phase, is an 700 mil Euro budget **Public-Private-Partnership** project that seeks to cover areas across Greece, which are estimated to remain “**white NGA areas**” after the implementation of the private sector investment plans and the Rural Broadband project, as well as areas where there is no offering of Internet connectivity of a downlink at least 100 Mbps, upgradable to 1 Gbs. It is expected to cover the vast majority of the population (>90%) of the eligible areas in semi-rural and urban settlements. So far, 160M€ of public funds have been utilized for broadband development in rural areas and more than 300M€ are going to be utilized in the framework of the UFBB project, in NGA-white areas throughout the country. **SDGs 17.17, 9.1**

- Greece has established by law a comprehensive framework for the elaboration and preparation of **Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans (SUMPs)** at local and regional level, based on the basic principles of sustainable urban mobility. The primary objective of SUMPs is to ensure a better quality of life in cities and to make urban mobility cleaner and more sustainable, reducing traffic-related air and noise pollution, congestion and accidents. A key element of a SUMP is, apart from the citizen’s participation, the cooperation and engagement of local authorities and stakeholders, such as decentralized administrations, transport providers, representatives of traffic policing services, chambers, commercial and professional associations, representatives of the educational community, bodies with the statutory purpose of promoting issues of persons with disabilities, that are directly affected by the SUMP preparation or are interested in it. The engagement takes the form of a participation agreement signed by representatives of the abovementioned groups. **SDGs 17.16, 17.17, 11.2, 7.3, 9.1, 13.2**
- In January 2022, a Memorandum of Cooperation was signed between the Ministry of Environment and Energy and 21 candidate Municipalities for the European Mission “100 Climate Neutral Cities until 2030 – by and for the citizens”. The aim of this Climate-Neutral & Smart Cities Pact (**Cities Pact**) is to speed up the cities’ transition to climate neutrality and digital transformation by 2030, since climate mitigation is heavily dependent on urban action. At the same time the purpose is to commit all parties to contribute to an integrated climate action and resilience strategy with a view to the EU Green Deal, the Paris Agreement commitments, the EU Climate law, and the Sustainable Development Goals (especially the SDG’s 11 and 13) in the cities, with a view to make them inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable. **SDGs 17, 11, 13**

- The **Planning of the National Strategy for Research and Innovation**, covering both the programming periods 2014-2020 and 2021-2027, has been elaborated and specified through the entrepreneurial discovery process (EDP) run by the **Innovation Platforms** of the General Secretariat for Research and Innovation (GSRI). In each priority sector, there is a corresponding Innovation Platform, which is the enlarged consultation body, where many representatives of the quadruple propeller participate at national level. Each Platform is coordinated and led by a small Advisory Group consisting of prominent scientists in the field of research and business as well as representatives of co-responsible Ministries and services and civil society. Regarding the process of operation of the Innovation Platforms, for each sector a basic text is formed by the participating bodies, which: (i) describes the current situation in each of the priority areas regarding the economy, research and technology as well as the policies for their promotion; (ii) highlights the trends and key challenges of each sector; (iii) contributes to the further specialization of each sector; and (iv) examines the possibility of harmonizing demand for research, innovation and technology with supply. **SDGs 17.17, 9.4, 12**
- In 2021, a new law was passed, entitled “**State support to businesses and non-profit entities for damages from natural disasters**”. In this regard, a secondary legislation has been implemented on state support funds for the regions affected by natural disasters, with the co-operation of regional authorities and directorates of the Ministries of (i) Infrastructure and Transport, (ii) Interior and (iii) Development and Investment. In the context of the inter-ministerial co-operation, a new legislative framework has been adopted which sets the provisions concerning the procedure and conditions for granting aid to businesses from the Regional Unit of Evia, in the Region of Central Greece, that suffered considerable financial losses due to the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic that was also aggravated by the disastrous forest fires of summer 2021. **SDGs 17.17, 1.5.**
- The General Secretariat for the Aegean & Island Policy, the University of the Aegean and the Centre for Research and Technology-Hellas (CERTH) are developing a **circular economy model for Milos Island** to be used as an innovative example, which highlights the combination of economic and environmental interests of the local population and promotes the three dimensions of sustainable development. The same model is planned to be applied to other islands as well. **SDGs 17.17, 9.4, 12**
- To fulfil its mission and objectives, including addressing crimes of common interest and combating all forms of trafficking drugs, food and pesticides, the **Financial Police Division (FPD) of the Ministry of Citizen Protection is working closely**, through common actions and strategic partnerships, with a number of **authorities, institutions and services, at international and national level**, including: prosecution and investigation authorities, the National Transparency Authority, the General Secretariat of Tax Policy & Public Property, the Independent Authority for Public Revenue and Tax Offices, social security institutions, the Labour Inspection Body, the National Organization for Medicines, the Ministry of Development and Investments, the Ministry of Rural Development and Food, the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, the Anti-Money Laundering Authority, the Greek Ombudsman, foreign embassies in Greece, and European and International Organizations, such as European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Cooperation (EUROPOL), International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL), European Union Intellectual Property Office (EUIPO), European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF). **SDGs 17.16, 17.17, 16.4, 16.5, 16.2, 8.7, 3.5**
- A new law was passed in 2021 on “**Model Tourism Destinations, Destination Management and Marketing Organizations, Thermal Springs and other provisions for the promotion of tourism development**”, which provides for the establishment of **Destination Management and Marketing Organizations (DMMOs)**, creating a governance framework, which facilitates the effective cooperation between various actors, including the public and private sector, at geographical or thematic level. The role of DMMOs will be to assess all available data and ensure in specific destinations (countries, cities, regions) a balance between tourism development and preservation of the natural, cultural and human environment. The law also provides for the establishment of Observatories for Sustainable Tourism Development, on a central or local/regional level. These Observatories will

make assessments of the situation in tourism and its impact and will suggest the necessary adjustments that will serve sustainable development. Furthermore, the Observatories will operate in accordance with the commitments and principles of the “Global Code of Ethics for Tourism” of the World Tourism Organization. **SDGs 17.17, 8.9, 9.1, 11.4, 12.b**

- Within the framework of the FAROS Program, which is funded by the “Rights, Equality and Citizenship Programme of the European Union” (REC 2014-2020), Greece puts forward actions aimed at **protecting the LGBTQI+ community, combating intolerance and hate crimes**, and ensuring inclusion and acceptance. Under the FAROS Program, a wide range of stakeholders, including the Centre for the Family and Child, ORLANDO LGBTQI+, COLOUR YOUTH, Families of Rainbow, and the Ministry of Justice, concluded a Memorandum of Understanding, which seeks to enhance cooperation and coordination among the relevant entities and institutions involved in the assistance to victims of criminal acts. **SDGs 17.17, 5, 16.3**
- The Government has established a specific **Working Group on the protection of victims of human trafficking**. This Working Group brings together a wide range of stakeholders including representatives of the police services, the Court of First Instance, judges, the Office of National Referee for the fight against Human Trafficking, and the National Centre of Social Solidarity that supports the function of the National Mechanism for the Protection of Victims of Human Trafficking. Its primary objective is to develop and implement a holistic approach to the protection of victims of human trafficking, ensuring the effective application of their fundamental rights. **SDGs 17.17, 16.2, 16.3**

Greece has established a **National EuroVelo Coordination Centre**, and its operation is based on a Memorandum of Cooperation signed by the Ministry of Infrastructure and Transport, the Ministry of Tourism, the Central Union of Municipalities (KEDE) and the “Cities for Cycling” Organization. The National EuroVelo Coordination Centre’s goal is to carry out research and coordinate the necessary projects for the development of the European network of cycle routes, as well as to inform about the cycle routes and encourage their use. **SDGs 17.17, 11, 13**

- Recognizing the decisive importance of international cooperation and **multilateral partnerships on the issue of migration**, Greece is taking part systematically in numerous initiatives, consultations, negotiations and exchange of knowledge and expertise, both within the European Union (new pact on Migration and Asylum) and with all the major international organizations, such as the UN’s International Organization for Migration (IOM), the Intergovernmental Consultations on Migration, Asylum and Refugees (IGC), the Council of Europe, the Organization for Economic Cooperation & Development (OECD), and recently the International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD), which Greece joined as a full member in 2021. **SDG 17.16**

Best practice examples

Vaccination programme for vulnerable social groups SDGs 3.3, 3.8, 17.17

The Government, with the aim of ensuring a fair and equal access to the COVID 19 vaccines, has adopted an innovative project to vaccinate vulnerable people, in a multi sector collaboration, between the central government administration (Ministries of the State, Health and Migration and Asylum), the Local Government and the Civil Society. The indicated legislative-administrative initiative is adapted to the needs of persons who are particularly disadvantaged in accessing healthcare, especially homeless, third-country nationals regardless of their legal status, mobile populations and people with drug addiction (substance use disorder). In this aspect, in order to avoid generating discrimination due to logistical and administrative barriers, a tailor - made project is designed from scratch, involving Local Authorities, namely social services, Migrant Integration Centres and Community Centres. The abovementioned authorities, were chosen for issuance of a temporary number for vaccination (PAMKA) and the Vaccination Certificate, in view of the fact that they are considered to be more favourable to people at risk. Furthermore, flexible legislation is also adopted, in order to provide a fair opportunity to access vaccination regardless of the residence permit, limiting all administrative barriers. At the same time, a strong collaboration with civil society is established. Civil Society Organizations are now officially participating in the National Vaccination Program, in each and every step of the process, not merely through their Mobile Units and polyclinics, who are participating in COVID-19 vaccination, but also in outreach activities, as well as administrative procedures in collaboration with the local authorities. Finally, it is worth noting that the protection of public health, human rights and fundamental freedoms is prioritized by all means. In this regard, the undocumented migrants are protected against arrest and detention, due to the lack of residence permit, during all the steps of the vaccination process.

SHARE programme for the promotion of work-life balance at the workplace SDGs 5.1, 5.4, 5.5, 17.17

The SHARE initiative "*Promoting work-life balance in companies and a better sharing of care between men and women*" began as a tripartite partnership between the Ministry of Employment and Social Affairs, civil society and the private sector that led to a very successful pilot program. Its core aim was to train and reward the enterprises for promoting work-life balance and sharing of care, as provided for in recent legislation. As regards the companies, the program comprises interventions to encourage gender-sensitive decisions for work-life balance and best practice exchanges, leading to an Equality Badge for the workplace. The programme's methodology included three consultation workshops where representatives from competent public services, all major social partners, academia and civil society participated. After that, special educational and informational materials were created and disseminated; seminars to 32 enterprises took place of which 21 submitted their files to the Ministry for assessment and, finally, 18 were awarded the Equality Badge. On the family level, the program focuses to highlight the father's role as essential in child rearing, aspiring to achieve equal share in care responsibilities between the parents regarding dependents of all ages and states of health.

Forthcoming initiatives

- The Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs has formulated a proposal to support the implementation of the UNESCO “ESD for 2030” framework in Greece that focuses on circular economy, supported by the Hellenic Ministry of Environment and Energy. The proposed title of the project is “**I defend my right to the environment, health, employment, I think and act BEFORE I recycle: Education for the circular economy**”. It will aim to inform both the educational community (teachers, students) as well as the local community (through municipalities) on the right to a healthy environment, and on the linkages between recycling and circular economy in order to steer behavioural and cultural changes with regard to municipal waste production based on the waste hierarchy (e.g. reuse before recycling). The project will run up to 2026 under ministerial coordination and its partners will include the Hellenic Recycling Agency (EOAN), Local Authorities, Universities, NGOs, Youth Organisations, and Centres of Environmental Education. **SDGs 17.17, 4.7, 12.8**
- Contribution of Greece to the implementation of actions, within the framework of the initiative **EuroMed Justice**, that promote the establishment of a permanent EuroMed network of contact points of participating EU Member States and South Partner Countries (SPCs), thus enhancing and increasing the cross-border and cross-regional judicial cooperation. **SDGs 17.16, 17, 17, 16.3, 16.6**
- Completion in 2022, by the Ministry of Finance, of two main actions associated with the implementation of a **green budgeting, performance budgeting and spending review reform** initiated by the Greek Government with a view to increasing transparency, coherence, resilience, inclusiveness and efficiency in public financial management. The first action concerns the configuration of a basic methodology for green budget tagging and the classification of environmental friendly- aggravating - neutral funded policies, while the second relates to the pilot implementation of the green budgeting approach to selected programs of performance budgeting. **SDGs 17.14, 16.6**

5 MEANS OF IMPLEMENTATION

5.1 Key changes

- The Presidency of the Government (PoG) drafted and published in 2020 a new comprehensive and redesigned Manual and Template on **Regulatory Impact Assessment (RIA)**, which incorporates, for the first time, the SDGs, introducing them, in a coherent and balanced manner, into the regulatory policy and governance. In addition, the PoG is in the process of publishing in 2022 a new Manual and Template on Ex-post Evaluation of Legislation, which addresses, inter alia, the extent to which the existing legislation has contributed to the achievement of the SDGs.
- In 2021, the Government integrated, for the first time, sustainability and environmental footprint indicators in the process of drafting and implementing the State Budget, within the framework of a **green budgeting, performance budgeting and spending review reform**, which aims to increase and enhance transparency, coherence, resilience, inclusiveness and efficiency in public financial management.
- The Government attributes particular importance to strengthening and reinvigorating the overall **financing framework for sustainable development**, through ensuring the mobilization of adequate financial resources and the effective implementation of a wide spectrum of long-term national and EU funding programmes and instruments that promote, in an integrated and balanced manner, all dimensions of sustainable development.
- Over the last two years, Greece has established mechanisms, tools and processes that promote, in a balanced and coherent manner, the use of **robust, high quality and quantified evidence and data** in the whole policy cycle, including the planning, design, formulation, implementation and evaluation of public policies inextricably linked to the SDGs.
- **At international level**, Greece continues to play, over the last years, an instrumental role in promoting actions and activities, based on the core principles of international law, which support the three dimensions of sustainable development and ensure the effective implementation of the 2030 Agenda, through the establishment of multilateral and bilateral partnership schemes, the adoption of comprehensive legal and policy instruments and the launch of a series of cooperative initiatives, in the context of international and regional organizations and fora, in the field of trade and investments, development cooperation, environmental protection and sustainable use of natural resources, cultural and natural heritage, peace, security, human rights, the rule of law and good governance.

5.2 Regulatory Governance: legislation and better regulation means

The law on the “Executive State” adopted by the Greek Government in August 2019 attributes particular importance to the promotion of measures and actions that improve the quality of legislation and foster the adoption of an integrated approach to the entire law-making process. It is within this context that the Presidency of the Government drafted and published in 2020, as provided for by the aforementioned law, a new comprehensive and redesigned Manual and Template on **Regulatory Impact Assessment** (RIA), introducing, for the first time in a systematic manner, the SDGs into the regulatory policy and governance. The RIA accompanying the legislative proposals constitutes an integral part of the whole law-making procedure, from the stage of public consultation on a draft law to its formal introduction into the Hellenic Parliament for consideration and adoption.

In particular, the redesigned RIA template consists, inter alia, of the following modules: (i) the explanatory report of the proposed regulation provided for in the Greek Constitution, which must specifically document the necessity of the proposed legislation, (ii) reports issued by the Ministry of Finance, identifying the financial impact of the proposed legislation on the State Budget, (iii) the report on the general consequences for certain policy areas, which analyses the effects of the regulation on benefits, costs and risks, (iv) the report on public consultation, which presents the process and the results of the consultation in the design of the regulation, (v) the legality report, (vi) a table of the amended and repealed provisions, and (vii) the implementation report.

The accompanying RIA ensures that the economic, social, environmental and institutional dimensions of the legislative proposals, including those related to the SDGs, have all been taken into account in the law-making process. RIA plays a pivotal role in the promotion, integration and evaluation of the SDGs in the legislative process, mainly through the “explanatory report”, which describes, in a coherent and thorough manner, the main scope and objectives of the proposed legislative initiatives. More specifically, RIA incorporates, for the first time, a distinctive index addressing the consistency and compatibility of the proposed regulatory measures with the three dimensions of sustainable development and the SDGs. The incorporation of the aforementioned index in RIAs contributes significantly to **mainstreaming all 17 SDGs into the Greek legislation** and further strengthening the transparency and accountability of the legislative process.

It is also worth pointing out that the Presidency of the Government is in the process of publishing a new comprehensive Manual and Template on **Ex-post Evaluation of Legislation**, which addresses, inter alia, the extent to which the existing legislation has contributed to the achievement of the SDGs. At the same time, the mainstreaming of the three dimensions of sustainable development, as reflected in the SDGs, in the regulatory governance and in particular in the better regulation tools is also promoted in the recurring “Better Regulation in Practice” training seminars in the National School of Public Administration designed and held since 2017 by the Better Regulation Office of the General Secretariat of Legal and Parliamentary Affairs of the Presidency of the Government. These seminars are attended by senior executive staff of the Ministries’ Better Regulation Units and the Ministers’ counsellors.

5.3 State budget, key financial resources and instruments

Green budgeting, performance budgeting and spending review reforms

The Greek Government and in particular the General Accounting Office (GAO) of the Ministry of Finance systematically proceeds with gradually developing performance budgeting, green budgeting and spending reviews, all considered significant public financial management tools. In this effort, GAO has a systematic cooperation with the European Commission and the OECD that includes actions such as technical assistance, seminars and conferences.

In 2021, GAO submitted to the Greek Parliament a special performance budgeting edition (presentational approach). The edition presented the 2022 budget classified in policy sectors/programs, while also providing information in terms of the current administrative and economic classification. Each program was accompanied by performance information. In this context, environmental protection was also highlighted and actively supported by clearly defining relevant objectives, actions, goals and performance indicators, as part of the budget documentation. Spending reviews also support the aforementioned reforms by actively helping enhance efficiency of certain actions and especially actions related to environmental protection.

Those reforms contribute to effectively implementing and monitoring a number of horizontal and cross-cutting policies of the State and the rest of the General Government entities, while promoting efficiency, public accountability, transparency and policy coherence for sustainable development.

Public Investments Programme

The Public Investments Programme operates as the key development policy tool to the growth and productivity of the Greek economy, the restoration of fiscal balance, the improvement of the business environment, the increase in employment and the promotion of actions that will strengthen and support social cohesion. The Public Investments Programme finances the country's development policy, subsidizes the expansion of private and public capital of the economy and supports the modernization of the country on a long-term basis with multiplier effects on both production and employment. The main goal of the Public Investments Programme 2022 is the distribution of predetermined resources with the aim of achieving the maximum possible growth footprint for the Greek economy and society. The Public Investments Programme 2022 is set to be €11.6 billion in total, including an amount of €3.2 billion for the implementation of projects that will be funded by the Recovery and Resilience Fund (RRF), which is covered by the national part of the Public Investment Budget. Based on the MTFS (Medium Term Fiscal Strategy) 2022-2025, €21 billion are expected to be budgeted for the Public Investments Programme 2023-2025.

The New Investment Law

The New Investment Incentives Law (4887/2022) constitutes a statutory framework for the establishment of Private Investments Aid Schemes for the regional and economic development of the country. The scope of the new investment law is to promote key incentives in order to achieve economies of scale, innovative investments, new entrepreneurship, boost employment with skilled staff, development of less developed areas of the country, further strengthening of tourism and improving competitiveness in high value-added sectors. The establishment of state aid canvas for investment projects includes digital and technological business transformation, green transition - environmental business upgrade, innovative business and new technologies of "Industry 4.0", robotics and artificial intelligence, fair development transition regime, research and applied innovation, agri-food-primary production and processing of agricultural products-fisheries and aquaculture, manufacturing-supply chain, business extroversion, support for tourism investments, alternative forms of tourism, large investments, European value chains and 360° entrepreneurship.

The New Strategic Investment Law

Strategic Investments are designed and implemented by either the Government or the private investors or through public-private partnership. Strategic Investments are of utmost importance for the national, regional or local economy because they can stimulate employment, boost economic growth and promote environmental sustainability under the principles of sustainable development, social equality and a cyclical economy. Strategic Investments offer licensing incentives, tax benefits, expenditure subsidies and special location regimes. In total, 45 environmental schemes have been carried out under the previous Investment Laws 3894/2010, 3986/2011 and 4608/2019 with a high-added value of 619 new permanent jobs.

The new Strategic Investment Framework (law 4864/2021) is aligned with SDGs 8, 9, 10, 13, 14 and 17, and is aiming at improving the business environment, at simplifying the legal framework and implementation procedures for strategic investors and at accelerating the resilience, competitiveness, innovation and extroversion of the Greek economy. Strategic investments are divided into categories according to their budget, the new permanent jobs being created, the incentives granted and the type of economic activity. In particular, the investments are divided into Strategic Investments 1, for over €40 million, Strategic Investments 2, for over €20 million, Emblematic Investments, Strategic Investments for Rapid Licensing for over €10 million and Automatically Incorporated Strategic Investments for over €10 million.

Public Private Partnerships

Public Private Partnerships (PPPs) are long-term contracts between private and public sector entities aiming at implementing projects, delivering services and developing the economy. The law 3389/2005 on Public Private Partnerships lays the foundations for the wide provision of services and the undertaking of public benefit construction work, in collaboration with and co-funded by the private sector. This law is designed to facilitate public-private partnerships through the strengthening and acceleration of PPP ripeness processes and the creation of a market-friendly regulatory environment.

PPP projects in Greece have significant comparative advantages compared to other project models as the project is repaid over time, significant leverage of private capital is made, while a predetermined time and cost of implementation of a project is ensured. In the European PPP market, Greece ranks 7th place. With the approval by the PPP Interministerial Committee, currently 21 projects in total amount to €3.21 billion, heading forward in the main sectors of transport, education, health, and the environment.

The Hellenic Development Bank

Hellenic Development Bank (HDB) was established in 2019 as a National Promotional Institution (NPI), to provide an equal playing field for SMEs through the efficient allocation of funds, bridging existing gaps in the business environment, attracting alternative funding sources, improving the overall business environment and, assisting the economy in growing and the businesses in becoming digital, innovative and extrovert. The main vision of HDB is to foster a multilateral, fair, inclusive and green-sustainable development.

HDB, having a new organizational structure, new corporate governance and capitalizing on existing collaborations, is in its full essence a development-oriented bank. It is the reliable and effective partner of all domestic and international financial institutions that want to approach the Greek company, to help it grow into a new international competitive environment. HDB's total market impact to covering the Financial Gap of SMEs is estimated till now up to 8 bn. euro of financing and 15,600 of new jobs created.

In 2021, HDB succeeded in achieving all the goals that have been set, by launching five (5) Financial Instruments for SMEs with a Loan budget of more than €942 million, fulfilling its original planning. In addition, the Top-Up of €50 million in Equifund funds was materialized with investments made through the respective fund managers. For 2022, HDB continues to expand its financial support, through existing Covid and new non-Covid measures. Most of the new schemes of the HDB incorporate additional benefits on successful completion of selected ESG criteria. Some of the fundamental new schemes that are going to be launched during 2022 are presented below.

A Capped Guarantee Fund for Innovation with a focus on innovative SMEs

The projects should incorporate a strong innovation element regarding the production process, a service or a business model operation. The fund will guarantee loans up to €400 thousand by 80% with a cap rate of 40%. The additional benefit on successful completion of the innovation project and the completion of selected ESG criteria will be a 15% + 5% grant, which will repay part of the loan. The estimated budget of the scheme is a total of €65 million, leveraging loans of €120 million.

A Capped Guarantee Fund for "Digital Transformation"

The fund will focus on SMEs that plan to invest in their digital transformation process. The fund will guarantee loans up to €700 thousand for a term of up to 10 years. It will be a capped portfolio with a guarantee rate of 80% with a 30% cap rate. The additional benefit on successful completion of selected ESG criteria will be a 10% + 5% grant, which will repay part of the loan. The estimated guarantee budget is €100 million leveraging loans up to €417 million.

A Green Guarantee Fund for Sustainable Development

The fund will focus on investments by SMEs on green finance activities (for example energy efficiency, renewable energy, energy production, etc.). It will be a capped guarantee portfolio with a guarantee rate of 80% with a 30% cap rate. The additional benefit of complying to ESG criteria, will be a 50% return of the guarantee commission. The fund will guarantee loans amounting up to €20 million for a term of up to 10-12 years (tentative). The estimated budget is €300 million leveraging loans up to €1,250 million.

Partnership Agreement 2014-2020 and 2021-2027

Under the new National Strategic Reference Framework (NSRF) 2021-2027, Greece stands to receive a total of €26.2 billion from the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), of which 20.9 billion is EU support and €5.3 billion is the national contribution. Therefore, it is roughly €26.2 billion of EU Funds to support growth and jobs in Greece over the 2021-2027 programming period. It includes, inter alia, distinctive programs for digital transformation, civil protection, fair transition (concerning lignite areas), environment and climate change, human resources and social cohesion, as well as a new competitiveness program with business support actions.

In the framework of the partnership Agreement (ESPA) 2014-2020, Greece has invested and is in the process of completing investments up to €25.5 billion EU contribution and national funding. The investments aim at economic growth and employment, reducing inequalities and promoting environmental resilience and climate adaptation. They are in alignment with the SDGs and contribute to their implementation. Those resources were increased by the Next Generation resources allocated through the REACT EU – amounting to €1.7 billion. Although these resources are mainly aiming at addressing the severe economic and social effects of the pandemic, at least 25% of the REACT EU resources will be allocated to actions addressing climate change.

About €4.5 billion from the ESF but also the ERDF contribute to the first five Goals, namely no poverty, zero hunger, good health and wellbeing, quality education and gender mainstreaming, but also to Goal 8, decent work and economic growth and Goal 9, reducing inequalities within the country.

Actions supporting these 5 SDGs and their targets include enhancing skills of workers and unemployed to secure better jobs with emphasis on young people and long term unemployed; creating resilient education systems including infrastructure ensuring access to all; enhancing resilient health systems, including actions to ensure access to health services for vulnerable groups and low income families, establish community centers to provide services to vulnerable and low income groups, establish structures in order to ensure zero hunger and homelessness to low income families, targeted actions for gender mainstreaming including the eradication of violence against women.

Investments promoting research and innovation, industrial transformation as well as sustainable transport infrastructure accessible to all, contribute to Goal 9. Investments in protection of biodiversity, solid and water waste management systems, improvement in the water systems and housing and public buildings renovation aiming at energy conservation and energy transition, contribute to Goals 6, 7, 13 and 15. The Integrated Territorial Investments financed through the NSRF contribute to Goal 11, actively promoting sustainable and better cities and communities. A distinct programme is dedicated to the restructuring of the public sector actively contributing to Goal 16.

Under the new National Strategic Reference Framework (NSRF) 2021-2027, Greece stands to invest a total of €26.2 billion, of which 20.9 billion is EU support and €5.3 billion is the national contribution, in order to support growth and jobs in Greece over the 2021-2027 programming period. About €3.3 billion of those resources is dedicated to promoting research, innovation and industrial transition (Goal 9) leading to the creation of a resilient economy and sustainable and quality employment.

About €5.3 billion from the ESF+ resource (but also the ERDF) will continue to contribute to the first five Goals, namely no poverty, zero hunger, good health and wellbeing, quality education and gender mainstreaming, but also to Goal 9, reducing inequalities within the country. Actions supporting the 5 SDGs and their targets include enhancing skills of workers and unemployed to secure better jobs with emphasis on young people and long term unemployed; creating resilient education systems including infrastructure ensuring access to all; enhancing resilient health systems, including actions to ensure access to health services for vulnerable groups and low income families, establish community centres to provide services to vulnerable and low income groups, establish structures in order to ensure zero hunger and homelessness to low income families, provide material assistance to the destitute, targeted actions for gender mainstreaming. About €1.5 billion are dedicated to social inclusion, limiting inequalities and ensuring access to quality services to all.

A distinct programme amounting to €1.7 billion is dedicated to energy transition and providing clean and affordable energy for all (Goal 7) while investments promoting energy conservation in private housing and public buildings are also foreseen in other programs as well. The transition to a green sustainable and circular economy and the protection of biodiversity (Goal 15) are priorities and about €3.5 billion are dedicated to this effect. About €4.5 billion will be dedicated to actions addressing climate change and protection from the adverse effects of climate change on places and communities.

More than €1 billion is dedicated to building better cities and communities through local action and participation thus, actively contributing to Goal 11.

Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF)

The Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF) was set up to tackle the COVID-19 crisis and support the transition to a green and digital economy. Greece's recovery and resilience plan responds to the urgent need of fostering a strong recovery and making Greece ready for the future. The reforms and investments in the plan will help Greece become more sustainable, resilient and better prepared for the challenges and opportunities of the green and digital transitions. To this end, the plan consists of 106 investment measures and 68 reforms. The measures will be supported by €17.77 billion in grants and €12.73 billion in loans around 16% of national GDP. 37.5% of the plan will support climate objectives and 23.3% of the plan will foster the digital transition.

The transformative impact of Greece's plan is the result of a strong combination of reforms and investments, which address the specific challenges of Greece. The reforms address bottlenecks to lasting and sustainable growth, while investments accelerate the transition towards a low-carbon, digital and more inclusive economy. In particular, the plan intends to facilitate the decarbonisation of the Greek economy, modernise and digitalise public administration, including by improving the tax administration and justice systems, promote the innovation capacity, digital uptake and resilience of key economic sectors, and upgrade health care, education, and active labour market policies. 70% of RRF resources should be committed in 2021 and 2022 and 30% of resources in 2023.

5.4 Evidence-based and quantitatively designed public policies

Addressing effectively the critical and multi-dimensional global challenges associated with the implementation of the SDGs, including sustainable recovery from the adverse social and economic impacts of the pandemic crisis, climate change, natural disasters, depletion of natural resources, digital transition, social inequalities, demographic pressure and sustainable, resilient and inclusive growth requires the adoption of integrated and forward-looking public policies supported by strong evidence and reliable data. It necessitates, more than ever, the establishment of mechanisms, tools and processes that incorporate, in a balanced and coherent manner, the use of robust, high quality and quantified evidence in the whole policy cycle, including the planning, design, formulation, implementation and evaluation of public policies.

In the last years, Greece has made important steps to incorporate evidence in policymaking. A particular case in point is the "Executive State" law adopted by the Government in August 2019, which includes several provisions outlining the importance of introducing the use of quantified evidence and data in the process of designing, formulating and evaluating public policies. In particular, the compilation of the Annual Action Plans by the Ministries postulates the adoption of clearly defined policy goals measured and evaluated based on key performance indicators. The connection between the defined policy goals and their implementing actions and measures is examined and established with the support of innovative scientific tools like the Logical Framework Analysis (Logframe), a specific tool that serves as an application framework for the Theory of Change for policy interventions. In addition, it is mandatory for every draft bill, before its submission to the Hellenic Parliament, to be accompanied by a Regulatory Impact Assessment, which – inter alia – documents the necessity of the legal intervention with a cost-benefit analysis based on quantified and quality scientific criteria and data.

Meanwhile, the pandemic has accelerated the use of scientific data in the decision-making process. Since the beginning of the pandemic, the measures for controlling the spread of the disease were adopted after thorough consultation with an extended scientific committee comprising doctors and epidemiologists, which has been meeting regularly in order to examine the situation of the pandemic and the available scientific evidence coming from the medicine sector. The recent development of a large number of digital services by the Greek state, which has enabled, among others, the collection of large amounts of data, acted as a catalyst for the objective estimation of the situation. The collection and aggregation of data from heterogeneous sources, its processing, as well as its use for inference extraction are achieved by the operation of a special Observatory, which consists of experienced economists and data scientists, and provides to the political decision makers a complete and always updated view of the situation.

All these mechanisms serve as experience and best-practice accumulation hubs for potential future crisis management in Greece. A highlight of these initiatives is the use of "Eva", a state-of-the-art AI tool to perform targeted COVID-19 testing of incoming visitors during the tourism season of 2020, which supported the safe opening of the country during the initial phases of the pandemic, when no vaccines were available.

The experience of using evidence coming from key performance indicators to control the consequences of the pandemic was utilized in the national vaccination programme "Operation Freedom". The digital implementation of the process, except for facilitating the smooth operation of the programme, has ad-

ditionally enabled the monitoring of the vaccination progress with the use of detailed quantified data, updated in real time and referring to multiple dimensions, including geographical location, age group or disease vulnerability level. This detailed information has given important feedback to decision-making, while implementing the vaccination procedure and having to adjust it in a changing environment determined by the development of the pandemic and the need to support the economy.

In view of the increasing demand for boosting the cooperation with the scientific community in policy design, a close cooperation with the Joint Research Centre (JRC) - the European Commission's science and knowledge service - has been initiated. In September 2021, the workshop "Science for policy making in Greece" took place, in which renowned policy makers and scientists across the EU participated. Greece was represented at a high political level in order to signal the importance of the subject and the undertaken efforts. The workshop concluded that science for policy making is gaining political momentum in Greece, given the successful use of scientific evidence and public management during COVID-19 and other government initiatives, and that there seems to be a strong political will to take further steps.

There is a strong political will supported by a coherent plan to strengthen the incorporation of scientific results and analysis into public policy making in the coming years. The enhancement of evaluation procedures for public policies requires the extended use of appropriate, reliable and high-quality scientific domain-specific evidence throughout the whole policy cycle. Given the benefits that can be realized by combining the competencies of scientists across multiple countries and aiming to leverage upon knowledge mobilization for the investigation of potential solutions to complex public policy issues, Greece is leading the multi-country project "Building capacity for evidence-informed policy making in governance and public administration in a post-pandemic Europe", funded by the European Commission and supported by eight EU countries, which will enhance institutional mechanisms for mainstreaming scientific evidence in public policy design and evaluation.

5.5 Fostering the SDGs implementation at global and regional levels

Building a more effective and coherent multilateral governance and promoting a rules-based international order, which supports all dimensions of sustainable development and enables development opportunities for all, constitute key priorities of Greek foreign policy. It is within this context that Greece has decided to present its candidacy as a non-permanent member of the United Nations Security Council for the period 2025-2026.

Greece is strongly committed to the full implementation of all international agreements and policy frameworks which aim to promote and foster, in a coherent and balanced manner, sustainable development, including: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the Paris Agreement, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda (2015), the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (2015-2030) and the New Urban Agenda agreed in 2016 in the context of the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III).

The overall foreign and security policy of Greece contributes significantly to the achievement of the SDGs in several ways, both directly and indirectly: in the context of establishing multilateral and bilateral cooperation schemes, adopting comprehensive legal and policy instruments and undertaking cooperative initiatives at international and regional levels, including through trade and investments, through development cooperation, humanitarian assistance and economic cooperation, by ensuring the protection of the environment and the sustainable use of natural resources and by promoting peace, security, respect for democratic principles, human rights, fundamental freedoms, gender equality, the rule of law and good governance.

Multilateral Cooperation Schemes

Aware of the challenging developments in the Eastern Mediterranean and the broader Middle East, Greece has long been striving for the establishment of a regional security architecture, foremost by means of dialogue and cooperation. To this end, Greece is always keen to encourage multilateral cooperation and promote joint actions and initiatives in the region with countries that fully respect international law.

Since 2013, Greece and Cyprus have created a vibrant network of trilateral cooperation and partnership mechanisms in the region, having, thus far, acquired increasing momentum. In this network of cooperation mechanisms, several countries in the region actively participate, including Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, UAE, Palestine, whereas in the last years these partnership mechanisms have expanded to other countries, including the USA and Iraq. Within the framework of the aforementioned cooperative schemes, many sectoral synergies have been established in various thematic fields inextricably linked to the SDGs, such as digital technology, health services technology, innovation, energy, management of water resources, marine pollution, agriculture, telecommunications, promotion of investments, tourism etc.

1. Trilateral cooperation Greece - Cyprus - Egypt

Trilateral Summits Greece – Cyprus – Egypt (Elounda Crete, 10.10.2018), (Cairo, 8.10.2019), (Nicosia, 21.10.2020), (Athens, 19.10.2021).

The following legal texts were signed on the occasion of the aforementioned Summits:

- Memorandum on Cooperation in the fields of Environmental Education and Education for Sustainable Development Information and Communication Technology in Education, and Cooperation between Higher Education and other Educational, Scientific and Research Institutions (SDG 4.7).
- Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation in the fields of Small and Medium Sized Enterprises and Entrepreneurship (SDG 9.3).
- Memorandum on Customs Technical Cooperation (SDG 17.10).
- Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation between Enterprise Greece, Invest Cyprus and the General Authority of Egypt for Investment and Free Zones (SDGs 17.13, 8.3).
- A Tripartite Investment Promotion Executive Program was signed as a follow-up to the above-mentioned MoU (SDGs 17.13, 8.3).
- An Agreement for the establishment of a trilateral electricity interconnector between the grids of Egypt, Cyprus and Greece (SDG 7).

2. Partnership schemes Greece - Cyprus - Egypt and cooperation of the three countries with the USA

(i) Trilateral Summits Greece-Cyprus-Israel (Beer Sheva/Israel, 20.12.2018), (Athens, 2.1.2020), (Jerusalem, 7.12.2021).

The following legal texts were signed on the occasion of the aforementioned Summits:

- Memorandum of Understanding on Cybersecurity Cooperation (SDGs 4, 8, 9, 16).
- Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation in the field of Smart Cities & Smart Homes (SDG 11.3).
- An Intergovernmental Energy Agreement for the construction of the EastMed natural gas pipeline by the Ministers of Energy of Greece, Cyprus and Israel was signed (SDG 7).

(ii) Summits Greece-Cyprus-Israel with the participation of the USA (Jerusalem, 20.3.2019 and 7.12.2021).

In the context of these Summits, an extensive cooperation and fruitful exchange of views with regard to energy issues took place. In addition, relevant working groups have been set up, with a particular focus on renewable energy sources and development of sustainable energy infrastructure (SDGs 7, 9.4).

3. Trilateral cooperation Greece - Cyprus - Jordan

Trilateral Summits (Amman 14.4.2019, Athens 28.7.2021).

The following legal texts were signed on the occasion of the aforementioned Summits:

- Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation in the field of Education for 2019-2022 (SDGs 4.7, 17.6).
- Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation between Jordan Investment Commission (JIC), Enterprise Greece S.A. and "Invest Cyprus" (SDGs 17.13, 8.3).

Legal and Policy Instruments

On 9 June 2020, **Greece signed a historic Agreement with Italy on the delimitation of their respective maritime zones**. This Agreement demonstrates the common will of the two countries to take resolute action when dealing with sensitive issues, through the path of peaceful negotiations in good faith and in a spirit of good neighbourliness and in accordance with international law and in particular with the relevant provisions of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (1982), thus contributing to international peace and security (law 4716/2020). **SDGs 14, 16.3**

On 29 May 2019, the **Agreement on the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Prespa Park Area** entered into force, which was signed at Pyli, Greece, in 2010 on the initiative of the Greek Government, between the three States sharing the Prespa Lakes Area (Greece, North Macedonia and Albania) and the European Union. The Agreement, which is unique in its kind in our region provides the necessary institutional framework and directions for cooperation and joint activities between its Parties to ensure an integrated protection of the ecosystem and the sustainable development of the ecologically and hydrologically rich and sensitive Prespa Park Area, including the development of integrated river basin management plans and approaches, in line with international and European Union standards (law 4453/2017). **SDGs 6.5, 6.6, 15.1, 15.5, 15.9, 17.16**

The Government of the Hellenic Republic, the Government of the Republic of Cyprus and the Government of the State of Israel, have signed an **Implementation Agreement on the sub-regional marine oil pollution contingency plan** pursuant to the protocol concerning cooperation in preventing pollution from ships and, in cases of emergency, combating pollution of the Mediterranean Sea to the Barcelona Convention. The three countries signed and ratified the Implementation Agreement (law 4787/2022). **SDG 14**

On 26 June 2021, Greece signed the **Framework Agreement on the establishment of the International Solar Alliance (ISA)**, an alliance of 124 countries initiated by India. The primary objective of the alliance is to work, through coordinated actions and activities and in close cooperation with relevant organizations, public and private stakeholders, towards ensuring efficient consumption of solar energy and reducing dependence on fossil fuels. Greece has signed and ratified the ISA Framework Agreement (law 4911/2022). **SDGs 7.2, 17.16**

Greece is building strong “beyond borders” partnerships with partner countries that face similar challenges and share common goals, through bilateral and trilateral technical cooperation schemes, especially in its geographic neighbourhood, i.e. South-East Europe and South-East Mediterranean. In particular, **at the Mediterranean level**, Greece is a very active Contracting Party to the **Barcelona Convention** for the protection of the environment of the Mediterranean coastal zone and Sea: the Coordination Unit/Secretariat of the Convention has been hosted in Athens since 1981 with the financial support of the Hellenic State. Greece has been chairing the “Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development” (MCSD) for 2017-2019, promoting the elaboration and regular update of a “Mediterranean Sustainability Dashboard” of indicators and aspiring to the implementation of the “Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development” (MSSD, 2016-2025) which constitutes a well elaborated “translation” of the global 2030 Agenda to the regional Mediterranean context and priorities and a useful tool to guide national efforts for SDGs’ implementation. **SDGs 14, 12, 13, 15, 17.14, 17.16, 17.17**

Greece participates actively in the implementation process of the **South East Europe (SEE) 2030 Strategy**, along with 12 SEE economies (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Kosovo, Moldova, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Romania, Serbia, Slovenia, and Turkey). The SEE 2030 Strategy, which was adopted in June 2021 within the framework of the South-East Europe Cooperation Process (SEECP), aims to promote and advance, through regional cooperation initiatives and actions, the integrated implementation of the UN Sustainable Development Goals within the SEE region, across key dimensions of sustainable development and strategic areas of the 2030 Agenda, including: (i) Prosperity; (ii) People; and (iii) Peace and Partnerships. The priority thematic areas of intervention of the Strategy were selected on the basis of National Voluntary Reviews of SEECP participants. On this basis, thirteen Sustainable Development Goals were selected (**SDGs 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 13, 16, 17**). Leaders of SEECP gave mandate to the Regional Cooperation Council, a regionally owned organization to lead the preparation of the Strategy. Comprehensive implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development requires partnerships between economies and across sub-regions. Political commitment to regional cooperation will therefore be a cornerstone for the successful and efficient implementation of the Strategy (**SDG 17.16**). It is worth noting that Greece, which was very active during the preparation of the Strategy, assumed, on July 1st 2021, for a period of 12 months, the Chairmanship in Office of SEECP. Additionally, Greece participates in the Monitoring Committee responsible for the implementation of the SEE 2030 Strategy.

Building Peace, Security and Stability

Greece has always actively supported and participated in Peacekeeping operations and other related activities throughout the world, from the Balkans to Asia and Africa. Greece confirms its commitment to the UN mission on maintaining peace around the globe by submitting, in a timely manner, its annual contributions to the budget of peace-keeping missions, as well as providing voluntary contributions. This commitment to Peacekeeping is expressed through political and financial support and the presence of Greek military officers and troops, together with civilian policemen, in various missions. Moreover, moving in this direction, Greece established in 2000 a Multinational Peace Support Operations Training Centre (MPSOTC) recognized by NATO, certified by UN and in 2008 a NATO Maritime Interdiction Operational Training Centre (NMIOTC) certified by NATO, in order to contribute to the enhancement of a more safe and secure land and maritime environment accordingly.

Greece is determined to make every effort to enhance its support to UN Peacekeeping and to help countries cope with the dire consequences of conflict. Since October 2006, the Greek Armed Forces have been participating in the Maritime Task Force of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL - MTF). The international Maritime Task Force is charged with maritime interdiction operations involving the surveillance, identification, and detainment of suspect vessels that are referred to Lebanese authorities.

At the same time, the country participates in three missions operating under the EU: (i) EUFOR ALTHEA (since 2000), whose objective is to conduct EU-led Peace Support Operations in the region of Bosnia and Herzegovina, up until the stabilization process is achieved; (ii) EUNAVFOR MED IRINI (since 2017), which aims to implement the arms embargo in Libya, develop the capabilities of the Libyan Coast Guard and Navy and contribute to the fight against human trafficking networks; and (iii) EUNAVFOR ATALANTA (since 2008), with the aim of protecting commercial ships off the Somali coast from piracy and all kinds of actions posing a serious threat to maritime security. EUNAVFOR ATALANTA also protects World Food Programme vessels and supports other EU missions, institutions and international organizations (UNFAO, UNODC) working towards enhancing maritime security and capacity in the region. Finally, the Greek Armed Forces have been participating since 1999 in NATO's KFOR mission in the Kosovo region, in cooperation with other international organizations, to help create a safe and secure environment and establish peace and stability at a local level.

In line with the UN Security Council Resolutions on Women, Peace and Security (WPS), Greece finalized, under the coordination of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, its first **National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security** (NAPWPS) which is to be adopted shortly. The NAPWPS puts forward a wide spectrum of actions and measures under the following pillars and priority areas: (i) prevention of armed conflict and of any form of gender-based, sexual and domestic violence, sexual exploitation and abuse, (ii) gender-equal representation, participation and leadership in decision-making, (iii) protection of women and girls from gender-based, sexual and domestic violence, including sexual exploitation and abuse, and from other violations of international humanitarian law and international human rights law, (iv) relief and recovery of the survivors of gender-based, sexual and domestic violence, and (v) promotion of the United Nations Agenda on Women, Peace and Security (WPS) at bilateral, regional, multilateral level. In order to enhance policy coherence, the NAPWPS is fully aligned with the National Action Plan on Gender Equality, which has been renewed for the period 2021-2025.

As in all developed countries, the Greek economy generates **immigrant remittances** which help to raise the living standards in a number of very poor countries listed at the weakest clusters of World Bank (<1,045\$/year, 2022), UN Human Development Index (<0.55, 2022) and OECD ("Least developed" among DAC ODA recipients, 2021) classifications. Some of the countries where remittances from Greece end up, like Afghanistan, Burkina Faso, Congo, Gambia, Guinea, Madagascar, Mali, Sierra Leone, Togo, and Uganda fall in all of the above three categories, facing, according to the UN, severe problems. Among remittance-recipients from Greece, Benin, Ethiopia, Senegal, Syria, and Tanzania are listed low in two of the above classifications categories and Bangladesh, Nepal and Nigeria in one. Moreover, Pakistan, slightly above the limit of 0.55 in the UN HDI list, is the 3rd biggest destination of remittances from Greece with an impressive increase between 2017 and 2021. **Foreign Direct Investments** are also made from Greece to countries falling in the above classifications, in 2021 to Ethiopia, Guinea and Liberia.

Greek Cooperative Initiatives

Deeply concerned about the destructive impact of climate change on the cultural and natural heritage, Greece, since 2019, is **leading a global initiative** to accelerate and streamline global action towards the protection of the world's heritage. Following the International Conference on "Climate Change Impacts on Cultural Heritage – Facing the Challenge", that was held in Athens, 21-22.06.2019, Greece launched at the UN Climate Action Summit (September 2019), the initiative "**Addressing climate change impacts on cultural and natural heritage**". The UN Secretary General has included the Greek proposal in the "Report on the 2019 Climate Action Summit and the Way Forward in 2020" among the most ambitious initiatives. So far, more than 100 UN member states have expressed their support to this initiative as well as the UNSG, UNESCO, World Meteorological Organization (WMO), the Council of Europe and many NGOs and organizations. In December 2019, the Greek Initiative was presented at a side event in the framework of UNFCCC COP25, in Madrid, by the Greek Minister of Environment and Energy along with the Greek Minister of Culture, the WMO Secretary-General and UNESCO.

A Flexible Mechanism (FM) has been set up with the participation of Greece, UNESCO, UNFCCC and the WMO. Moreover, for the implementation of the Initiative and in order to support the work of the Flexible Mechanism, a Coordination Unit (CU) has been established, by decision of the Greek Prime Minister, in early 2021. The CU aims, inter alia, at raising awareness, facilitating and enhancing the efforts of the supporting States in a coordinated manner and bridging scientific knowledge and climate adaptation tools. The CU, located in the Academy of Athens, is made up of distinguished scientists with expertise in the fields of climate change and cultural heritage. **SDGs 11.4, 13.2, 13.3**

In addition, it is worth noting that in the margins of the UNFCCC COP26 and with the aim to further accelerate global action, Greece organized on 2 November 2021, a High Level Meeting with Ministers of Culture and Environment on the issue of climate change impacts on cultural and natural heritage.

With a view to deepen their close cooperation and further contribute to the consolidation of peace, stability and security in the Eastern Mediterranean and the Middle East and Gulf region, seven countries, including Cyprus, Egypt, Greece, Bahrain, France, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) participated, on the initiative of Greece, in the **Philia Forum** taken place in Athens on 11 February 2021. The participating countries reiterated their common adherence to international law, including the UN Charter, UN Security Council Resolutions and the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) to which they are all signatories. They stressed their strong commitment to the promotion of the fundamental principles enshrined therein, including the respect for the principles of national sovereignty and non-interference in the internal affairs of States, sovereign rights, independence and territorial integrity of states, the peaceful resolution of differences and rejection of threat or use of force, and the freedom of navigation. **SDGs 16.3, 14, 17.16**

COVID-19 pandemic

At international level, **Greece has donated over 4 million doses of COVID-19 vaccines**, through bilateral agreements, to Albania, Armenia, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Egypt, Gabon, Ghana, Iran, Jordan, Kenya, Libya, North Macedonia, Rwanda, Tunisia, Ukraine and Vietnam. The vaccines delivered, serve as an example of solidarity of Greece to its partner countries and of commitment to share resources to fight the COVID-19 pandemic. Moreover, Greece offered almost 6 million doses of COVID-19 vaccines, 4.3 million of which were immediately donated, via the European Union COVAX mechanism, to Djibouti, Ethiopia, Indonesia, Kenya, Laos, Nigeria, Pakistan and Syria, thus contributing to the full vaccination of approximately 17% of the combined population of these countries. **SDG 17.16, 17.9, 3.8, 3.b, 16.6**

6 CONCLUSIONS AND NEXT STEPS

Greece's second Voluntary National Review reflects the country's progress, since 2018, on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. It also shows that, despite and amidst three consecutive crises (economic depression and fiscal adjustment programmes, Covid-19 pandemic, war in Ukraine), the country has managed to take positive steps towards sustainability, as can be seen in indicators concerning social cohesion and development, the environment, and functioning of the institutions. Considering there were difficult times and shortcomings, the country stayed as close to the SDGs pathway as possible, and its course was recently stabilized by institutional reforms on the central-government level that guarantee cohesion and monitoring through all policy-making stages. These are a prerequisite to further incorporate the SDS into national policies, not least because ownership of strengths and weaknesses allows for informed, swifter and more efficient policies.

Countries approaching full containment, hopefully, of the Covid-19 pandemic are now faced with the necessity of mitigating its repercussions and ensuring their defence against future threats of similar nature and calibre. At the same time, global concern about peace, stability, and cost and sufficiency of basic goods and energy has arisen after the war outbreak in Ukraine. The 2030 Agenda seems to become more relevant and necessary with every passing year.

A lesson learnt for Greece is that crises and obstacles can be catalysts to move beyond problem-listing to actual solutions. Without losing sight of the probable and upcoming challenges, Greece has chosen to accelerate towards SDG implementation with an overall plan that, importantly, extends beyond the electoral cycle on both the social and environmental levels: with interconnected national plans for core social issues and coordinated efforts to promote climate and carbon neutrality, mainly through RES promotion and a, newly passed, first climate law.

Particularly for the SDGs under discussion in 2022, significant **reforms and large investments are underway** in an effort to transform core policies and institutions that will ensure **building back better**. For **SDG4** public schools and universities are turning decisively towards contemporary skills, knowledge and infrastructure as well as inclusion and extroversion. Gender equality policies, related to **SDG5**, which have been in place for decades, are being revisited in order to become more relevant and create new paradigms, principally for women's economic and political empowerment and participation. As regards **SDGs 14 & 15**, a cohesive policy framework for blue economy is designed to foster a balanced development plan for the Greek islands while promoting healthy seas and marine biodiversity, whereas the great challenges for land biodiversity associated with forest wildfires and energy networks have started to be addressed through improved prevention and operational capacity, large-scale reforestation and undergrounding of overhead power lines, especially in protected areas. Undoubtedly, at policy level, energy and environmental risks, new or persistent, call for updated approaches and lasting solutions.

On the whole, the country's next steps towards SDG implementation should be in at least three priority fields:

First, building effective, accountable and inclusive **institutions** is essential. On the central government level, adjustments are being designed in order to mainstream and monitor the SDGs in public policies and socio-economic activity. A more active and SDG-aware engagement of the regional and local level in this process should immediately follow.

Secondly, the country will continue to implement policy reforms aiming to **leave no-one behind**, through a holistic approach to social issues and needs-based planning. Besides child protection, of the utmost importance for Greece is the chronic low performance in significant youth indicators. It is evident that neither resilience nor sustainable growth can be achieved without youth inclusion. Through an upcoming cohesive **policy framework for Youth**, the country will be drastically replacing dysfunctional practices in an effort to listen to young people and create visibility for them. An array of policies fostering their autonomy through, inter alia, education, VET, work, mental health services, housing, and culture aims at supporting them to fulfill their potential.

Thirdly, outlining a plan for **SDG 17**, steps need to be taken towards strengthening **cooperation**. This is both a need and an aspiration for citizens, stakeholders and public entities that join the sustainability dialogue in increasing numbers. Greece could benefit from a stable and adaptive mechanism to facilitate social dialogue on sustainable development, not only for boosting communication between the stakeholders and government but also to encourage collaboration among stakeholders. Such a framework is expected to foster cultural change as well, bringing to the forefront a core lesson of the 2030 Agenda, which is connectedness. Besides carrying through the thematic interlinkages of the SDGs, it is crucial to seize the opportunities deriving from the actual condition that citizens, organizations, institutions, policy-makers and countries are all connected. Building on **positive networks**, at all levels, is a key choice for leveraging their strengths, and Greece aspires to invest in this on the way forward.

ANNEX I

SDG 1. No Poverty

People at risk of poverty or social exclusion and People at risk of poverty after social transfers

Figure 1: People at risk of poverty or social exclusion and at risk of income poverty after social transfers

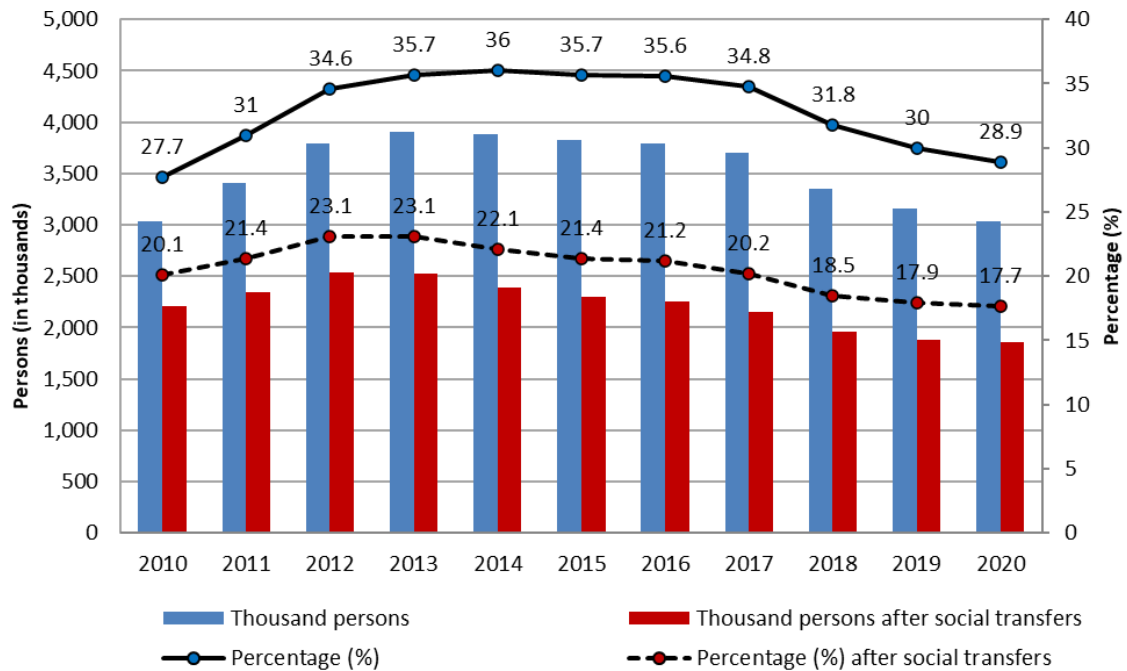


Table 1: People at risk of poverty or social exclusion and at risk of income poverty after social transfers

Year	People at risk of poverty or social exclusion		People at risk of income poverty after social transfers	
	Thousand persons	Percentage (%)	Thousand persons	Percentage (%)
2010	3,031	27.7	2,205	20.1
2011	3,403	31.0	2,349	21.4
2012	3,795	34.6	2,536	23.1
2013	3,904	35.7	2,529	23.1
2014	3,885	36.0	2,384	22.1
2015	3,829	35.7	2,293	21.4
2016	3,789	35.6	2,256	21.2
2017	3,702	34.8	2,151	20.2
2018	3,349	31.8	1,954	18.5
2019	3,162	30.0	1,882	17.9
2020	3,033	28.9	1,856	17.7

Severely materially deprived people

The indicator measures the share of severely materially deprived persons who have living conditions severely constrained by a lack of resources. They experience at least 4 out of 9 following deprivations items: cannot afford i) to pay rent or utility bills, ii) keep home adequately warm, iii) face unexpected expenses, iv) eat meat, fish or a protein equivalent every second day, v) a week holiday away from home, vi) a car, vii) a washing machine, viii) a colour TV, or ix) a telephone.

Figure 2: Severely materially deprived people (as % of total population)

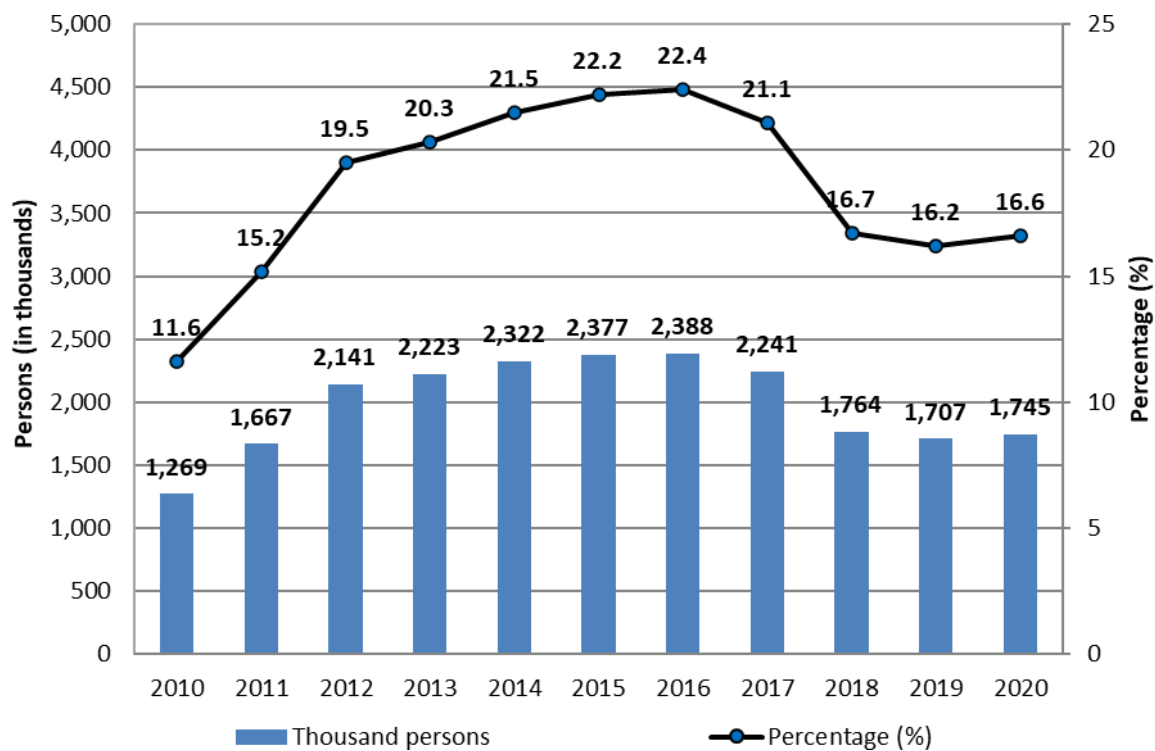


Table 2: Severely materially deprived people (as % of total population)

Year		
	Thousand persons	Percentage (%)
2010	1,269	11.6
2011	1,667	15.2
2012	2,141	19.5
2013	2,223	20.3
2014	2,322	21.5
2015	2,377	22.2
2016	2,388	22.4
2017	2,241	21.1
2018	1,764	16.7
2019	1,707	16.2
2020	1,745	16.6

Population living in a dwelling with a leaking roof, damp walls, floors or foundation or rot in window frames of floor by poverty status

The indicator measures the share of the population experiencing at least one of the following basic deficits in their housing condition: a leaking roof, damp walls, floors or foundation, or rot in window frames or floor. A breakdown by poverty status is available.

Figure 3: Percentages of people living in households with poor housing conditions (such as leaking roof, damp walls or foundation, etc.) by income situation in relation to the risk of poverty threshold

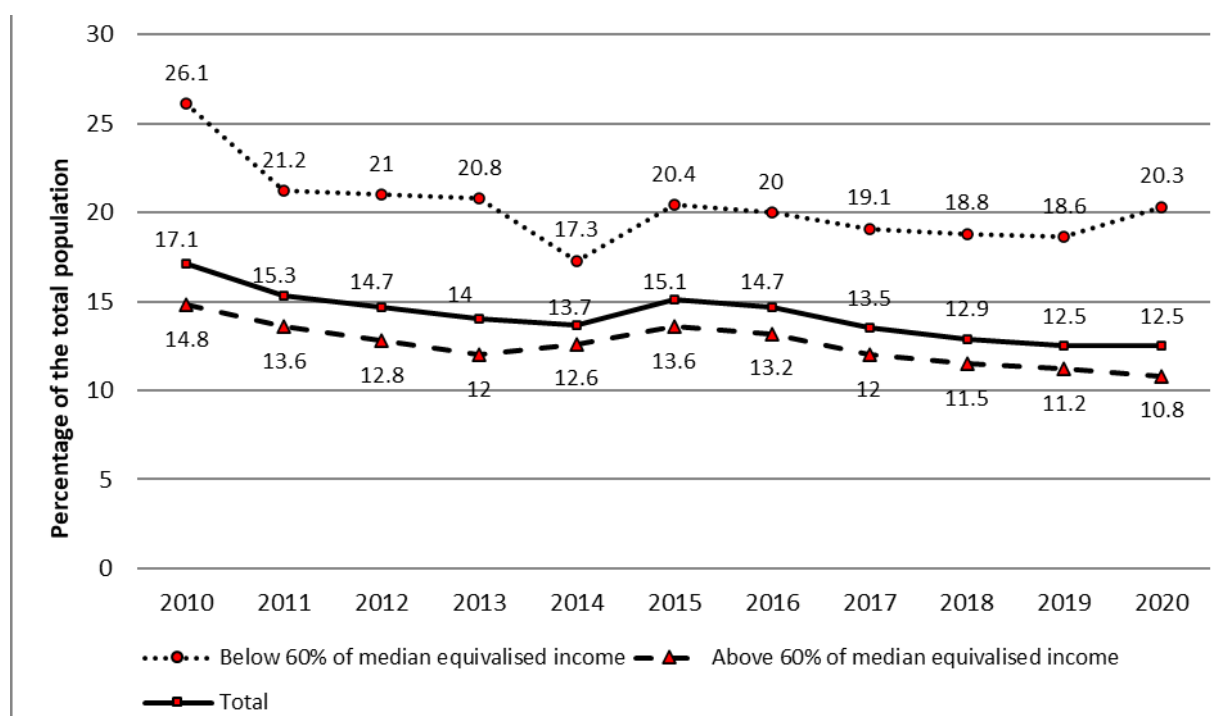


Table 3: Percentages (%) of people living in households with poor housing conditions by income situation in relation to the risk of poverty threshold

Year	Below 60% of median equivalised income	Above 60% of median equivalised income	Total
2010	26.1	14.8	17.1
2011	21.2	13.6	15.3
2012	21.0	12.8	14.7
2013	20.8	12.0	14.0
2014	17.3	12.6	13.7
2015	20.4	13.6	15.1
2016	20.0	13.2	14.7
2017	19.1	12.0	13.5
2018	18.8	11,5	12.9
2019	18.6	11.2	12.5
2020	20.3	10.8	12.5

Total population having neither a bath, nor a shower, nor indoor flushing toilet in their household

(This indicator is also included in the SDG 6: Clean water and sanitation)

The indicator measures the share of total population having neither a bath, nor a shower, nor an indoor flushing toilet in their household.

Figure 4: Percentage (%) of people having neither a bath, nor a shower, not indoor flushing toilet in their households by income situation in relation to the risk of poverty threshold

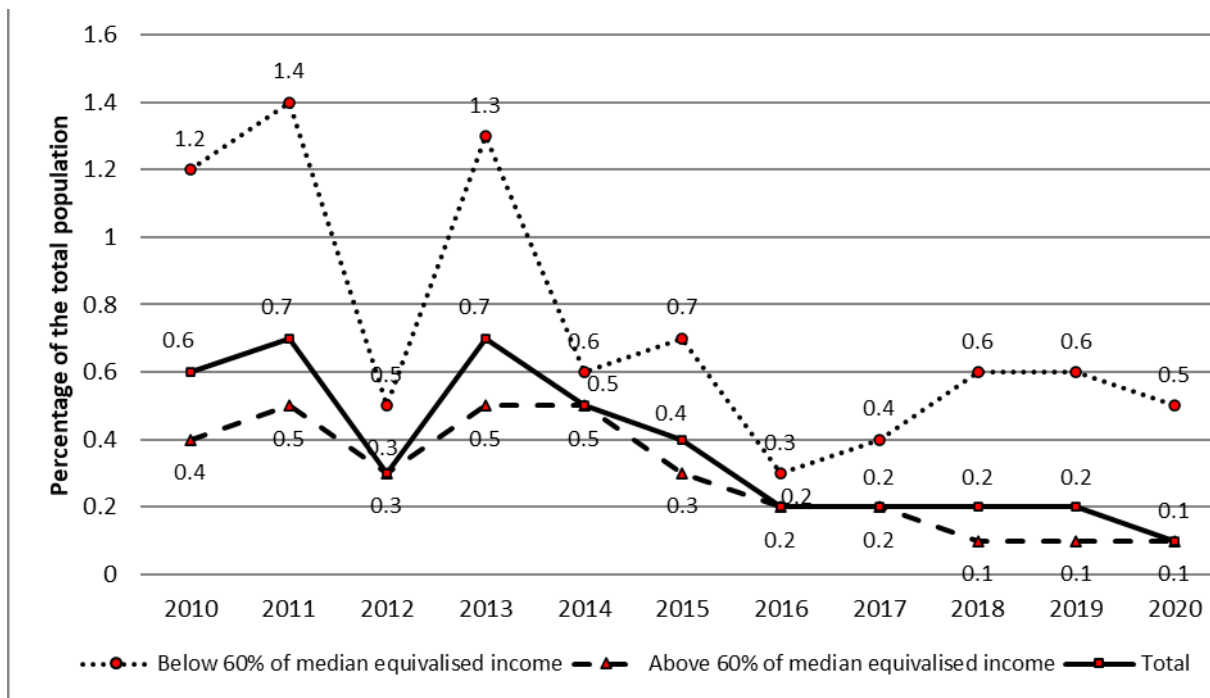


Table 4: Percentage (%) of people having neither a bath, nor a shower, not indoor flushing toilet in their households by income situation in relation to the risk of poverty threshold

Year	Below 60% of median equivalised income	Above 60% of median equivalised income	Total
2010	1.2	0.4	0.6
2011	1.4	0.5	0.7
2012	0.5	0.3	0.3
2013	1.3	0.5	0.7
2014	0.6	0.5	0.5
2015	0.7	0.3	0.4
2016	0.3	0.2	0.2
2017	0.4	0.2	0.2
2018	0.6	0.1	0.2
2019	0.6	0.1	0.2
2020	0.5	0.1	0.1

Population unable to keep home adequately warm by poverty status

(This indicator is also included in the SDG 7: Affordable and clean energy)

Indicator measures the share of population who are in the state of enforced inability to keep home adequately warm. Data for this indicator are being collected as part of the European Union Statistics on Income and Living Conditions (EU-SILC) to monitor the development of poverty and social inclusion in the EU. The data collection is based on a survey, which means that indicator values are self-reported.

Figure 5: Percentage (%) of people unable to keep their home adequately warm by income situation in relation to the risk of poverty threshold

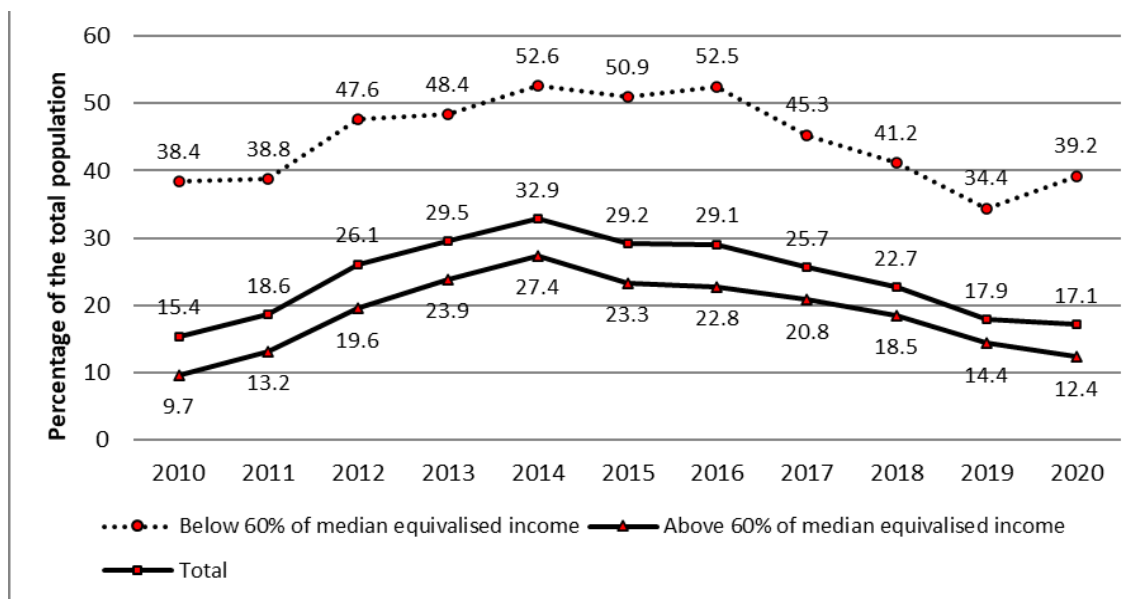


Table 5: Percentage of people unable to keep their home adequately warm by income situation in relation to the risk of poverty threshold

Year	Below 60% of median equivalised income	Above 60% of median equivalised income	Total
2010	38.4	9.7	15.4
2011	38.8	13.2	18.6
2012	47.6	19.6	26.1
2013	48.4	23.9	29.5
2014	52.6	27.4	32.9
2015	50.9	23.3	29.2
2016	52.5	22.8	29.1
2017	45.3	20.8	25.7
2018	41.2	18.5	22.7
2019	34.4	14.4	17.9
2020	39.2	12.4	17.1

Overcrowding rate by poverty status

(This indicator is also in the in the SDG 11: Sustainable cities and communities)

The indicator measures the share of people living in overcrowded conditions in the EU. A person is considered to be living in an overcrowded household if the house does not have at least one room for the entire household as well as a room for a couple, for each single person above 18, for a pair of teenagers (12 to 17 years of age) of the same sex, for each teenager of different sex and for a pair of children (under 12 years of age).

Figure 6: Percentage (%) of people living in overcrowded household by income situation in relation to the risk of poverty threshold

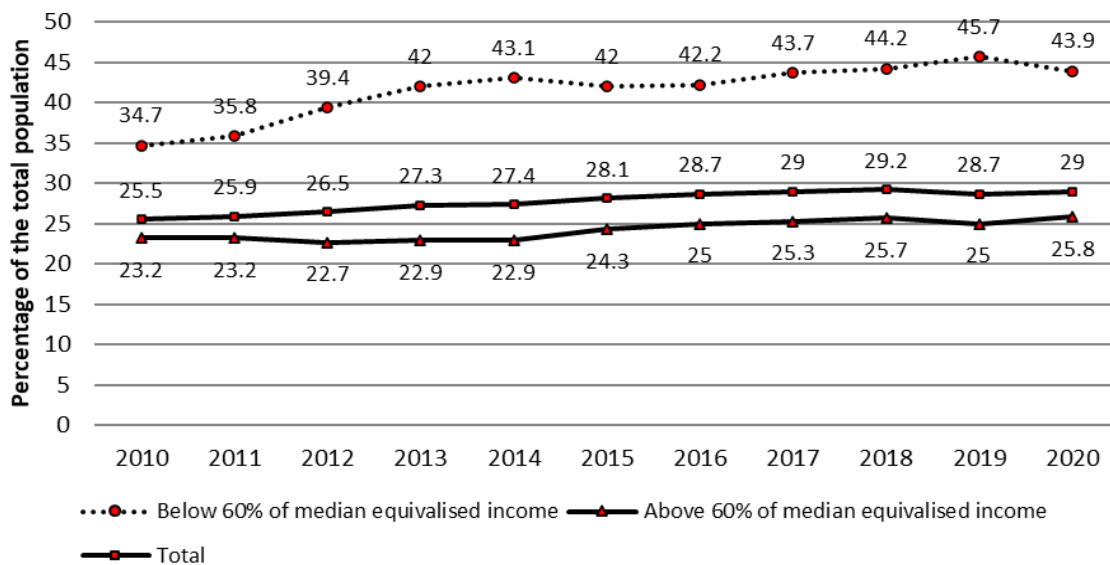


Table 6: Percentage of people living in overcrowded household by income situation in relation to the risk of poverty threshold

Year	Below 60% of median equivalised income	Above 60% of median equivalised income	Total
2010	34.7	23.2	25.5
2011	35.8	23.2	25.9
2012	39.4	22.7	26.5
2013	42.0	22.9	27.3
2014	43.1	22.9	27.4
2015	42.0	24.3	28.1
2016	42.2	25.0	28.7
2017	43.7	25.3	29.0
2018	44.2	25.7	29.2
2019	45.7	25.0	28.7
2020	43.9	25.8	29.0

SDG 2. Zero hunger

Obesity rate by body mass index (BMI)

The indicator measures the share of obese people based on their body mass index (BMI). BMI is defined as the weight in kilos divided by the square of the height in meters. People aged 18 years or over are considered obese with a BMI equal or greater than 30. Other categories are: underweight (BMI less than 18.5), normal weight (BMI between 18.5 and less than 25), and pre-obese (BMI between 25 and less than 30). The category overweight (BMI equal or greater than 25) combines the two categories pre-obese and obese.

Figure 7: Percentage (%) of pre-Obese and Obese people

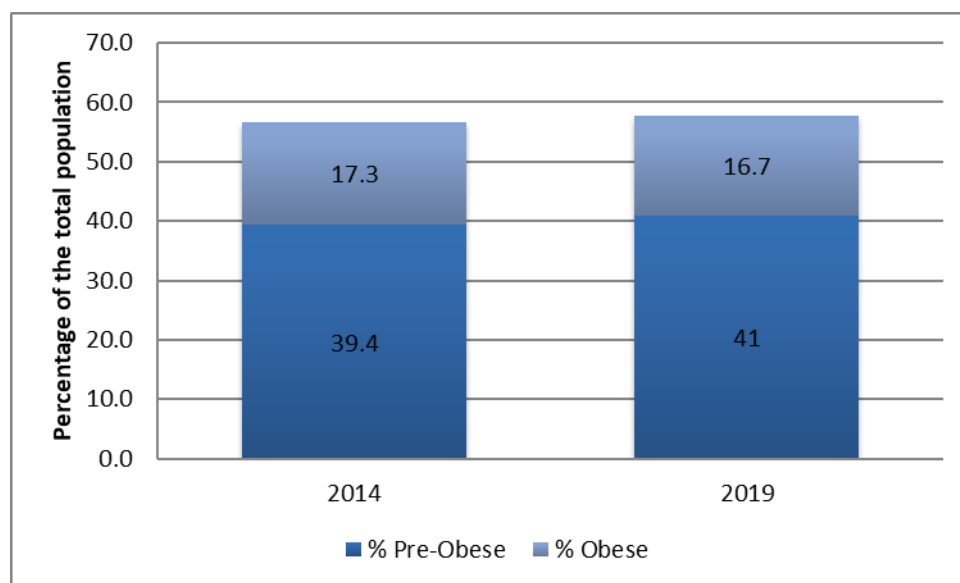


Table 7: Percentage pre-Obese and Obese people

Year	% Pre-Obese	% Obese	% Overweight
2014	39.4	17.3	56.7
2019	41.0	16.7	57.6

Agricultural factor income per annual work unit (AWU)

The indicator is an important measure of the productivity of the agricultural sector. Agricultural factor income measures the income generated by farming, which is used to remunerate borrowed or rented factors of production (capital, wages and land rents) as well as own production factors (own labour, capital and land). Factor income corresponds to the deflated (real) net value added at factor cost of agriculture. The implicit price index of GDP is used as deflator.

Annual work units (AWUs) are defined as full-time equivalent employment (corresponding to the number of full-time equivalent jobs), i.e. as total hours worked divided by the average annual number of hours worked in full-time jobs within the economic territory.

Figure 8: Index of the real income of factors in agriculture per annual work unit (2010=100)

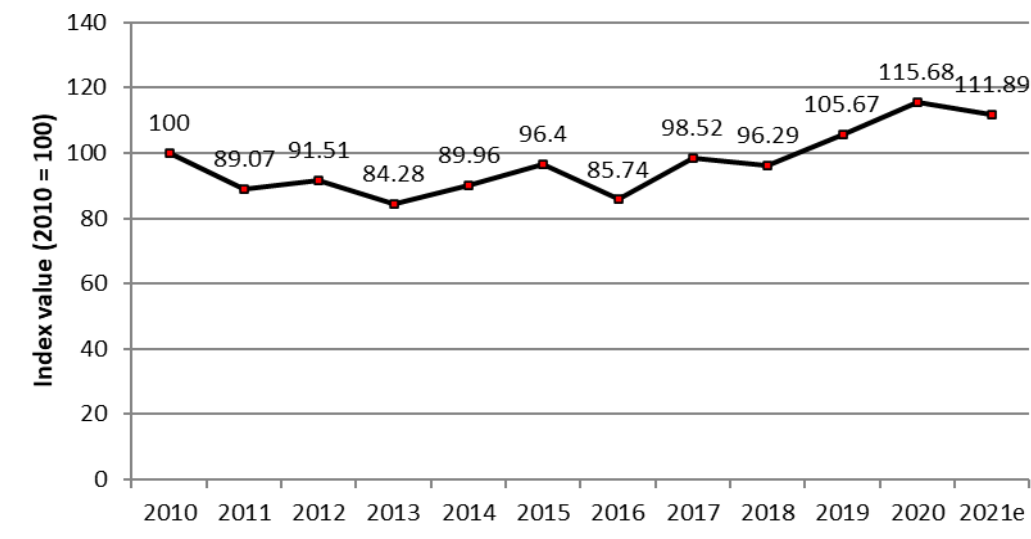


Table 8: Index of the real income of factors in agriculture per annual work unit

Year	Index of the real income of factors in agriculture per annual work unit
2010	100
2011	89.07
2012	91.51
2013	84.28
2014	89.96
2015	96.40
2016	85.74
2017	98.52
2018	96.29
2019	105.67
2020	115.68
2021 ^e	111.89

e: estimated

Government support to agricultural research and development

The indicator refers to Government Budget Appropriations or Outlays on R&D (GBAORD). GBAORD data measure government support to research and development (R&D) activities, or, in other words, how much priority governments place on the public funding of R&D. GBAORD data are built up using the guidelines laid out in the proposed standard practice for surveys of research and experimental development, the OECD's Frascati Manual from 2002. GBAORD data are broken down by socio-economic objectives in accordance to the nomenclature for the analysis and comparison of scientific programmes and budgets (NABS 2007).

Figure 9: Government support to agriculture research and development in euro per inhabitant and in million euro

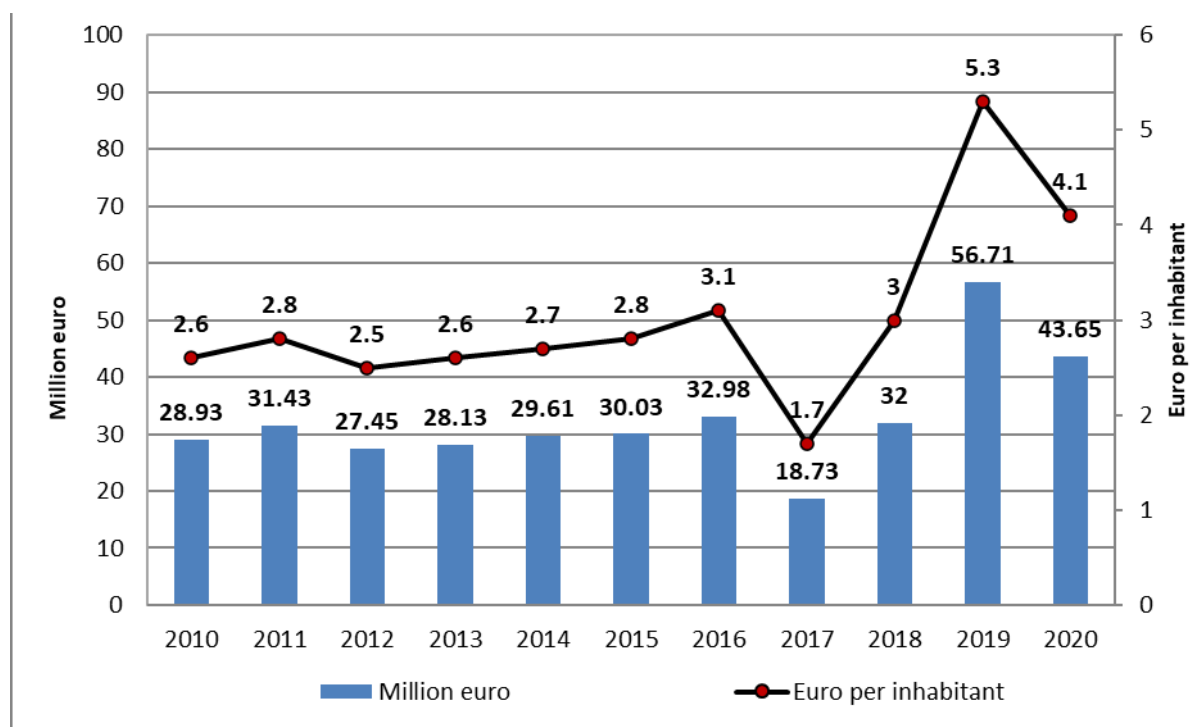


Table 9: Government support to agriculture research and development in euro per inhabitant and in million euro

Year	Euro per inhabitant	Million euro
2010	2.6	28.93
2011	2.8	31.43
2012	2.5	27.45
2013	2.6	28.13
2014	2.7	29.61
2015	2.8	30.03
2016	3.1	32.98
2017	1.7	18.73
2018	3	32.0
2019	5.3	56.71
2020	4.1	43.65

Area under organic farming

The indicator is defined as the share of total utilized agricultural area (UAA) occupied by organic farming (existing organically-farmed areas and areas in process of conversion).

Figure 10: Percentage of UUA under organic farming

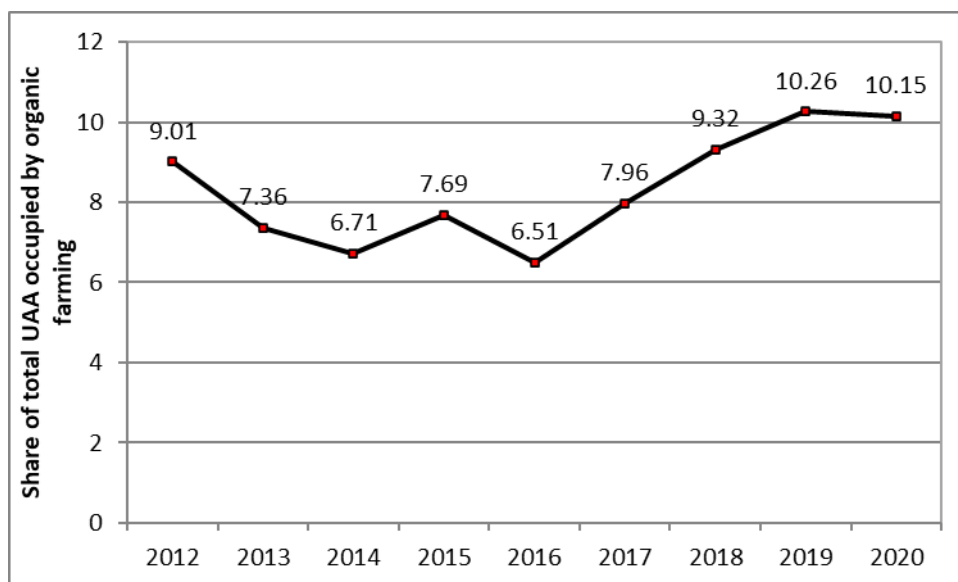


Table 10: Percentage of UUA under organic farming

Year	Share of total UUA occupied by organic farming
2012	9.01
2013	7.36
2014	6.71
2015	7.69
2016	6.51
2017	7.96
2018	9.32
2019	10.26
2020	10.15

SDG 3. Good health and well-being

Healthy life years at birth by sex

Healthy life years is defined as the number of remaining years that a person of specific age is expected to live without any severe or moderate health problems. The notion of health problem is reflecting a disability dimension and is based on a self-perceived question which aims to measure the extent of any limitations, for at least six months, because of a health problem that may have affected respondents as regards activities they usually do (the so-called GALI - Global Activity Limitation Instrument foreseen in the annual SILC survey). If healthy life years are increasing more rapidly than life expectancy, it means that people are living more years in better health.

Figure 11: Healthy life years at birth by sex

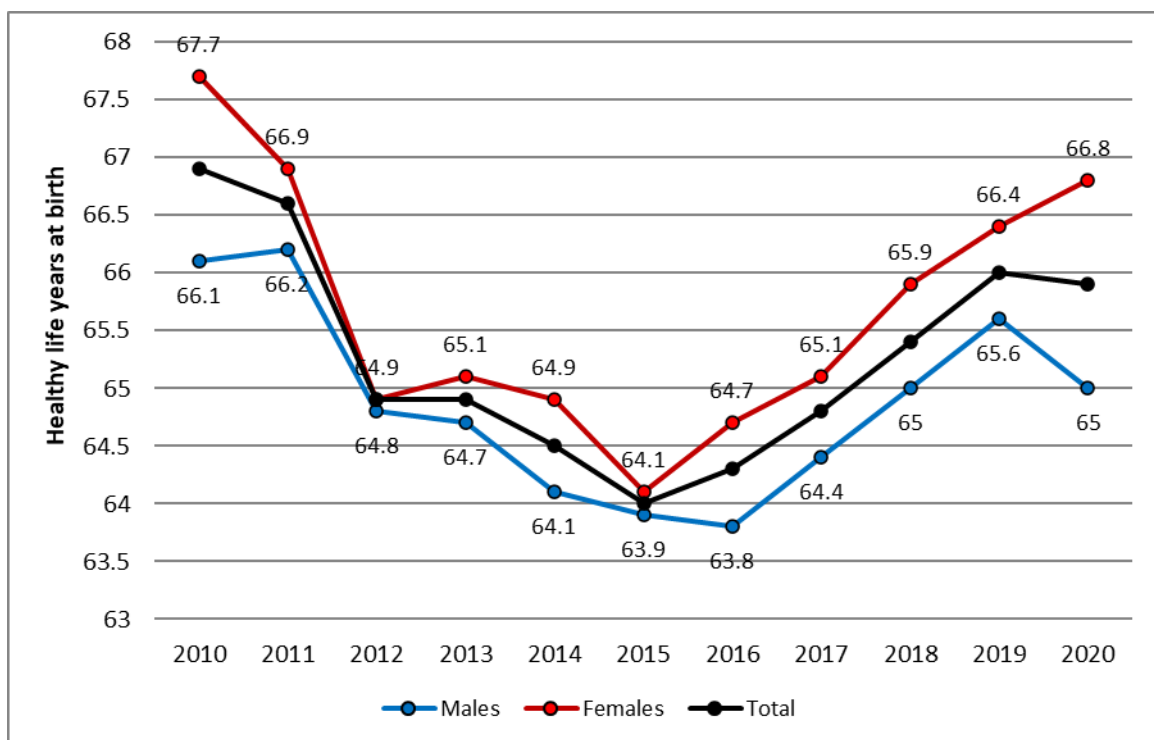


Table 11: Healthy life years at birth by sex

Year	Total	Males	Females
2010	66.9	66.1	67.7
2011	66.6	66.2	66.9
2012	64.9	64.8	64.9
2013	64.9	64.7	65.1
2014	64.5	64.1	64.9
2015	64.0	63.9	64.1
2016	64.3	63.8	64.7
2017	64.8	64.4	65.1
2018	65.4	65.0	65.9
2019	66.0	65.6	66.4
2020	65.9	65.0	66.8

Self-perceived health by level of perception

The indicator is a subjective measure on how people judge their health in general on a scale from 'very good' to 'very bad'. It is expressed as the share of the population aged 16 or over perceiving itself to be in "good" or "very good" health. The data stem from the Survey on Income and Living Conditions (SILC).

Figure 12: Self-perceived health: people (%) who said to be in very good or good health by sex

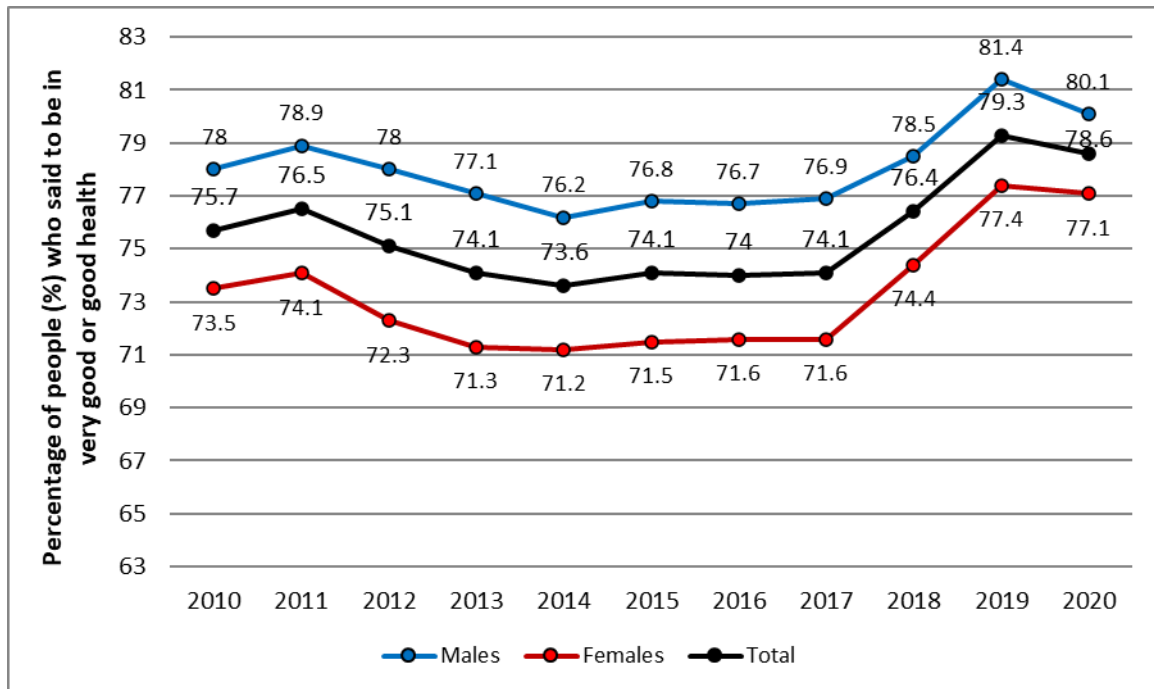


Table 12: Self-perceived health: percentage of people (%) who said to be in very good or good health by sex

Year	Total	Males	Females
2010	75.7	78.0	73.5
2011	76.5	78.9	74.1
2012	75.1	78.0	72.3
2013	74.1	77.1	71.3
2014	73.6	76.2	71.2
2015	74.1	76.8	71.5
2016	74.0	76.7	71.6
2017	74.1	76.9	71.6
2018	76.4	78.5	74.4
2019	79.3	81.4	77.4
2020	78.6	80.1	77.1

Smoking prevalence

The indicator measures the percentage of the population aged 15 years and over who report tobacco smoking every day. Estimates based on self-reports of daily smoking. The general coverage of the survey is the population aged 15 or over living in private households residing in the territory of the country.

Figure 13: Percentage of the population aged 15 years and over who report tobacco smoking every day

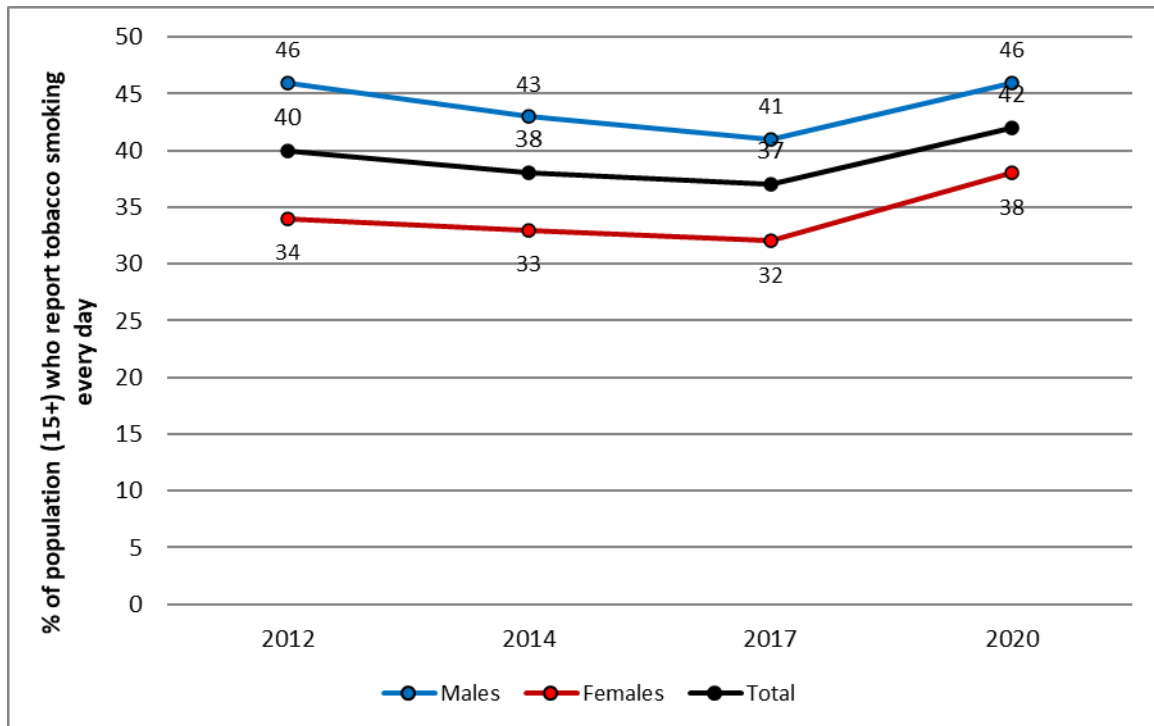


Table 13: Percentage of the population aged 15 years and over who report tobacco smoking every day

Year	Total	Males	Females
2012	40	46	34
2014	38	43	33
2017	37	41	32
2020	42	46	38

Standardised death rate due to tuberculosis, HIV and hepatitis by type of disease

The indicator measures the standardised death rate of tuberculosis, HIV and hepatitis (International Classification of Diseases (ICD) codes A15-A19_B90, B15-B19_B942 and B20-B24). The rate is calculated by dividing the number of people dying due to selected communicable diseases by the total population

Figure 14: Standardised death rate due to tuberculosis, HIV and hepatitis by type of disease

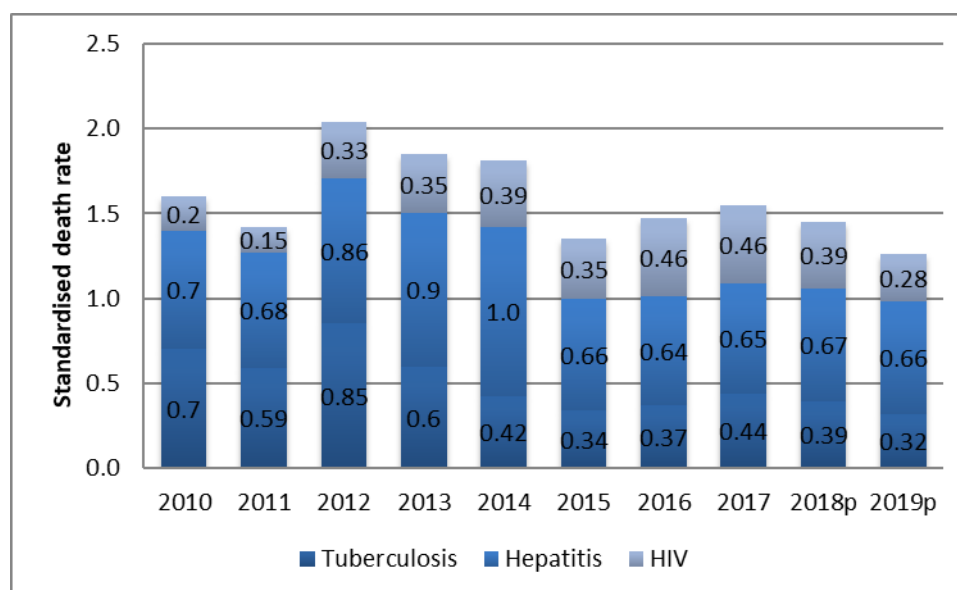


Table 14: Standardised death rate due to tuberculosis, HIV and hepatitis by type of disease

Year	Total	Tuberculosis	Hepatitis	HIV
2010	1.60	0.70	0.70	0.20
2011	1.42	0.59	0.68	0.15
2012	2.04	0.85	0.86	0.33
2013	1.85	0.60	0.90	0.35
2014	1.81	0.42	1.00	0.39
2015	1.35	0.34	0.66	0.35
2016	1.47	0.37	0.64	0.46
2017	1.55	0.44	0.65	0.46
2018 ^p	1.45	0.39	0.67	0.39
2019 ^p	1.26	0.32	0.66	0.28

p: provisional

Obesity rate by body mass index (BMI)

(This indicator has been covered in SDG 2: Zero hunger)

People killed in accidents at work

(This indicator is also included in the SDG 8: Decent work and economic growth)

The indicator measures the number of fatal accidents that occur during the course of work and lead to the death of the victim within one year of the accident. The incidence rate refers to the number of fatal accidents per 100,000 persons in employment. An accident at work is 'a discrete occurrence in the course of work which leads to physical or mental harm'. This includes all accidents in the course of work, whether they happen inside or outside the premises of the employer, accidents in public places or different means of transport during a journey in the course of the work (commuting accidents are excluded) and at home (such as during teleworking). It also includes cases of acute poisoning and willful acts of other persons, if these happened during the course of the work.

Figure 15: Number and incidence rate of fatal accidents at work

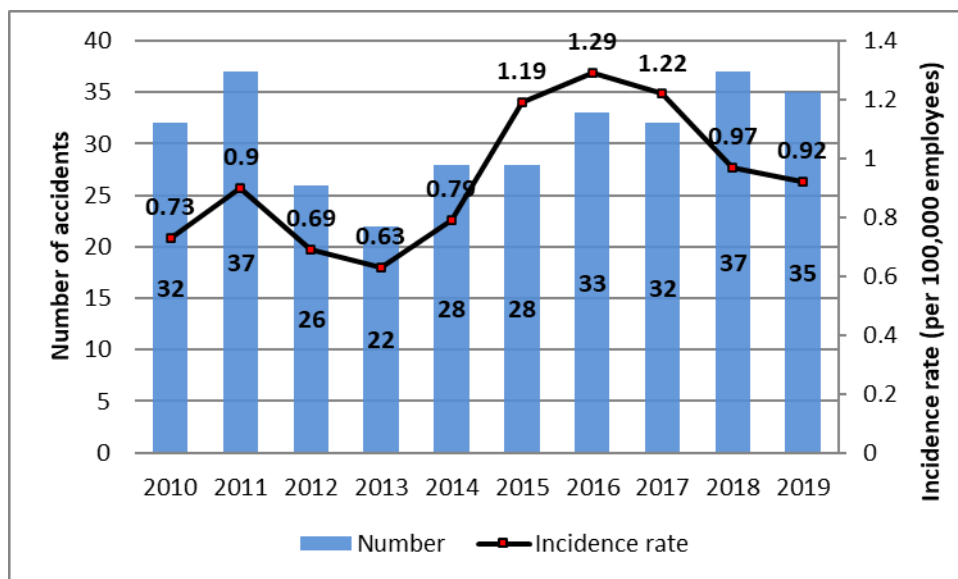


Table 15: Number and incidence rate of fatal accidents at work

Year	Number	Incidence rate (per 100,000 employees)
2010	32	0.73
2011	37	0.90
2012	26	0.69
2013	22	0.63
2014	28	0.79
2015	28	1.19
2016	33	1.29
2017	32	1.22
2018	37	0.97
2019	35	0.92

Population living in households considering that they suffer from noise, by poverty status

(This indicator is also included in the SDG 11: Sustainable cities and communities)

The indicator measures the proportion of the population who declare that they are affected either by noise from neighbours or from the street.

Figure 16: Percentage (%) of people living in households suffering from noise by poverty status

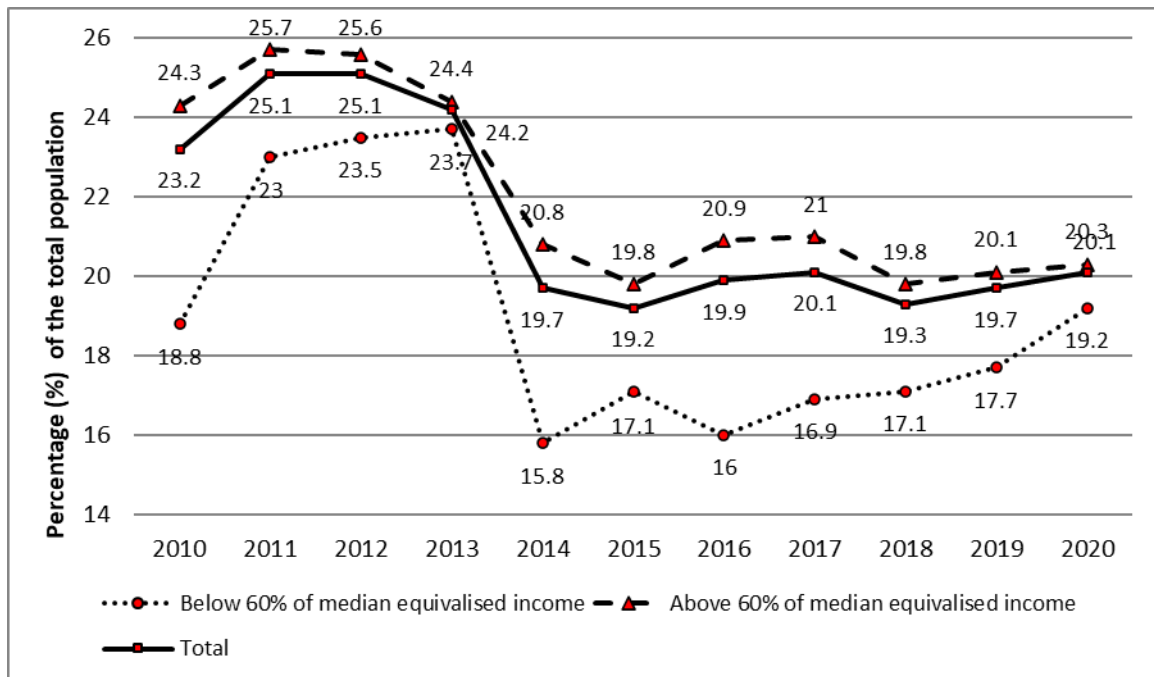


Table 16: Percentage (%) of people living in households suffering from noise and by poverty status

Year	Below 60% of median equivalised income	Above 60% of median equivalised income	Total
2010	18.8	24.3	23.2
2011	23.0	25.7	25.1
2012	23.5	25.6	25.1
2013	23.7	24.4	24.2
2014	15.8	20.8	19.7
2015	17.1	19.8	19.2
2016	16.0	20.9	19.9
2017	16.9	21.0	20.1
2018	17.1	19.8	19.3
2019	17.7	20.1	19.7
2020	19.2	20.3	20.1

People killed in road accidents

(This indicator is also included in the SDG 11: Sustainable cities and communities)

The indicator measures the number of fatalities caused by road accidents, including drivers and passengers of motorised vehicles and pedal cycles as well as pedestrians. Persons dying on road accidents up to 30 days after the occurrence of the accident are counted as road accident fatalities. After these 30 days, the reason for dying might be declared differently.

Figure 17: Number and incidence rate of road accidents

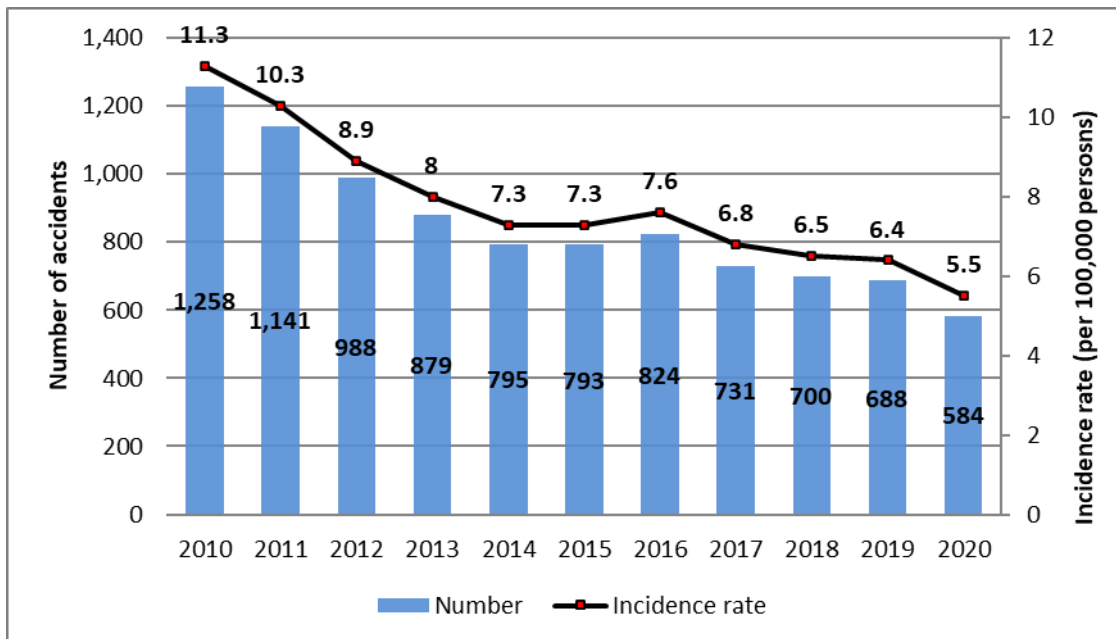


Table 17: Number and incidence rate of road accidents

Year	Number	Incidence rate (per 100,000 persons)
2010	1,258	11.3
2011	1,141	10.3
2012	988	8.9
2013	879	8.0
2014	795	7.3
2015	793	7.3
2016	824	7.6
2017	731	6.8
2018	700	6.5
2019	688	6.4
2020	584	5.5

Exposure to air pollution by particulate matter

This indicator is covered in SDG 11: Sustainable cities and communities

SDG 4. Quality education

Early leavers from education and training by sex

(This indicator is also included in SDG 5: Gender equality)

The indicator measures the share of the population aged 18 to 24 with at most lower secondary education who was not involved in any education or training during the four weeks preceding the survey. Data stem from the Labour Force Survey (LFS).

Figure 18: Percentage (%) of the population aged 18 to 24 early leavers from education and training by sex

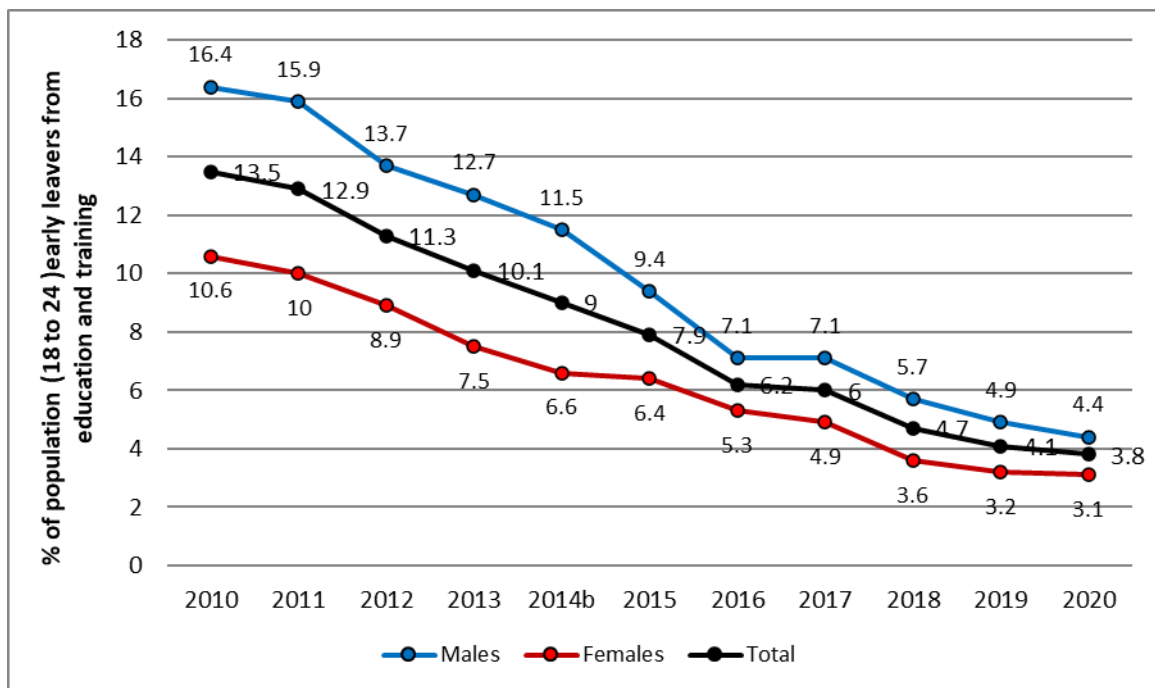


Table 18: Percentage of the population aged 18 to 24 early leavers from education and training by sex

Year	Total	Males	Females
2010	13.5	16.4	10.6
2011	12.9	15.9	10.0
2012	11.3	13.7	8.9
2013	10.1	12.7	7.5
2014 ^b	9.0	11.5	6.6
2015	7.9	9.4	6.4
2016	6.2	7.1	5.3
2017	6.0	7.1	4.9
2018	4.7	5.7	3.6
2019	4.1	4.9	3.2
2020	3.8	4.4	3.1

b: break in time series

Tertiary educational attainment by sex

(This indicator is also included in SDG 5: Gender equality)

The indicator measures the share of the population aged 25-34 who have successfully completed tertiary studies (e.g. University, Higher Technical Institution, etc.). The indicator is based on the Labour Force Survey (LFS).

Figure 19: Percentage of people aged 25 to 34 with tertiary educational attainment by sex

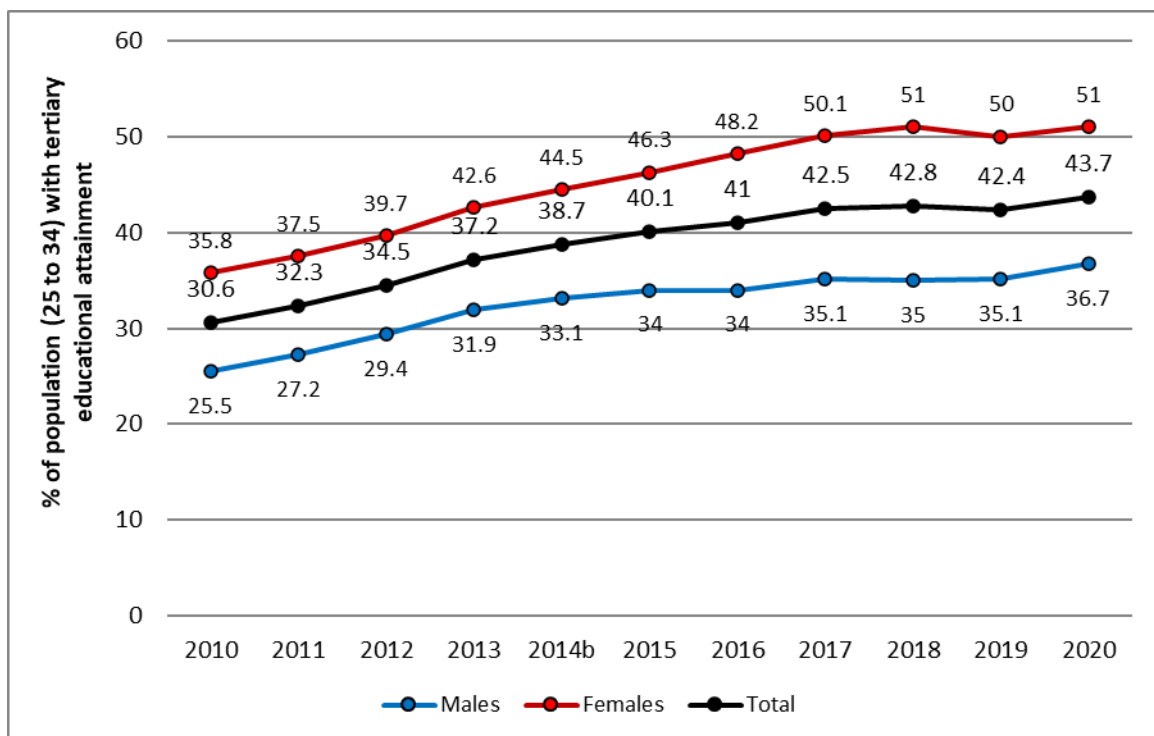


Table 19: Percentage of people aged 25 to 34 with tertiary educational attainment in total and by sex

Year	Total	Males	Females
2010	30.6	25.5	35.8
2011	32.3	27.2	37.5
2012	34.5	29.4	39.7
2013	37.2	31.9	42.6
2014 ^b	38.7	33.1	44.5
2015	40.1	34.0	46.3
2016	41.0	34.0	48.2
2017	42.5	35.1	50.1
2018	42.8	35.0	51.0
2019	42.4	35.1	50.0
2020	43.7	36.7	51.0

b: break in time series

Adult participation in learning by sex

The indicator measures the share of people aged 25 to 64 who stated that they received formal or non-formal education and training in the four weeks preceding the survey. The denominator consists of the total population of the same age group. Adult learning covers formal and non-formal learning activities (both general and vocational) undertaken by adults after leaving initial education and training. Data stem from the Labour Force Survey (LFS).

Figure 20: Percentage (%) of adults aged 25 to 64 participate in learning by sex

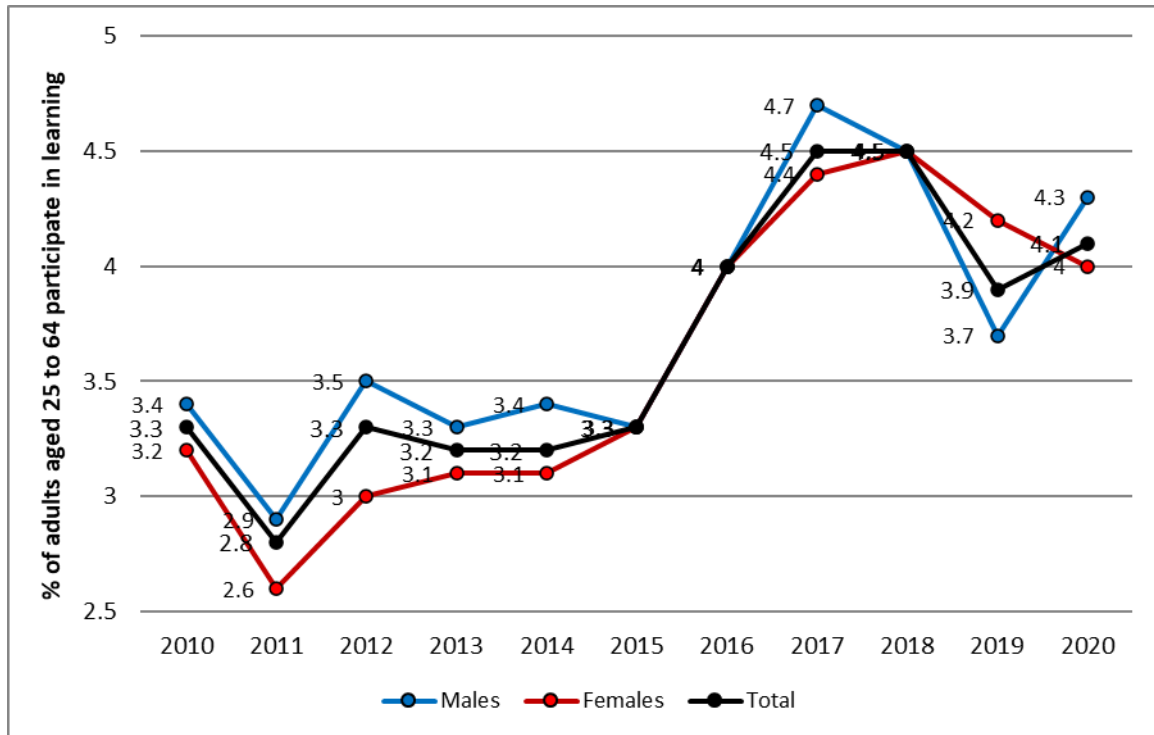


Table 20: Percentage of adults aged 25 to 64 to participate in learning in total and by sex

Year	Total	Males	Females
2010	3.3	3.4	3.2
2011	2.8	2.9	2.6
2012	3.3	3.5	3.0
2013	3.2	3.3	3.1
2014	3.2	3.4	3.1
2015	3.3	3.3	3.3
2016	4.0	4.0	4.0
2017	4.5	4.7	4.4
2018	4.5	4.5	4.5
2019	3.9	3.7	4.2
2020	4.1	4.3	4.0

Young people neither in employment nor in education and training by sex

(This indicator is also included in the SDG 8: Decent work and economic growth)

The indicator measures the share of the population aged 15 to 29 who is not employed and not involved in education or training. The numerator of the indicator refers to persons who meet the following two conditions: (a) they are not employed (i.e. unemployed or inactive according to the International Labour Organisation definition) and (b) they have not received any education or training (i.e. neither formal nor non-formal) in the four weeks preceding the Labour Force Survey (LFS). The denominator includes the total population aged 15 to 29 (excluding those who did not answer the questions on 'participation in regular (formal) education and training').

Figure 21: Percentage of population aged 15 to 29 years neither in employment nor in education and training (NEET) by sex

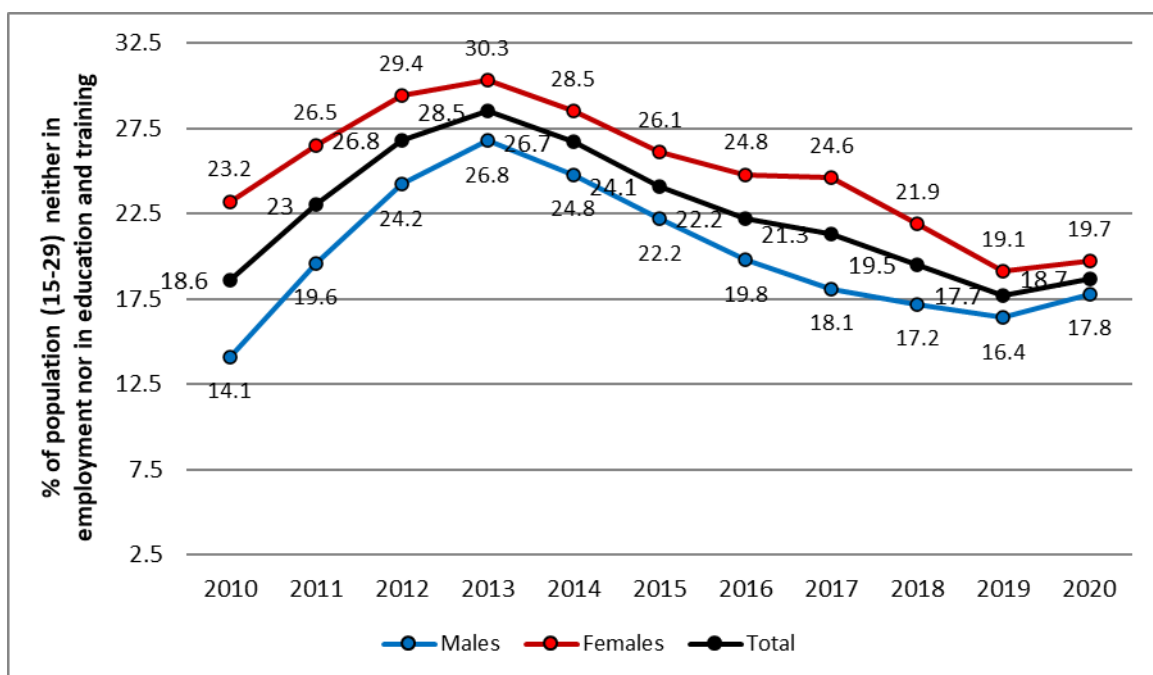


Table 21: Percentage of population aged 15 to 29 years neither in employment nor in education and training in total and by sex

Year	Total	Males	Females
2010	18.6	14.1	23.2
2011	23.0	19.6	26.5
2012	26.8	24.2	29.4
2013	28.5	26.8	30.3
2014	26.7	24.8	28.5
2015	24.1	22.2	26.1
2016	22.2	19.8	24.8
2017	21.3	18.1	24.6
2018	19.5	17.2	21.9
2019	17.7	16.4	19.1
2020	18.7	17.8	19.7

5. Gender equality

Gender pay gap in unadjusted form

The indicator measures the difference between average gross hourly earnings of male paid employees and of female paid employees as a percentage of average gross hourly earnings of male paid employees. The indicator has been defined as unadjusted, because it gives an overall picture of gender inequalities in terms of pay and measures a concept which is broader than the concept of equal pay for equal work. All employees working in firms with ten or more employees, without restrictions for age and hours worked, are included.

Figure 22: Difference between average gross hourly earnings of male and female employees

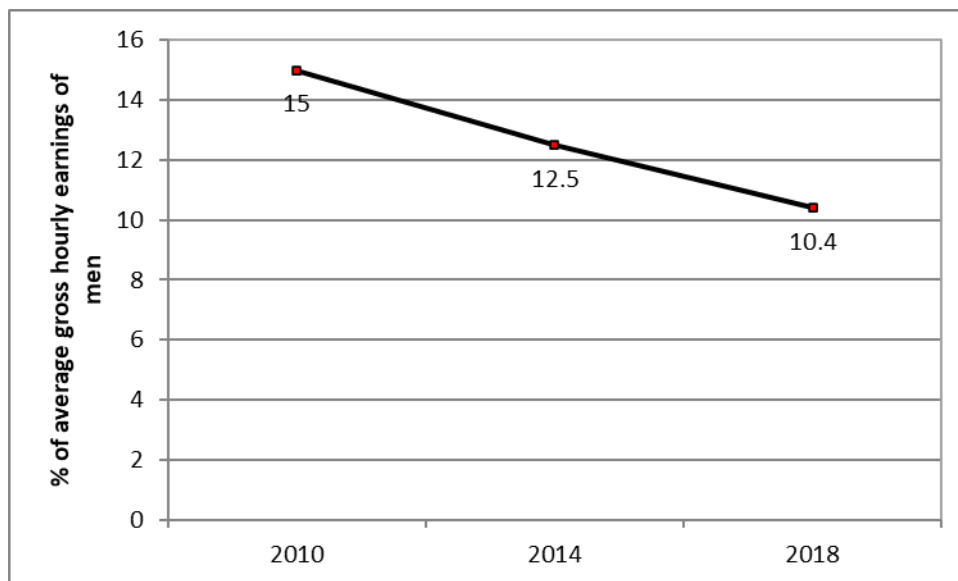


Table 22: Difference between average gross hourly earnings of male and female employees

	2010	2014	2018
% of average gross hourly earnings of men	15.0	12.5	10.4

Gender employment gap

The indicator measures the difference between the employment rates of men and women aged 20 to 64. The employment rate is calculated by dividing the number of persons aged 20 to 64 in employment by the total population of the same age group. The indicator is based on the Labour Force Survey (LFS).

Figure 23: Gender Employment Gap - Difference between employees and employment rates of men and women aged 20 to 64

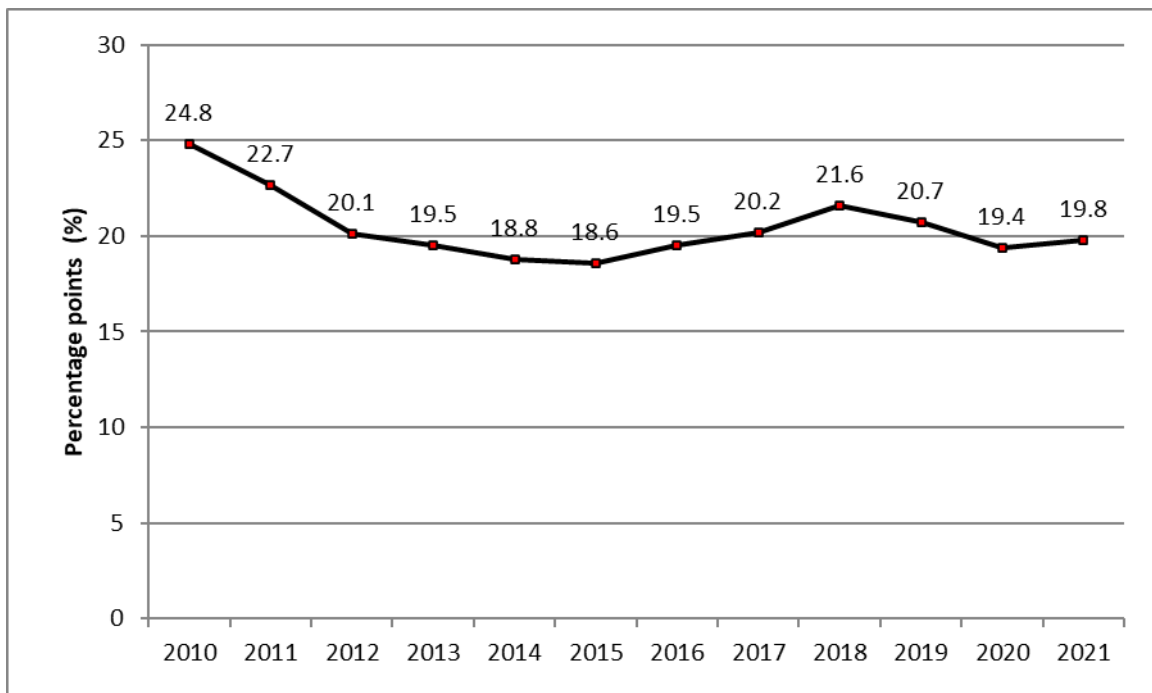


Table 23: Gender Employment Gap - Difference between employees and employment rates of men and women aged 20 to 64

Year	Percentage (%)
2010	24.8
2011	22.7
2012	20.1
2013	19.5
2014	18.8
2015	18.6
2016	19.5
2017	20.2
2018	21.6
2019	20.7
2020	19.4
2021	19.8

Seats held by women in national parliaments and governments

The indicator measures the proportion of women in national parliaments and national governments. The national parliament is the national legislative assembly. The national government is the executive body with authority to govern a country or a state. Members of government include both senior ministers (having a seat in the cabinet or council of ministers, including the prime minister) and junior ministers.

Figure 24: Percentage (%) of seats held by women in national parliaments and national governments

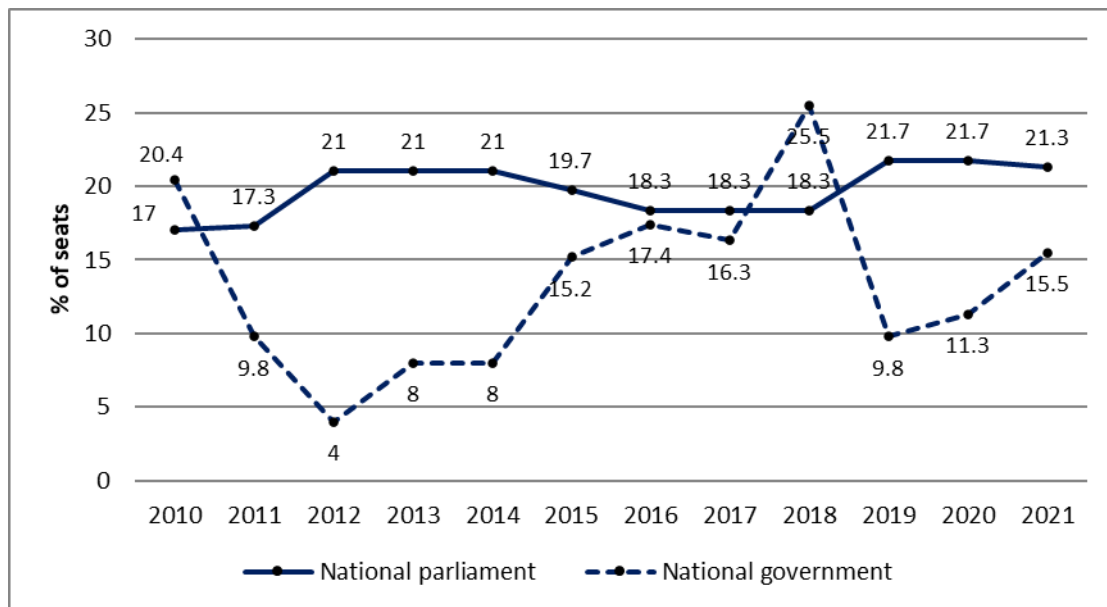


Table 24: Percentage of seats held by women in national parliaments and national governments

Year	National parliament	National government
2010	17.0	20.4
2011	17.3	9.8
2012	21.0	4.0
2013	21.0	8.0
2014	21.0	8.0
2015	19.7	15.2
2016	18.3	17.4
2017	18.3	16.3
2018	18.3	25.5
2019	21.7	9.8
2020	21.7	11.3
2021	21.3	15.5

Positions held by women in senior management positions

The indicator measures the share of female board members in the largest publicly listed companies. Publicly listed means that the shares of the company are traded on the stock exchange. Only companies which are registered in the country concerned are counted. Board members cover all members of the highest decision-making body in each company (i.e. chairperson, non-executive directors, senior executives and employee representatives, where present). The highest decision-making body is usually termed the supervisory board (in case of a two-tier governance system) or the board of directors (in a unitary system).

Figure 25: Percentage (%) of women in senior management positions

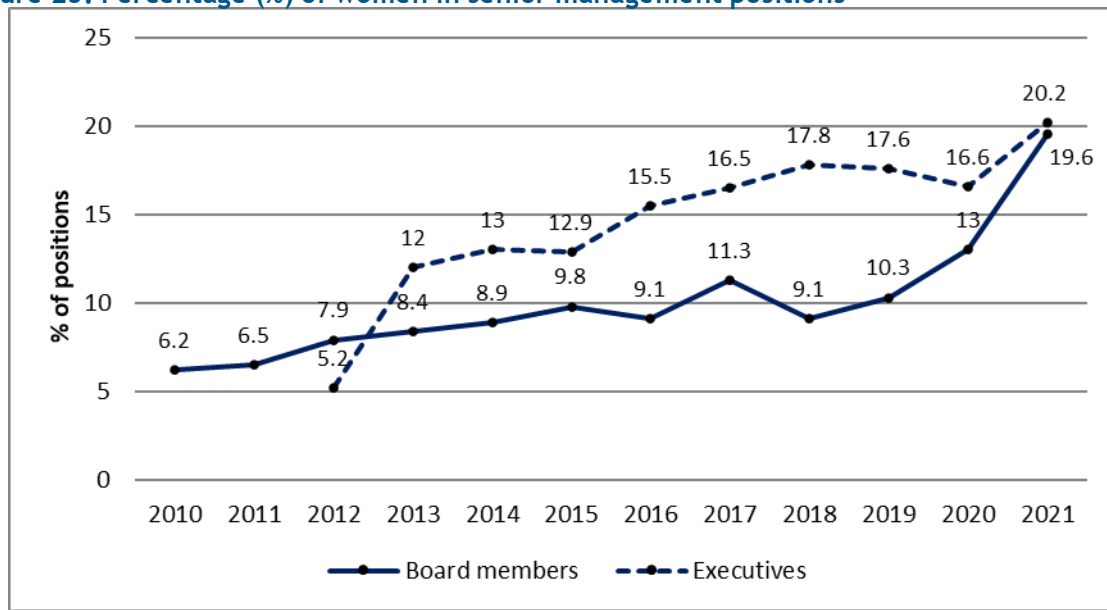


Table 25: Percentage of women in senior management positions

Year	Board members	Executives
2010	6.2	N/A
2011	6.5	N/A
2012	7.9	5.2
2013	8.4	12
2014	8.9	13
2015	9.8	12.9
2016	9.1	15.5
2017	11.3	16.5
2018	9.1	17.8
2019	10.3	17.6
2020	13.0	16.6
2021	19.6	20.2

Early leavers from education and training by sex

This indicator has been covered in SDG 4: Quality education

Tertiary educational attainment by sex

This indicator has been covered in SDG 4: Quality education

SDG 6. Clean water and sanitation

Population having neither a bath, nor a shower, nor indoor flushing toilet in their household by poverty status

The indicator has been covered in SDG 1: Poverty

Population connected to at least secondary waste water treatment

The indicator measures the percentage of population connected to wastewater treatment systems with at least secondary treatment. Thereby, wastewater from urban sources or elsewhere is treated by a process generally involving biological treatment with a secondary settlement or other process, resulting in a removal of organic material that reduces the biochemical oxygen demand (BOD) by at least 70 % and the chemical oxygen demand (COD) by at least 75 %.

Figure 26: Percentage of population connected to at least secondary wastewater treatment

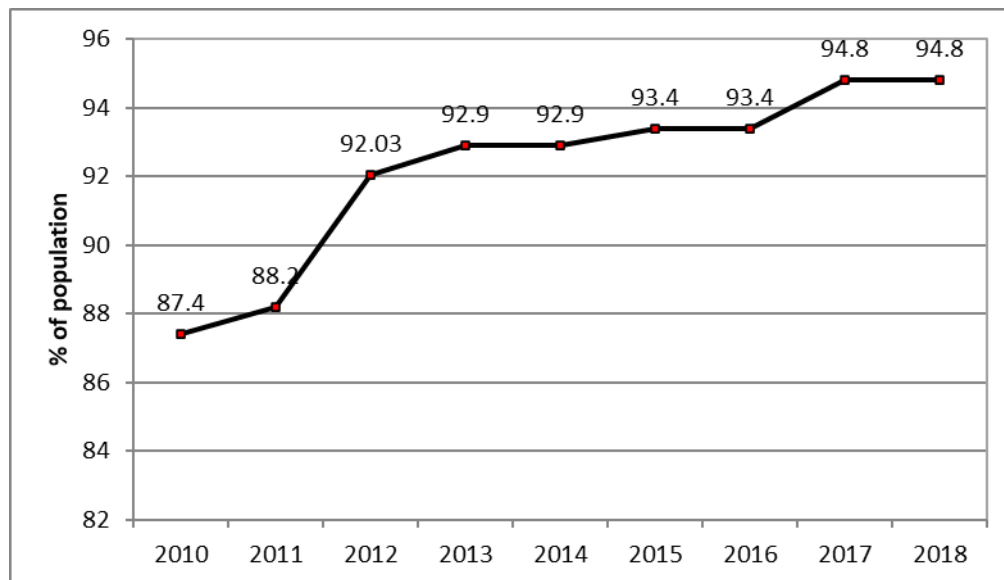


Table 26: Percentage of population connected to at least secondary wastewater treatment

Year	% of population
2010	87.40
2011	88.20
2012	92.03
2013	92.90
2014	92.90
2015	93.40
2016	93.40
2017	94.80
2018	94.80

Water exploitation index, plus (WEI+)

The Water Exploitation Index plus (WEI+) is a measure of total fresh water use as a percentage of the renewable fresh water resources (groundwater and surface water) at a given time and place. It quantifies how much water is abstracted and how much water is returned after use to the environment. The difference between water abstraction and return is regarded as water use and illustrates the pressure on renewable freshwater resources due to water demand. In the absence of Europe-wide agreed formal targets, values above 20% are generally considered as an indication of water scarcity, while values equal or bigger than 40% indicate situations of severe water scarcity, i.e. the use of freshwater resources is clearly unsustainable. The indicator is presented as annual average values. Annual calculations at national level, however, cannot reflect uneven spatial and seasonal distribution of resources and may therefore mask water scarcity that occurs on a seasonal or regional basis. The indicator is a result of estimations by EEA based on data from the WISE SoE - Water quantity database (WISE 3) and other open sources (JRC, Eurostat, OECD, FAO) and including gap filling methods.

Figure 27: Water exploitation index, plus (WEI+)

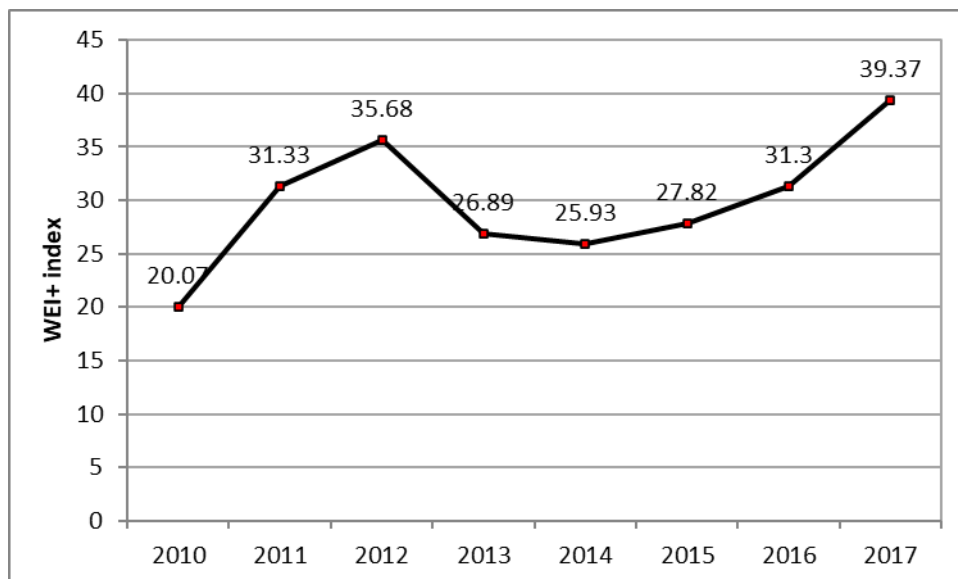


Table 27: Water exploitation index, plus (WEI+)

Year	WEI+
2010	20.07
2011	31.33
2012	35.68
2013	26.89
2014	25.93
2015	27.82
2016	31.30
2017	39.37

Bathing sites with excellent water quality by locality

The indicator is covered in SDG 14: Life below water

SDG 7. Affordable and clean energy

Primary energy consumption

The indicator measures the total energy demand of a country excluding all non-energy use of energy carriers (e.g. natural gas used not for combustion but for producing chemicals). "Primary Energy Consumption" covers the energy consumption by end users such as industry, transport, households, services and agriculture, plus energy consumption of the energy sector itself, losses occurring during transformation and distribution of energy.

Figure 28: Index of primary energy consumption (2005 = 100)

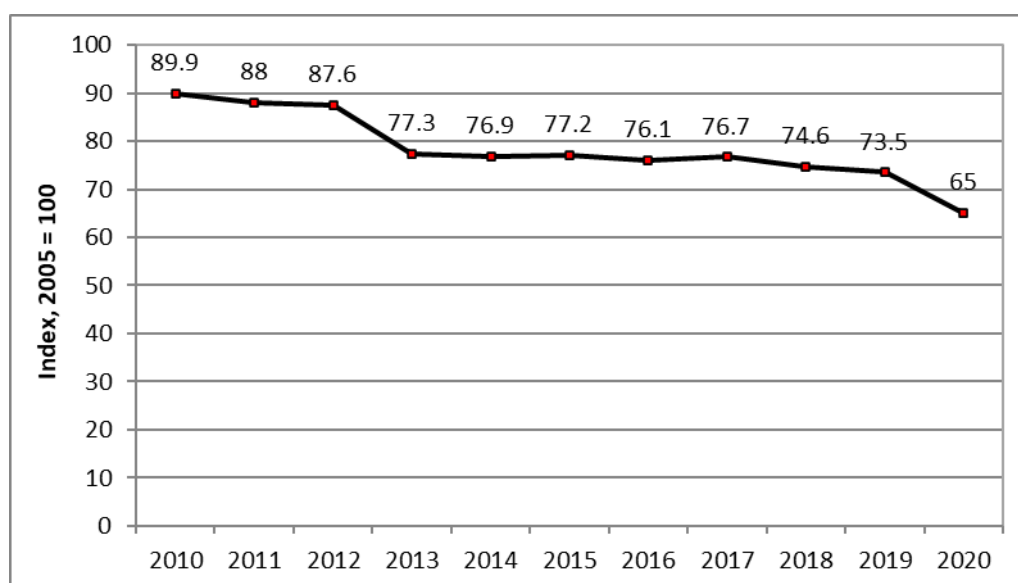


Table 28: Primary energy consumption in million tonnes of oil equivalent and as index

Year	Million tonnes of oil equivalent (TOE)	Index, 2005=100
2010	27.2	89.9
2011	26.7	88.0
2012	26.5	87.6
2013	23.4	77.3
2014	23.3	76.9
2015	23.4	77.2
2016	23.1	76.1
2017	23.2	76.7
2018	22.6	74.6
2019	22.3	73.5
2020	19.7	65.0

Final energy consumption

The indicator measures the total energy demand of a country excluding all non-energy use of energy carriers (e.g. natural gas used not for combustion but for producing chemicals). "Final energy consumption" only covers the energy consumed by end users, such as industry, transport, households, services and agriculture, it excludes energy consumption of the energy sector itself and losses occurring during transformation and distribution of energy.

Figure 29: Index of final energy consumption (2005=100)

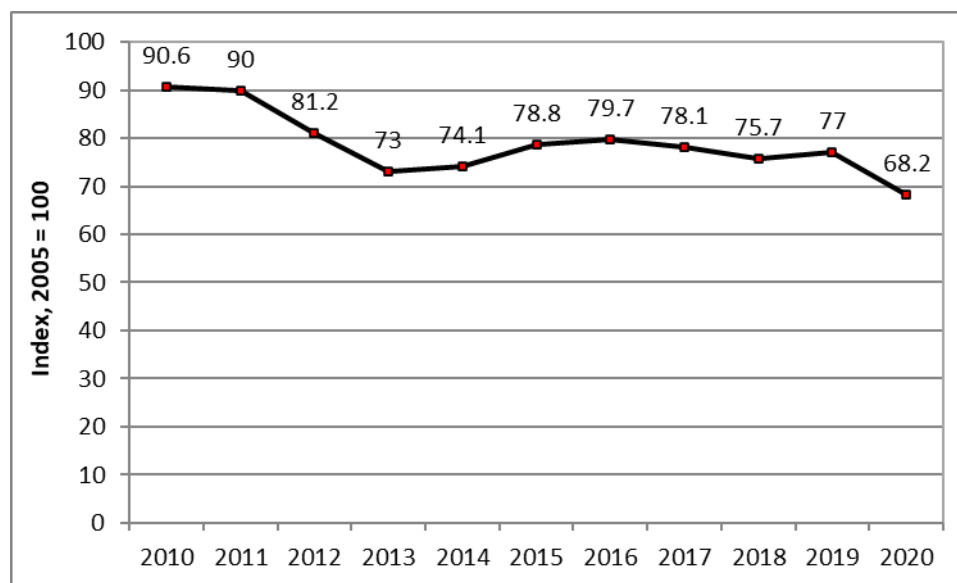


Table 29: Final energy consumption in million tonnes of oil equivalent and as index

Year	Million tonnes of oil equivalent (TOE)	Index, 2005=100
2010	19.1	90.6
2011	18.9	90.0
2012	17.1	81.2
2013	15.3	73.0
2014	15.6	74.1
2015	16.6	78.8
2016	16.8	79.7
2017	16.4	78.1
2018	15.9	75.7
2019	16.2	77.0
2020	14.3	68.2

Final energy consumption in households per capita

Indicator measures how much electricity and heat every citizen consumes at home without consideration of energy used for transportation. Since the indicator refers to final energy consumption, only energy used by end consumers is considered. The related consumption of the energy sector itself is excluded.

Figure 30: Final energy consumption in households per capita

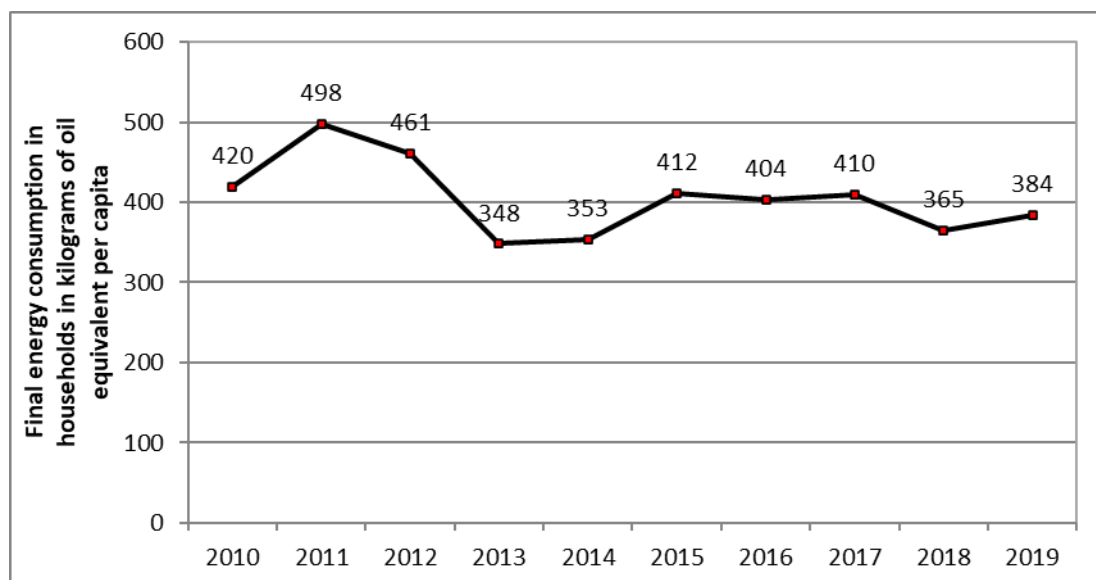


Table 30: Final energy consumption in households per capita in kilograms of oil equivalent

Year	Final energy consumption in households in kilograms of oil equivalent per capita
2010	420
2011	498
2012	461
2013	348
2014	353
2015	412
2016	404
2017	410
2018	365
2019	384

Energy productivity

The indicator measures the amount of economic output that is produced per unit of gross inland energy consumption. The gross inland energy consumption is the primary energy consumption (PEC) plus energy carriers employed for non-energy purposes. The economic output is either given as in the unit of Euros in chain-linked volumes to the reference year 2010 at 2010 exchange rates or in the unit PPS (Purchasing Power Standard). The former is used to observe the evolution over time for a specific region while the latter allows comparing Member States in a given year.

Figure 31: Energy productivity

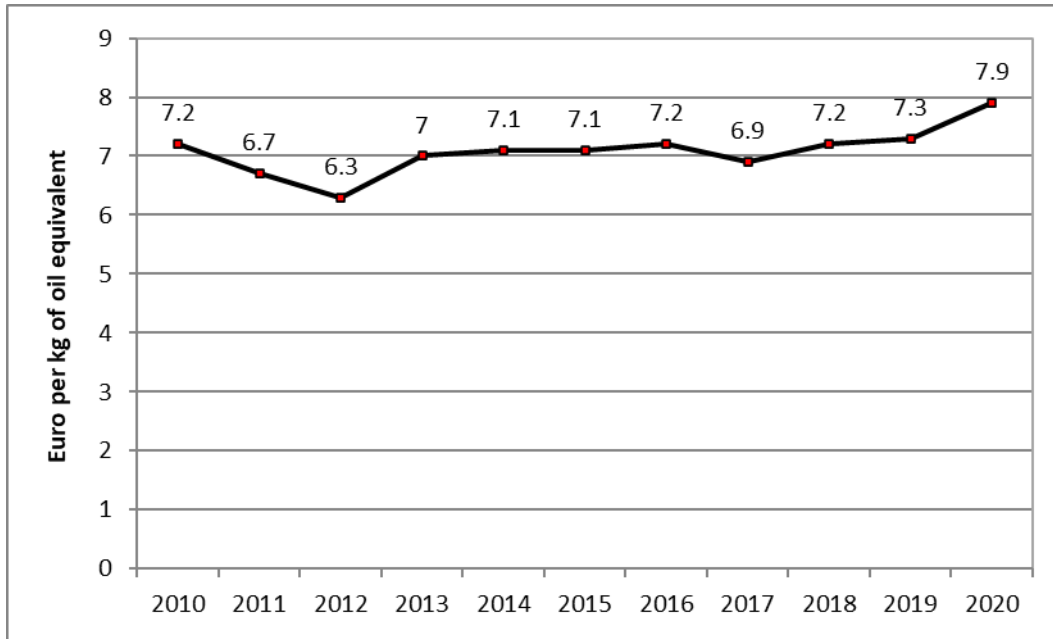


Table 31: Energy productivity in euro per kilogram of oil equivalent

Year	Energy productivity
2010	7.2
2011	6.7
2012	6.3
2013	7.0
2014	7.1
2015	7.1
2016	7.2
2017	6.9
2018	7.2
2019	7.3
2020	7.9

Share of renewable energy in gross final energy consumption by sector

The indicator measures the share of renewable energy consumption in gross final energy consumption according to the Renewable Energy Directive. The gross final energy consumption is the energy used by end-consumers (final energy consumption) plus grid losses and self-consumption of power plants.

Figure 32: Share of renewable energy sources

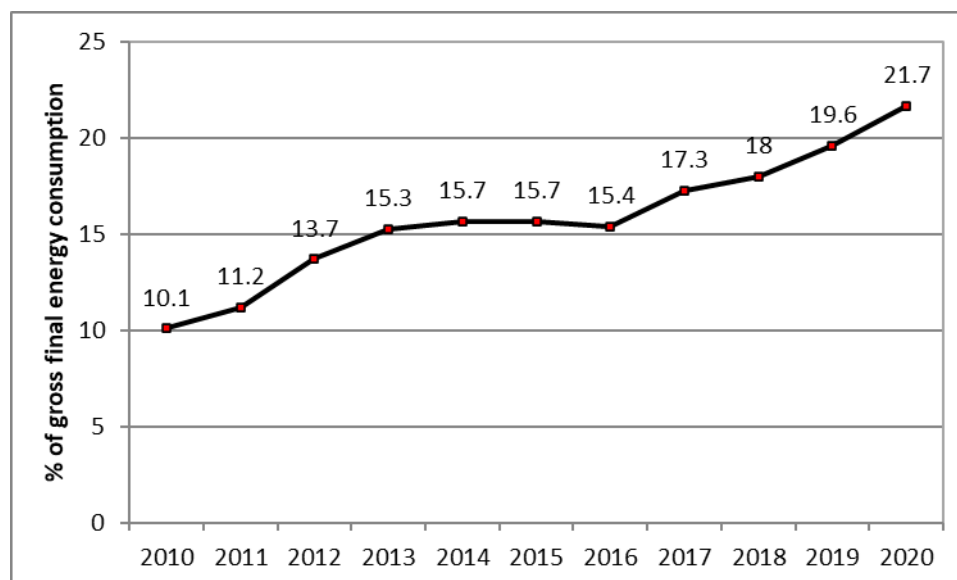


Table 32: Share of renewable energy in gross final energy consumption and by sector

Year	Share of renewable energy sources	Share of renewable energy in transport	Share of renewable energy in electricity	Share of renewable energy in heating and cooling
2010	10.1	1.9	12.3	18.7
2011	11.2	0.6	13.8	20.1
2012	13.7	0.9	16.4	24.1
2013	15.3	1.0	21.2	27.4
2014	15.7	1.3	21.9	27.9
2015	15.7	1.1	22.1	26.6
2016	15.4	1.6	22.7	25.4
2017	17.3	4.0	24.5	28.2
2018	18.0	4.1	26.0	30.1
2019	19.6	4.0	31.3	30.0
2020	21.7	5.3	35.9	31.9

Energy import dependency by products

The indicator shows the share of total inland energy needs met by imports from other countries. It is calculated as net imports divided by the sum of gross inland energy consumption plus maritime bunkers.

$$\text{Energy dependence} = \frac{\text{Net imports}}{\sum(\text{Gross inland energy consumption} + \text{International maritime bunkers})}$$

Figure 33: Total energy dependence as percentage of imports in total energy consumption

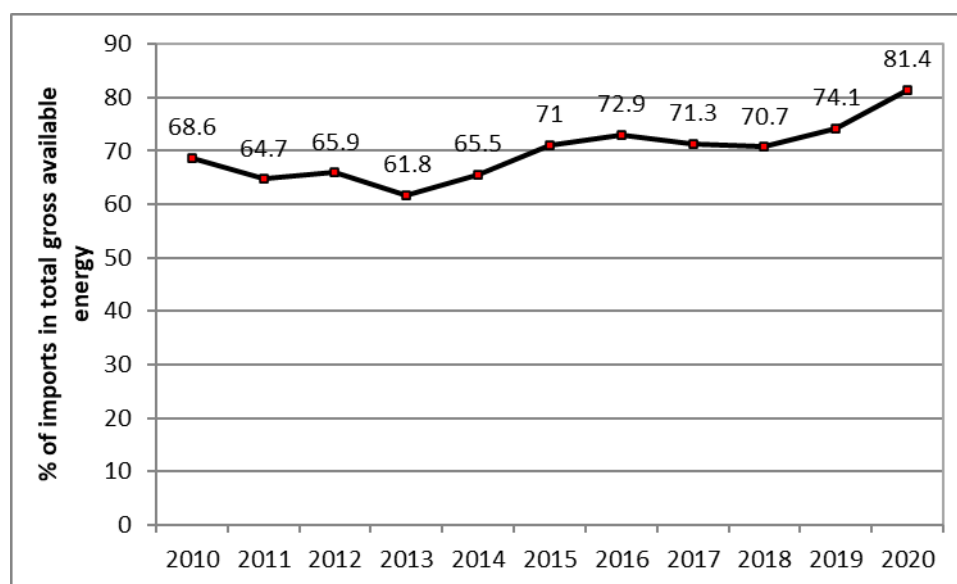


Table 33: Energy import dependency in total and by product

Year	All products	Solid fuels	Oil and petroleum products (excluding biofuel portion)	Natural Gas
2010	68.6	5.1	98.7	99.9
2011	64.7	2.9	93.9	100.0
2012	65.9	2.3	101.3	100.3
2013	61.8	3.2	94.7	100.0
2014	65.5	2.9	99.9	99.3
2015	71.0	2.8	105.4	99.9
2016	72.9	4.4	99.7	99.2
2017	71.3	4.8	98.1	100.5
2018	70.7	5.1	97.9	100.7
2019	74.1	6.3	95.7	99.0
2020	81.4	10.1	106.4	100.7

Population unable to keep home adequately warm by poverty status

The indicator has been covered in SDF 1: Poverty

Greenhouse gas emissions intensity of energy consumption

(This indicator is also included in SDG 13: Climate action)

The indicator is calculated as the ratio between energy-related GHG emissions and gross inland consumption of energy. It expresses how many tonnes CO₂ equivalents of energy-related GHGs are being emitted in a certain economy per unit of energy that is being consumed. The data on energy emissions are being sourced from the GHG emissions reported to the UNFCCC.

Figure 34: Index of greenhouse gas emission intensity of energy consumption

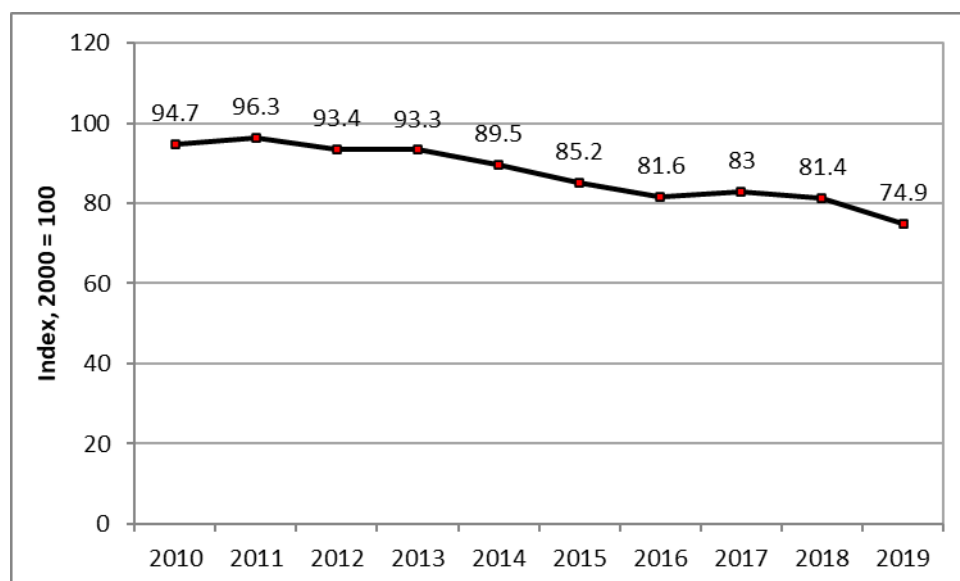


Table 34: Index of greenhouse gas emission intensity of energy consumption

Year	Greenhouse gas emissions intensity of energy consumption (Index, 2000=100)
2010	94.7
2011	96.3
2012	93.4
2013	93.3
2014	89.5
2015	85.2
2016	81.6
2017	83.0
2018	81.4
2019	74.9

SDG 8. Decent work and economic growth

Real GDP per capita

The indicator is calculated as the ratio of real GDP to the average population of a specific year. GDP measures the value of total final output of goods and services produced by an economy within a certain period of time. It includes goods and services that have markets (or which could have markets) and products which are produced by general government and non-profit institutions.

It is a measure of economic activity and is commonly used as a proxy for the development in a country's material living standards. However, it is not a complete measure of economic welfare. For example, GDP does not include most unpaid household work. Neither does GDP take account of negative effects of economic activity, like environmental degradation.

Figure 35: Real GDP in euro per inhabitant

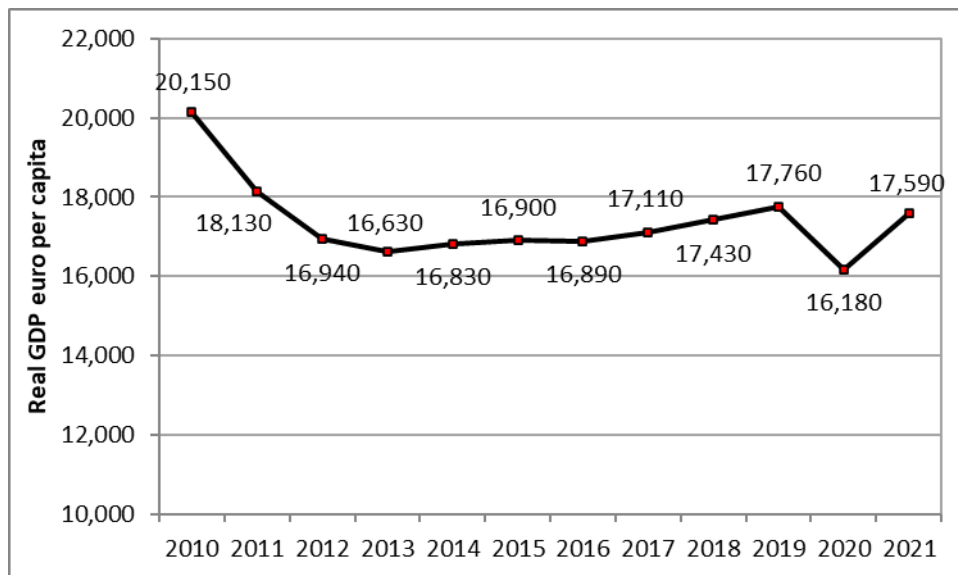


Table 35: Real GDP in euro per inhabitant

Year	Real GDP in euro per inhabitant
2010	20,150
2011	18,130
2012	16,940
2013	16,630
2014	16,830
2015	16,900
2016	16,890
2017	17,110
2018	17,430
2019 ^P	17,760
2020 ^P	16,180
2021 ^P	17,590

p: provisional

Young people neither in employment nor in education and training by sex

The indicator has been covered in SDG 4: Quality education

Employment rate by sex

The indicator measures the share of the population aged 20 to 64 which is employed. Employed persons are defined as all persons who, during a reference week, worked at least one hour for pay or profit or were temporarily absent from such work.

The indicator is part of the adjusted, break-corrected main indicators series and should not be compared with the annual and quarterly non-adjusted series, which have slightly different results.

Figure 36: Employment rate of the population aged 20 to 64 years by sex

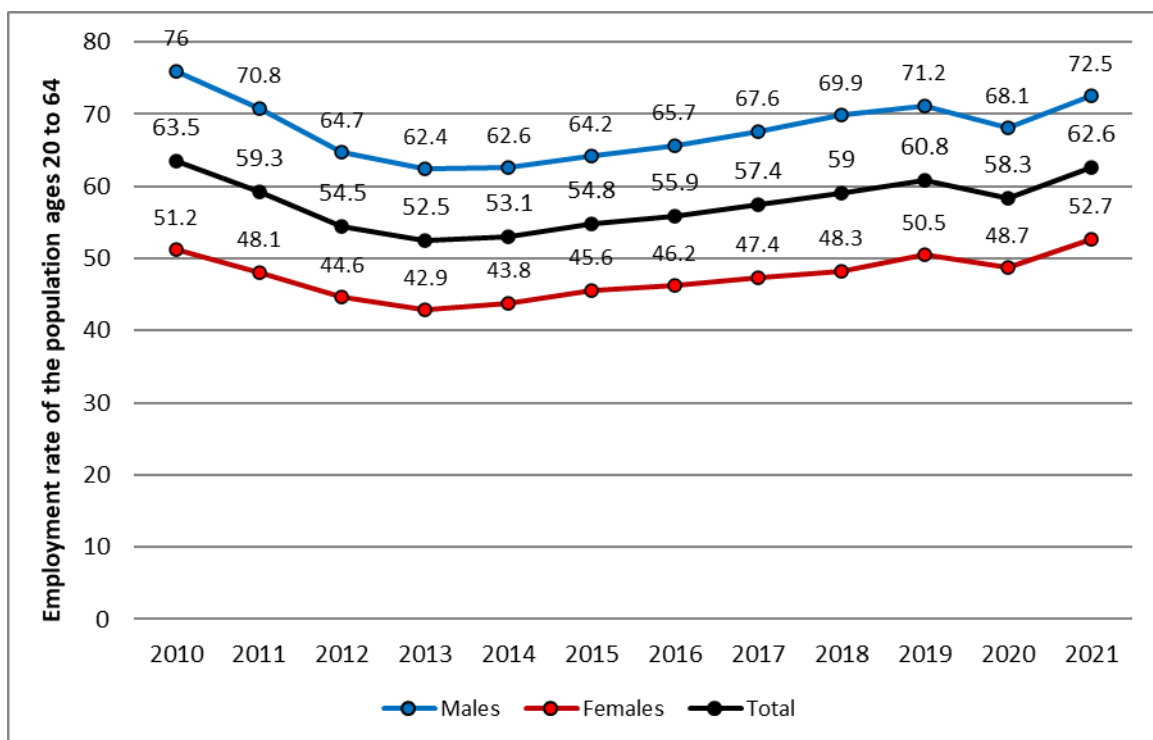


Table 36: Employment rate of the population ages 20 to 64 in total and by sex

Year	Total	Males	Females
2010	63.5	76.0	51.2
2011	59.3	70.8	48.1
2012	54.5	64.7	44.6
2013	52.5	62.4	42.9
2014	53.1	62.6	43.8
2015	54.8	64.2	45.6
2016	55.9	65.7	46.2
2017	57.4	67.6	47.4
2018	59.0	69.9	48.3
2019	60.8	71.2	50.5
2020	58.3	68.1	48.7
2021	62.6	72.5	52.7

Long-term unemployment rate by sex

The indicator measures the share of the economically active population aged 15 to 74 who has been unemployed for 12 months or more.

Unemployed persons are defined as all persons who were without work during the reference week, were currently available for work and were either actively seeking work in the last four weeks or had already found a job to start within the next three months. The economically active population comprises employed and unemployed persons.

Figure 37: Long term unemployment rate of the active population in total and by sex

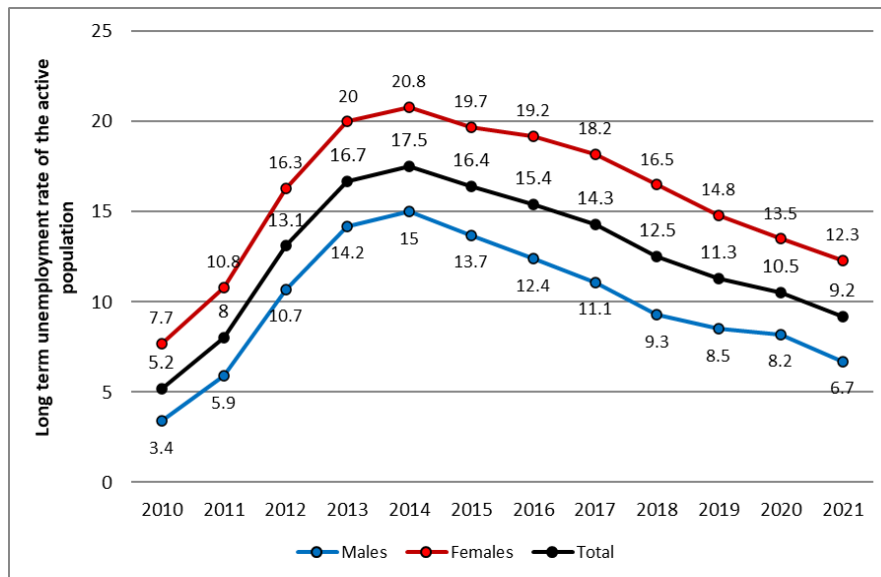


Table 37: Long-term unemployment of the active population in total and by sex

Year	Total	Males	Females
2010	5.2	3.4	7.7
2011	8.0	5.9	10.8
2012	13.1	10.7	16.3
2013	16.7	14.2	20.0
2014	17.5	15.0	20.8
2015	16.4	13.7	19.7
2016	15.4	12.4	19.2
2017	14.3	11.1	18.2
2018	12.5	9.3	16.5
2019	11.3	8.5	14.8
2020	10.5	8.2	13.5
2021	9.2	6.7	12.3

People killed in accidents at work

The indicator has been covered in SDG 3: Good health and well-being

Inactive population due to caring responsibilities by sex

The indicator has been covered in SDG 5: Gender equality

SDG 9 - Industry, innovation and infrastructure

Gross domestic expenditure on R&D by sector - % of GDP

The indicator measures gross domestic expenditure on R&D (GERD) as a percentage of the gross domestic product (GDP). "Research and experimental development (R&D) comprise creative work undertaken on a systematic basis in order to increase the stock of knowledge, including knowledge of man, culture and society and the use of this stock of knowledge to devise new applications".

Figure 38: Gross Domestic Expenditure on R&D by Sector

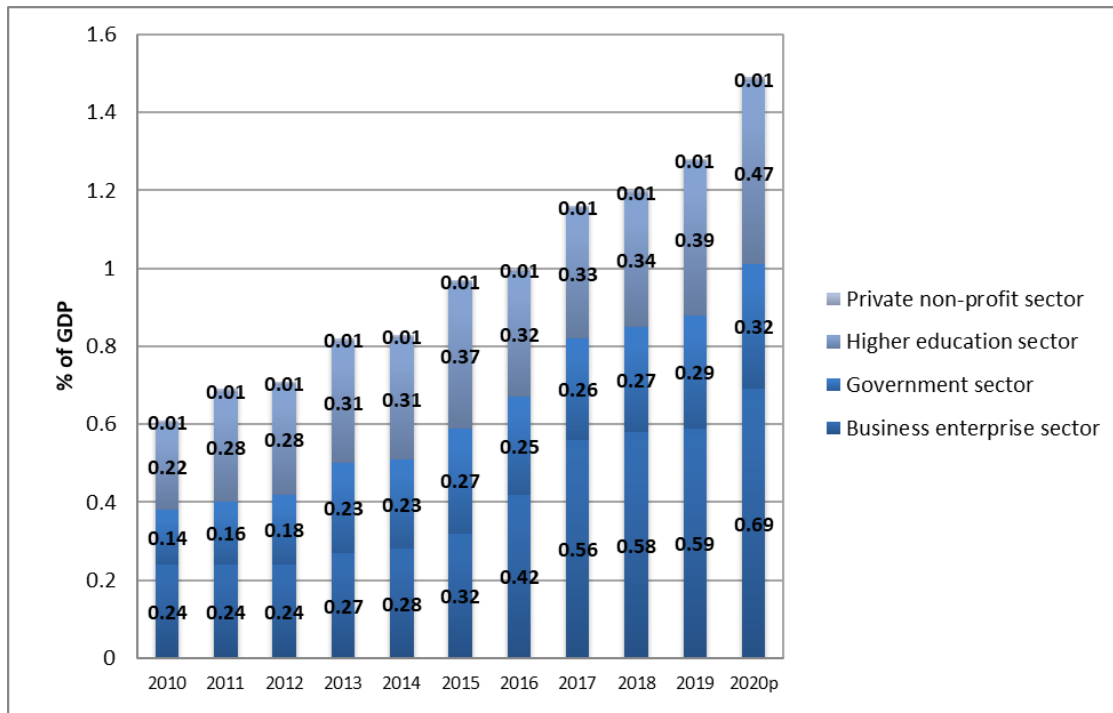


Table 38: Gross Domestic Expenditure on R&D by Sector

Year	All sectors	Business enterprise sector	Government sector	Higher education sector	Private non-profit sector
2010	0.6	0.24	0.14	0.22	0.01
2011	0.7	0.24	0.16	0.28	0.01
2012	0.7	0.24	0.18	0.28	0.01
2013	0.8	0.27	0.23	0.31	0.01
2014	0.8	0.28	0.23	0.31	0.01
2015	1.0	0.32	0.27	0.37	0.01
2016	1.0	0.42	0.25	0.32	0.01
2017	1.2	0.56	0.26	0.33	0.01
2018	1.2	0.58	0.27	0.34	0.01
2019	1.3	0.59	0.29	0.39	0.01
2020 ^p	1.5	0.69	0.32	0.47	0.01

p: provisional

R&D personnel by sector - % of active population

The indicator measures the share of R&D personnel broken down by the following institutional sectors: Business Enterprise, Government, Higher Education, Private Non-Profit. Data are presented in full-time equivalents as a share of the economically active population (the 'labour force'). The indicator measures the share of R&D personnel broken down by the following institutional sectors: Business Enterprise, Government, Higher Education, Private Non-Profit. Data are presented in full-time equivalents as a share of the economically active population (the 'labour force').

Figure 39: R&D Personnel by Sector (% of Active Population)

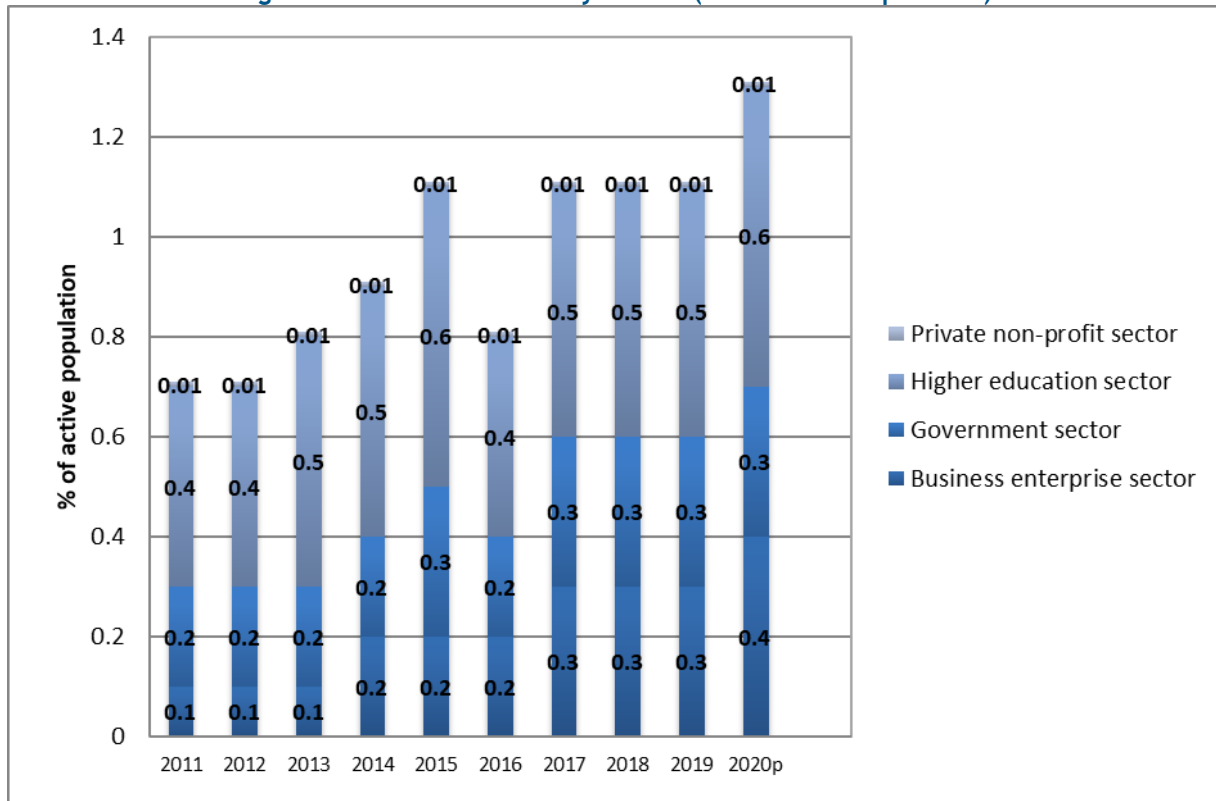


Table 39: R&D Personnel by Sector (% of Active Population)

Year	All sectors	Business enterprise sector	Government sector	Higher education sector	Private non-profit sector
2011	0.8	0.1	0.2	0.4	0.01
2012	0.8	0.1	0.2	0.4	0.01
2013	0.9	0.1	0.2	0.5	0.01
2014	0.9	0.2	0.2	0.5	0.01
2015	1.0	0.2	0.3	0.6	0.01
2016	0.9	0.2	0.2	0.4	0.01
2017	1.0	0.3	0.3	0.5	0.01
2018	1.1	0.3	0.3	0.5	0.01
2019	1.2	0.3	0.3	0.5	0.01
2020 ^p	1.3	0.4	0.3	0.6	0.01

p: provisional

SDG 10 - Reduced inequalities

Purchasing power adjusted GDP per capita

Gross domestic product (GDP) is a measure for the economic activity. It refers to the value of the total output of goods and services produced by an economy, less intermediate consumption, plus net taxes on products and imports. GDP per capita is calculated as the ratio of GDP to the average population in a specific year. Basic figures are expressed in purchasing power standards (PPS), which represents a common currency that eliminates the differences in price levels between countries to allow meaningful volume comparisons of GDP.

Figure 40: Purchasing Power Adjusted GDP per Capita

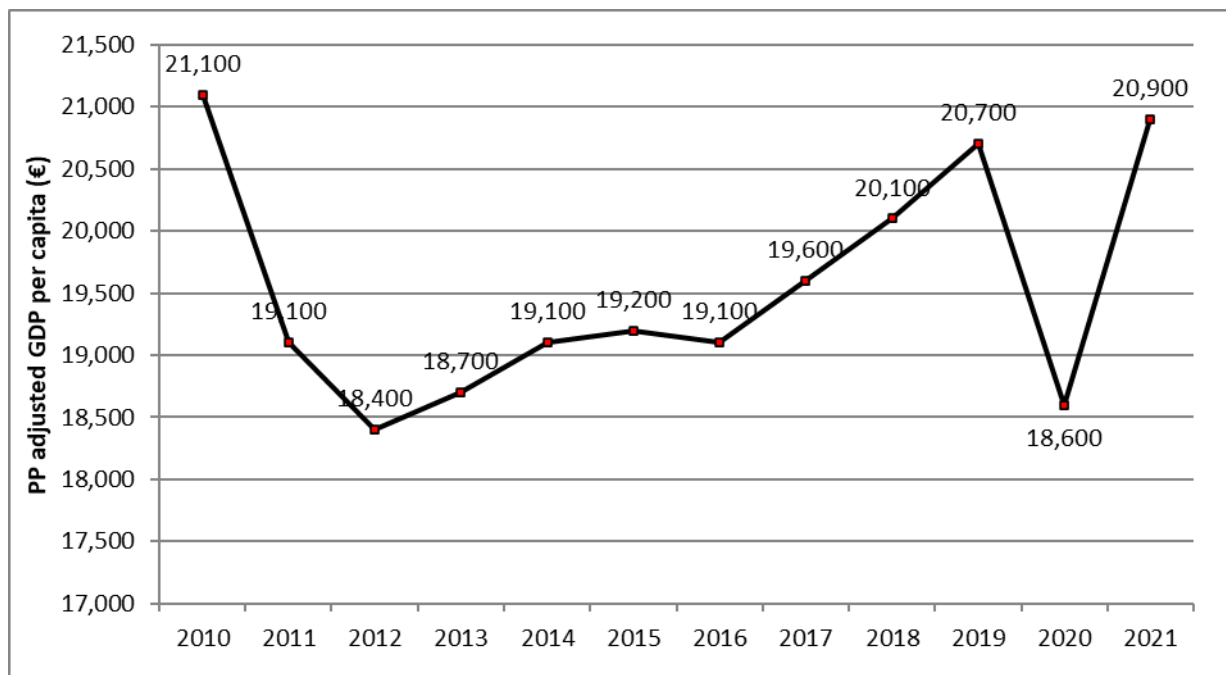


Table 40: Purchasing power adjusted GDP per capita

Year	PP adjusted GDP per capita (€)
2010	21,100
2011	19,100
2012	18,400
2013	18,700
2014	19,100
2015	19,200
2016	19,100
2017	19,600
2018	20,100
2019	20,700
2020	18,600
2021	20,900

Adjusted gross disposable income of households per capita

The indicator reflects the purchasing power of households and their ability to invest in goods and services or save for the future, by accounting for taxes and social contributions and monetary in-kind social benefits. It is calculated as the adjusted gross disposable income of households and Non-Profit Institutions Serving Households (NPISH) divided by the purchasing power parities (PPP) of the actual individual consumption of households and by the total resident population.

Figure 41: Adjusted Gross Disposable Income of Household per Capita

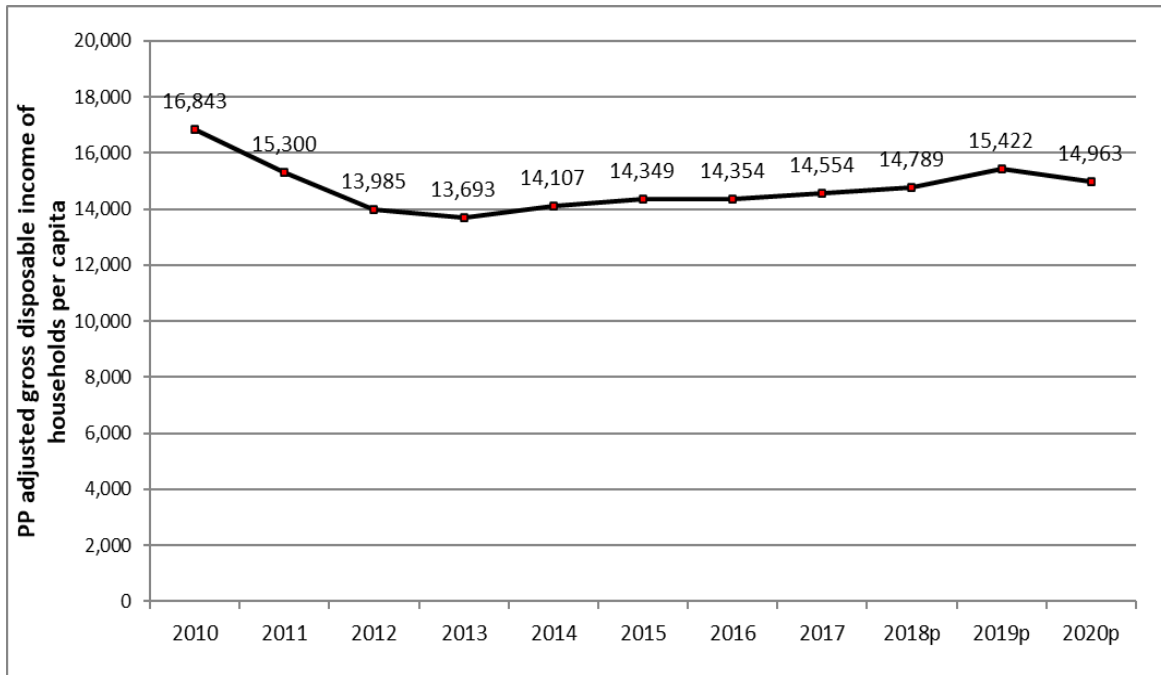


Table 41: Adjusted gross disposable income of households per capita - Purchasing power standard (PPS) per inhabitant

Year	PP adjusted gross disposable income of households per capita
2010	16,843
2011	15,300
2012	13,985
2013	13,693
2014	14,107
2015	14,349
2016	14,354
2017	14,554
2018 ^p	14,789
2019 ^p	15,422
2020 ^p	14,963

p: provisional

Relative median at-risk-of-poverty gap - % distance to poverty threshold

The indicator is calculated as the distance between the median equivalised total net income of persons below the at-risk-of-poverty threshold and the at-risk-of-poverty threshold itself, expressed as a percentage of the at-risk-of-poverty threshold. This threshold is set at 60% of the national median equivalised disposable income of all people in a country.

Figure 42: Relative median at-risk-of-poverty gap - % distance to poverty threshold

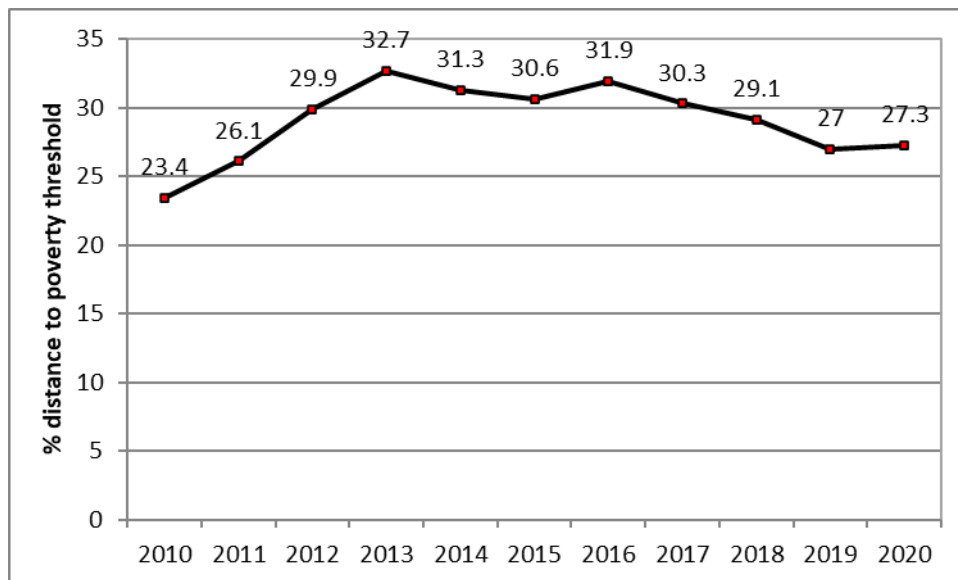


Table 42: Relative median at-risk-of-poverty gap - % distance to poverty threshold

Year	% distance to poverty threshold
2010	23.4
2011	26.1
2012	29.9
2013	32.7
2014	31.3
2015	30.6
2016	31.9
2017	30.3
2018	29.1
2019	27.0
2020	27.3

Income distribution

The indicator measures the inequality of income distribution. It is calculated as the ratio of total income received by the 20 % of the population with the highest income (the top quintile) to that received by the 20 % of the population with the lowest income (the bottom quintile).

Figure 43: Ratio of total income received by the 20% of the population with highest income to that received by the 20% of the population with the lowest income S80/S20

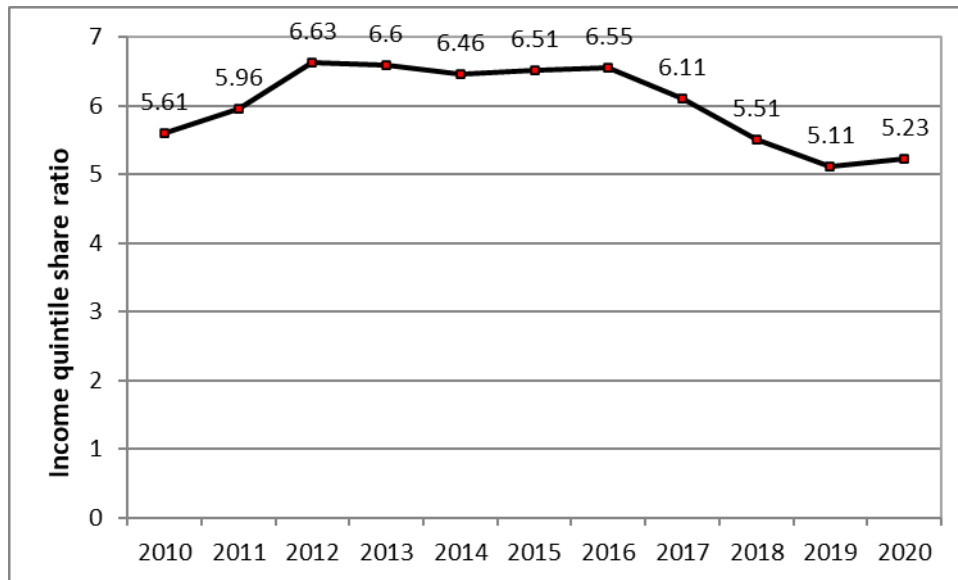


Table 43: Ratio of total income received by the 20% of the population with highest income to that received by the 20% of the population with the lowest income S80/S20

Year	Income quintile share ratio
2010	5.61
2011	5.96
2012	6.63
2013	6.60
2014	6.46
2015	6.51
2016	6.55
2017	6.11
2018	5.51
2019	5.11
2020	5.23

Income share of the bottom 40% of the population

The indicator measures the income share received by the bottom 40% of the population. The income concept used is the total disposable household income.

Figure 44: Income share of the bottom 40% of the Population - % of Income

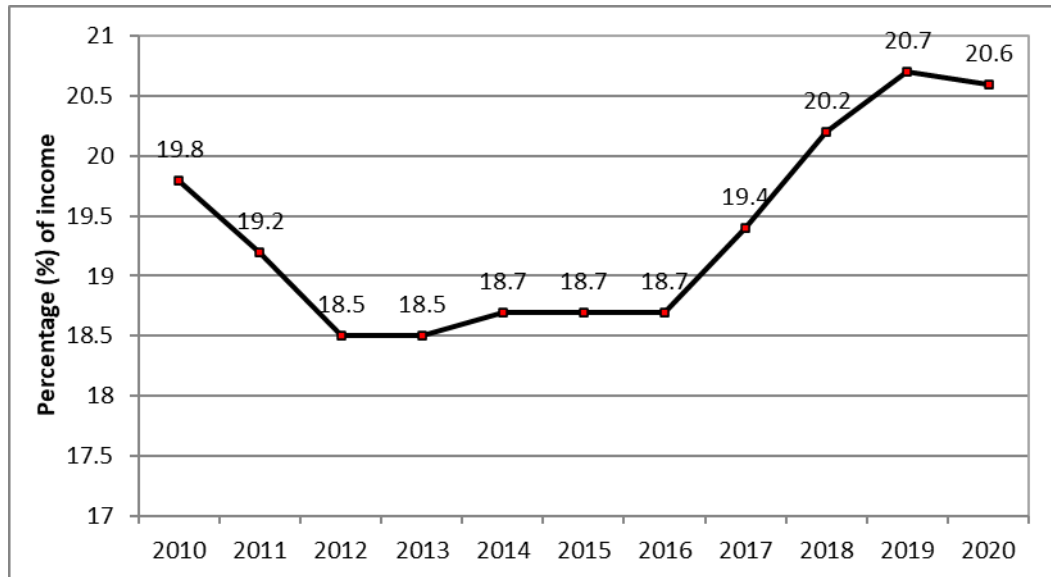


Table 44: Income share of the bottom 40% of the Population - % of Income

Year	Percentage (%) of income
2010	19.8
2011	19.2
2012	18.5
2013	18.5
2014	18.7
2015	18.7
2016	18.7
2017	19.4
2018	20.2
2019	20.7
2020	20.6

Asylum applications

The indicator shows the number of first-time asylum applicants per million inhabitants and the number of positive first instance decisions per million inhabitants. Please note that caution is required when comparing these two values, since applications received in a given year might not be processed until a later year. A first-time applicant for international protection is a person who lodged an application for asylum for the first time in a given Member State. First instance decisions are decisions granted by the respective authority acting as a first instance of the administrative/judicial asylum procedure in the receiving country.

Figure 45: Asylum applications - number per million inhabitants

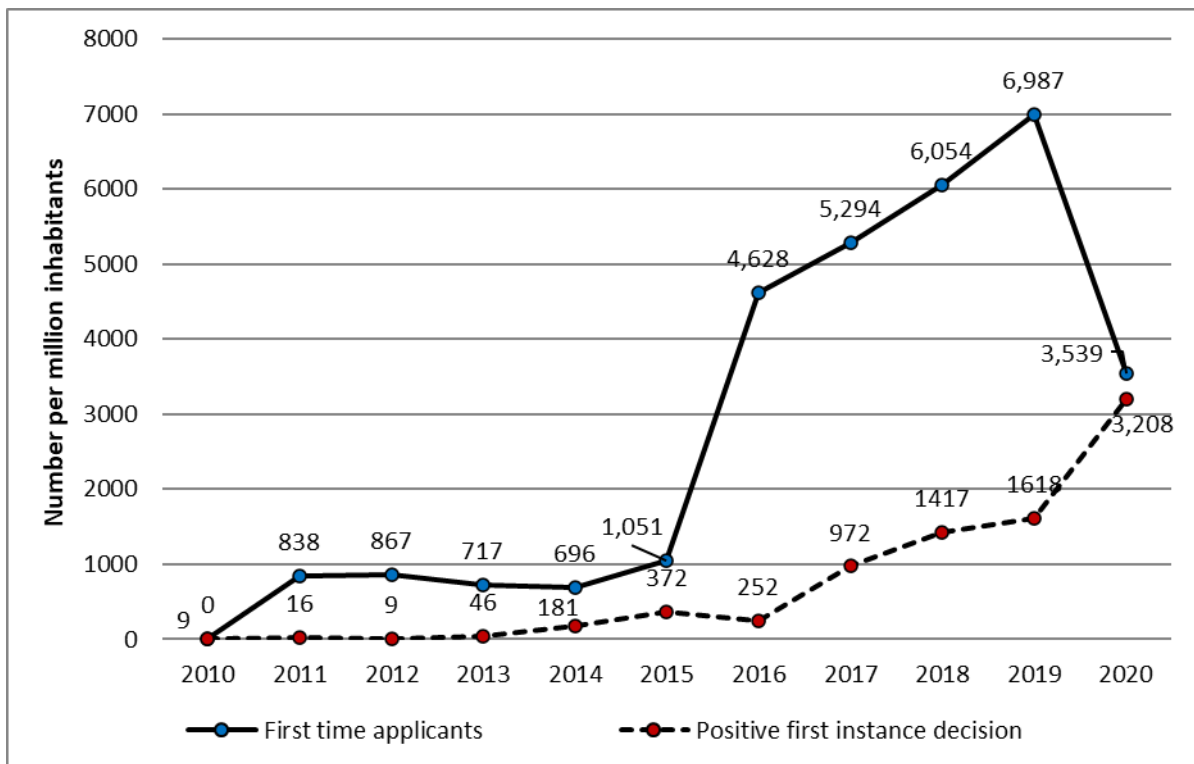


Table 45: Asylum applications - number per million inhabitants

Year	First time applicants	Positive first instance decision
2010	-	9
2011	838	16
2012	867	9
2013	717	46
2014	696	181
2015	1,051	372
2016	4,628	252
2017	5,294	972
2018	6,054	1,417
2019	6,987	1,618
2020	3,539	3,208

SDG 11 - Sustainable cities and communities

Overcrowding rate by poverty status

(This indicator has been covered in the SDG 1: Poverty)

Population living in households considering that they suffer from noise, by poverty status

(This indicator has been covered in the SDG 3: Good health and well-being)

People killed in road accidents

(This indicator has been covered in the SDG 3: Good health and well-being)

Exposure to air pollution by particulate matter

The indicator measures the population weighted annual mean concentration of particulate matter at urban background stations in agglomerations. Fine and coarse particulates (PM₁₀), i.e. particulates whose diameters are less than 10 micrometers, can be carried deep into the lungs where they can cause inflammation and exacerbate the condition of people suffering heart and lung diseases.

Fine particulates (PM_{2.5}) are those whose diameters are less than 2.5 micrometers. They are therefore a subset of the PM₁₀ particles. Their deleterious health impacts are more serious than PM₁₀ as they can be drawn further into the lungs and may be more toxic.

Figure 46: Exposure to air pollution by particulate matter

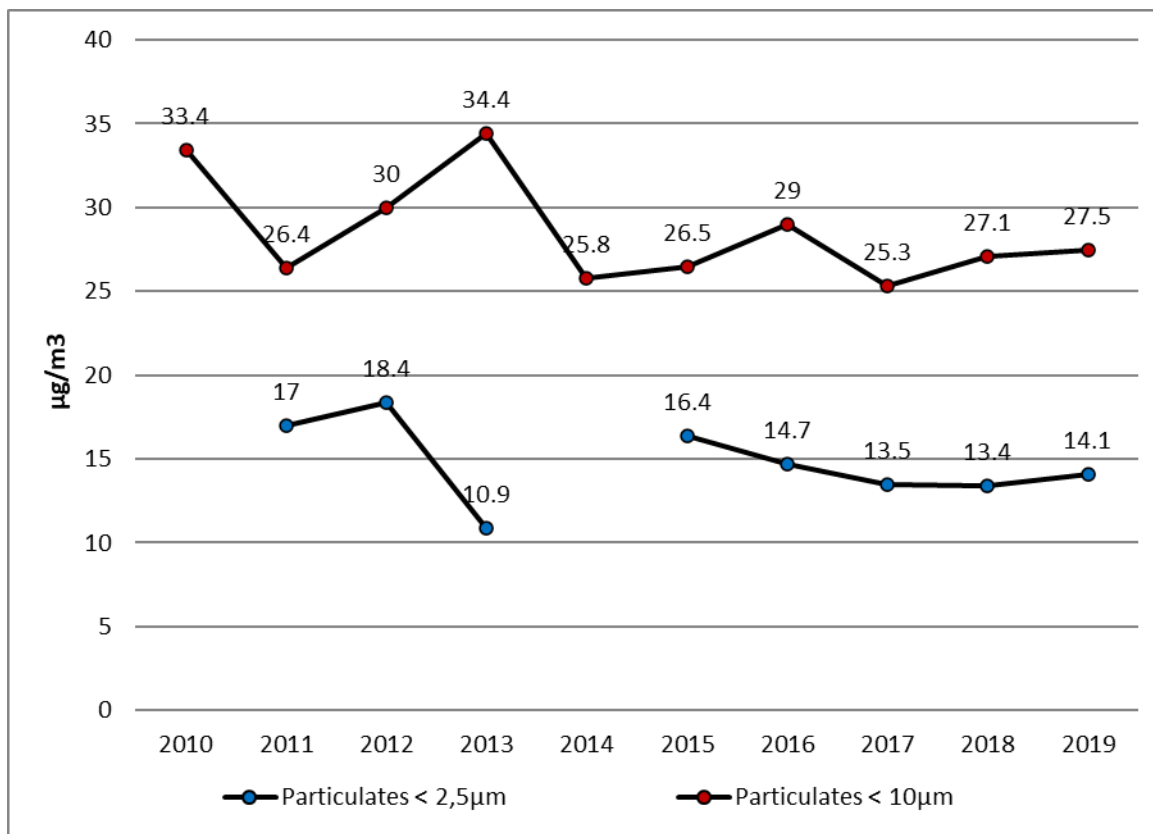


Table 46: Exposure to air pollution by particulate matter - µg/m³

Year	Particulates < 2,5µm	Particulates < 10µm
2010	N/A	33.4
2011	17.0	26.4
2012	18.4	30.0
2013	10.9	34.4
2014	N/A	25.8
2015	16.4	26.5
2016	14.7	29.0
2017	13.5	25.3
2018	13.4	27.1
2019	14.1	27.5

Recycling rate of municipal waste

The indicator measures the tonnage recycled from municipal waste divided by the total municipal waste arising. Recycling includes material recycling, composting and anaerobic digestion.

Figure 47: Recycling rate of municipal waste

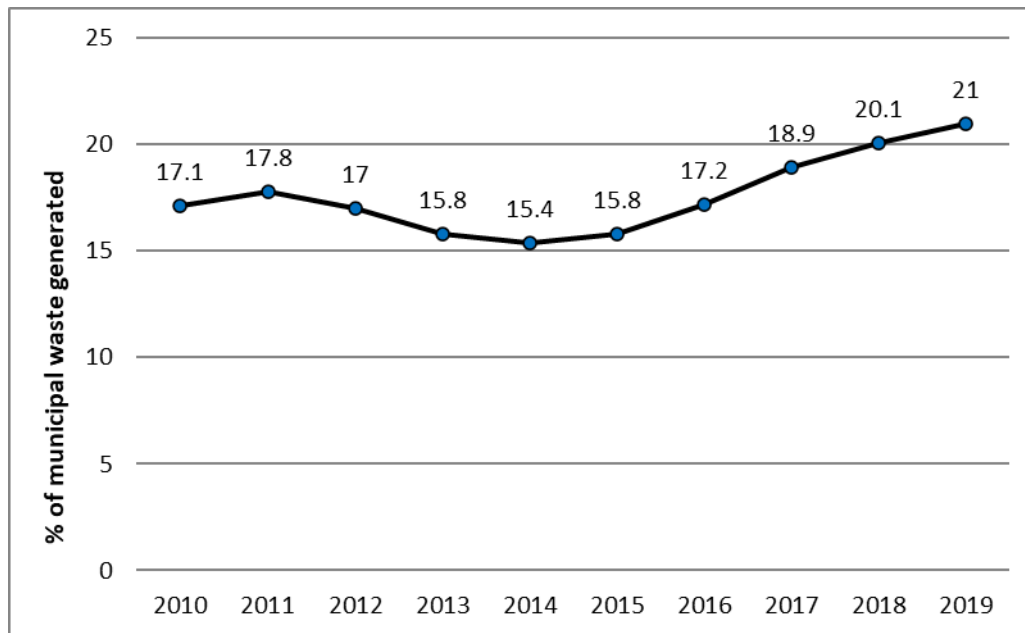


Table 47: Recycling rate of municipal waste - % of total waste generated

Year	% of total municipal waste generated
2010	17.1
2011	17.8
2012	17.0
2013	15.8
2014	15.4
2015	15.8
2016	17.2
2017	18.9
2018	20.1
2019	21.0

SDG 12 - Responsible consumption and production

Resource productivity and domestic material consumption (DMC)

This indicator presents the gross domestic product (GDP) divided by domestic material consumption (DMC). DMC measures the total amount of materials directly used by an economy. It is defined as the annual quantity of raw materials extracted from the domestic territory of the focal economy, plus all physical imports minus all physical exports. It is important to note that the term "consumption", as used in DMC, denotes apparent consumption and not final consumption. DMC does not include upstream flows related to imports and exports of raw materials and products originating outside of the focal economy.

Figure 48: Resource productivity and domestic material Consumption (DMC)

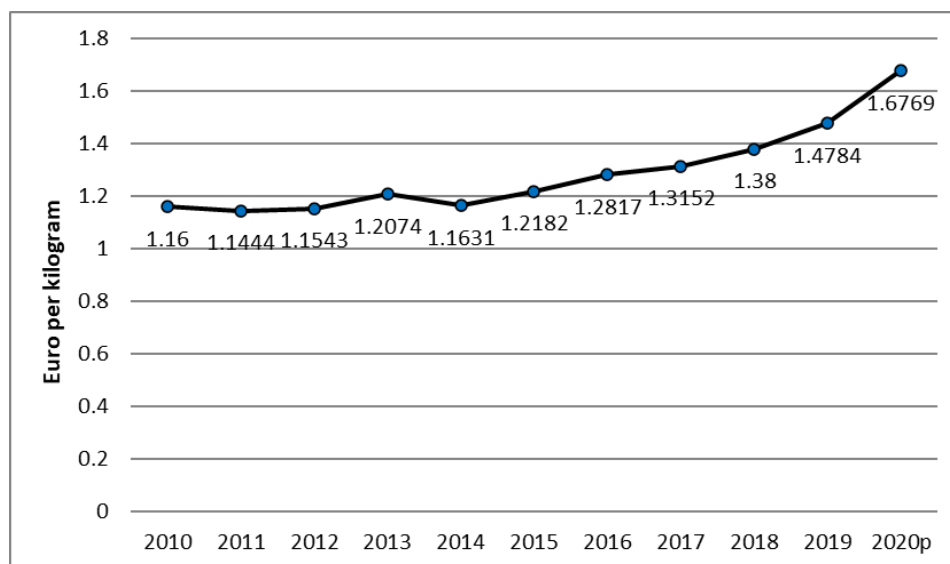


Table 48: Resource productivity and domestic material Consumption (DMC)

Year	Euro per kilogram
2010	1,16
2011	1,1444
2012	1,1543
2013	1,2074
2014	1,1631
2015	1,2182
2016	1,2817
2017	1,3152
2018	1,38
2019	1,4784
2020p	1,6769

p: provisional

Generation of waste excluding major mineral wastes by hazardousness

This indicator is defined as all waste generated in a country per inhabitant and year (in kg), excluding major mineral wastes, dredging spoils and contaminated soils. This exclusion enhances comparability across countries as mineral waste accounts for high quantities in some countries and economic activities such as mining and construction.

Figure 49: Generation of waste excluding major mineral wastes by hazardousness - kg per capita

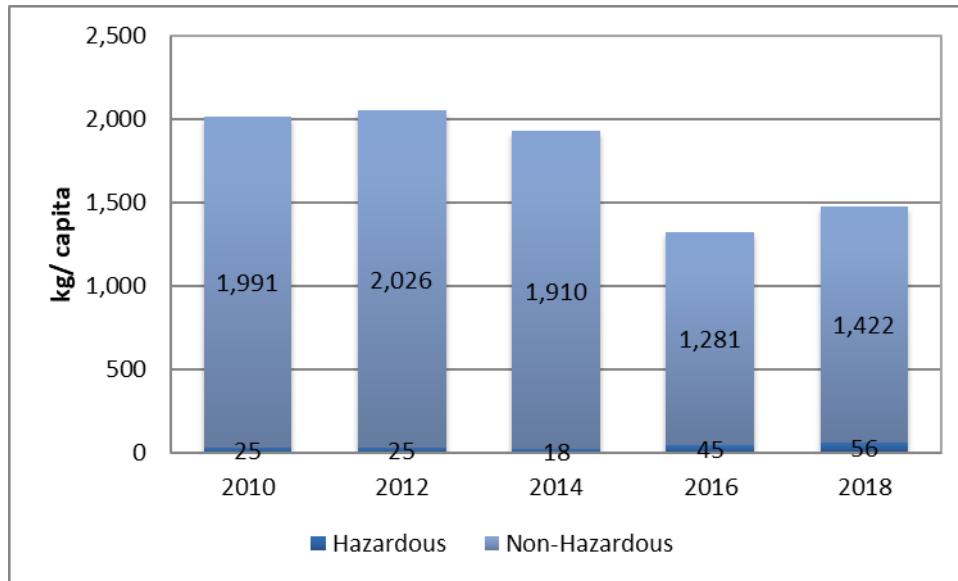


Table 49: Generation of waste excluding major mineral wastes by hazardousness - kg per capita

Year	Hazardous and non-hazardous Total	Hazardous	Non-Hazardous
2010	2,016	25	1,991
2012	2,051	25	2,026
2014	1,928	18	1,910
2016	1,326	45	1,281
2018	1,478	56	1,422

Circular material use rate

The circular material use rate (CMR) measures the share of material recovered and fed back into the economy in overall material use. The CMU is defined as the ratio of the circular use of material to the overall material use. The overall material use is measured by summing up the aggregate domestic material consumption (DMC) and the circular use of materials. DMC is defined in economy-wide material flow accounts. The circular use of materials is approximated by the amount of waste recycled in domestic recovery plants minus imported waste destined for recovery plus exported waste destined for recovery abroad. A higher CMU rate value means that more secondary materials substitute for primary raw materials thus reducing the environmental impacts of extracting primary material.

Figure 50: Circular material use rate (CMR) - % of the circular use of material to the overall material use

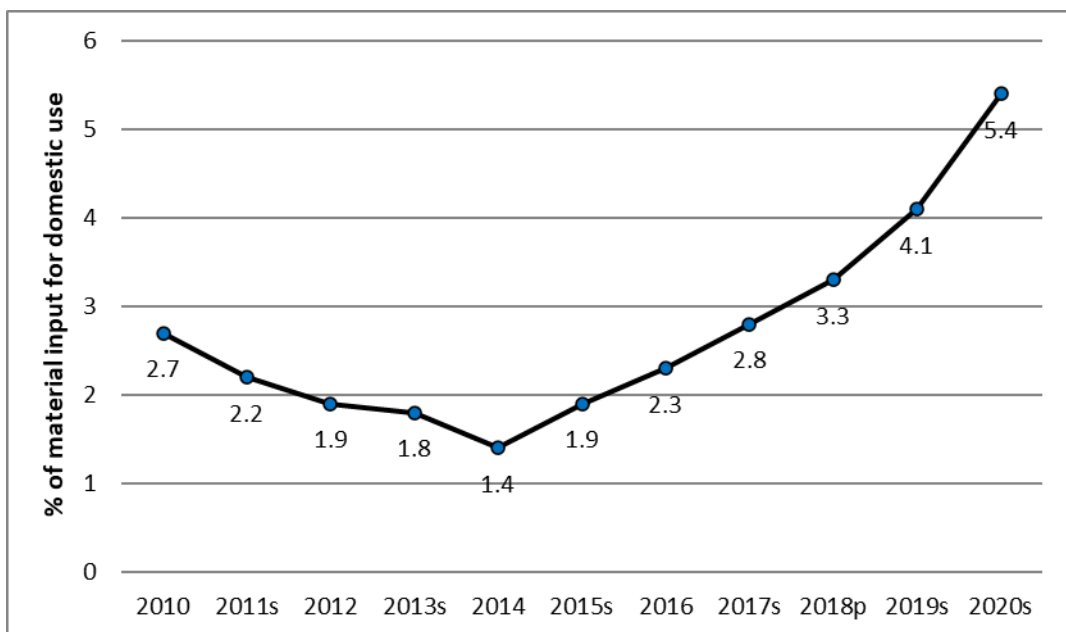


Table 50: Circular material use rate (CMR) - % of the circular use of material to the overall material use

Year	% of material input for domestic use
2010	2.7
2011 ^s	2.2
2012	1.9
2013 ^s	1.8
2014	1.4
2015 ^s	1.9
2016	2.3
2017 ^s	2.8
2018 ^p	3.3
2019 ^s	4.1
2020 ^s	5.4

SDG 13 - Climate change

Greenhouse gas emissions

The indicator measures all man-made emissions of the so called 'Kyoto basket' of greenhouse gases, including carbon dioxide (CO₂), methane (CH₄), nitrous oxide (N₂O), and the so-called F-gases (hydrofluorocarbons, perfluorocarbons, nitrogen trifluoride (NF₃) and sulphur hexafluoride (SF₆)). Using each gas' individual global warming potential (GWP), they are being integrated into a single indicator expressed in units of CO₂ equivalents.

Figure 51: Greenhouse gas emissions - index, 1990=100

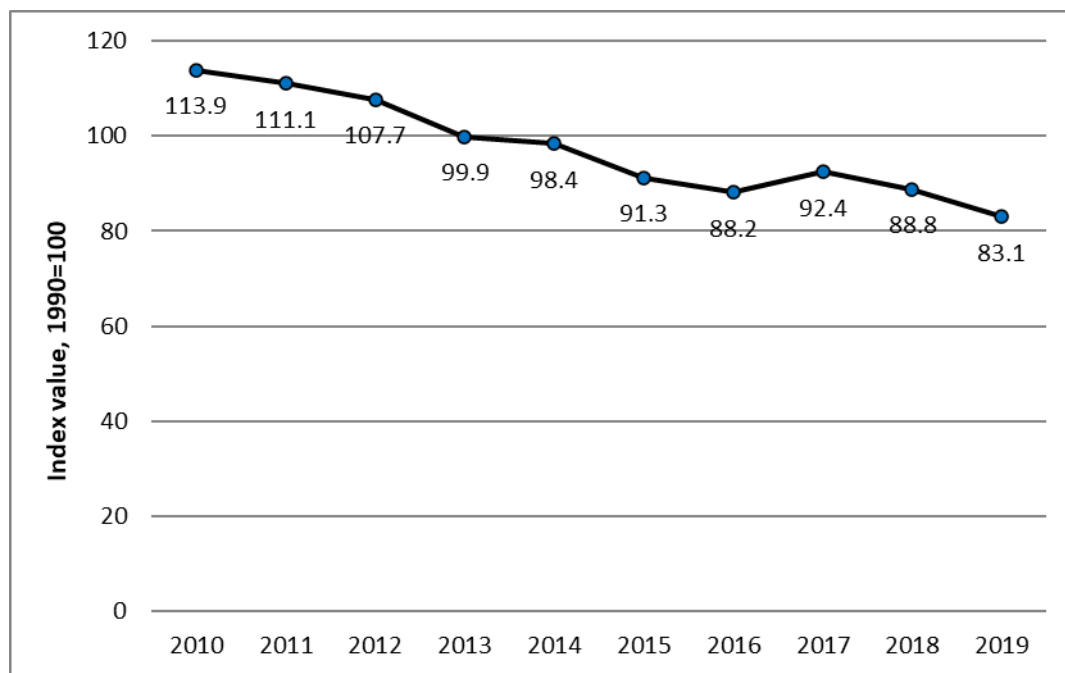


Table 51: Greenhouse gas emissions - index, 1990=100

Year	Total CO ₂ equivalent emissions with land use, land-use change and forestry (including International Aviation), Index (1990=100)
2010	113.9
2011	111.1
2012	107.7
2013	99.9
2014	98.4
2015	91.3
2016	88.2
2017	92.4
2018	88.8
2019	83.1

Greenhouse gas emissions intensity of energy consumption

(This indicator has been covered in the SDG 7. Affordable and clean energy)

SDG 14 - Life below water

Surface of marine sites designated under Natura 2000

The indicator measures the surface of marine sites designated under Natura 2000. The Natura 2000 network comprises both marine and terrestrial protected areas designated under the EU Habitats and Birds Directives with the goal to maintain or restore a favourable conservation status for habitat types and species of EU interest.

Figure 52: Surface of marine sites designated under Natura 2000

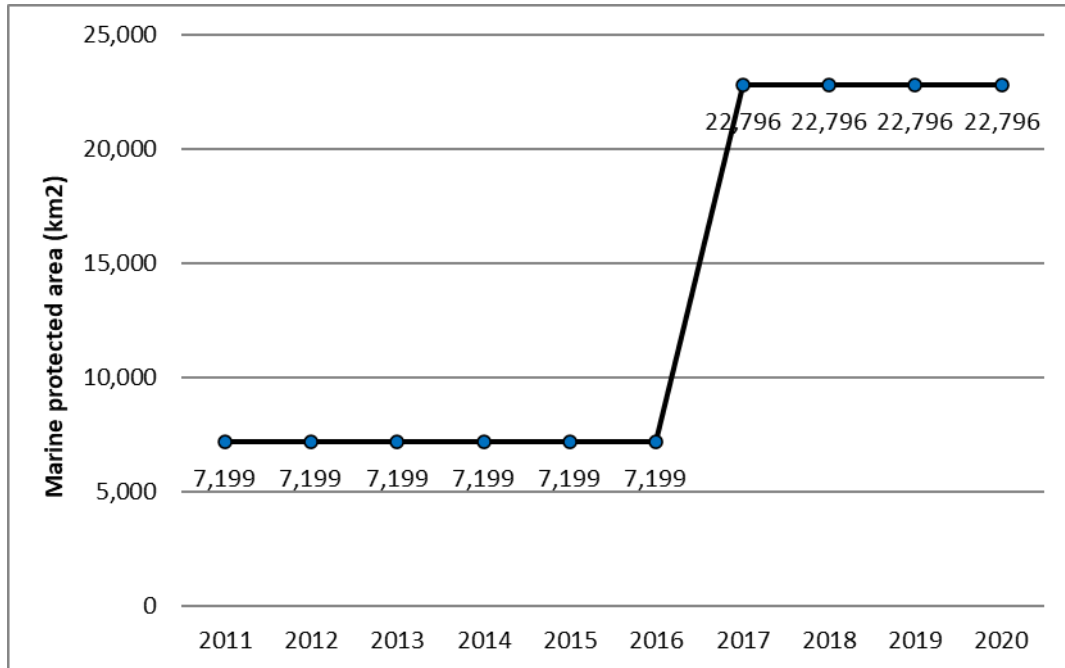


Table 52: Surface of marine sites designated under Natura 2000

Year	Marine protected area (km ²)
2011	7,199
2012	7,199
2013	7,199
2014	7,199
2015	7,199
2016	7,199
2017	22,796
2018	22,796
2019	22,796
2020	22,796

Bathing sites with excellent water quality

This indicator measures the proportion of coastal bath sites with excellent water quality. The indicator is assessed according to standards for microbiological parameters (intestinal enterococci and Escherichia coli).

Figure 53: Bathing sites with excellent water quality by locality

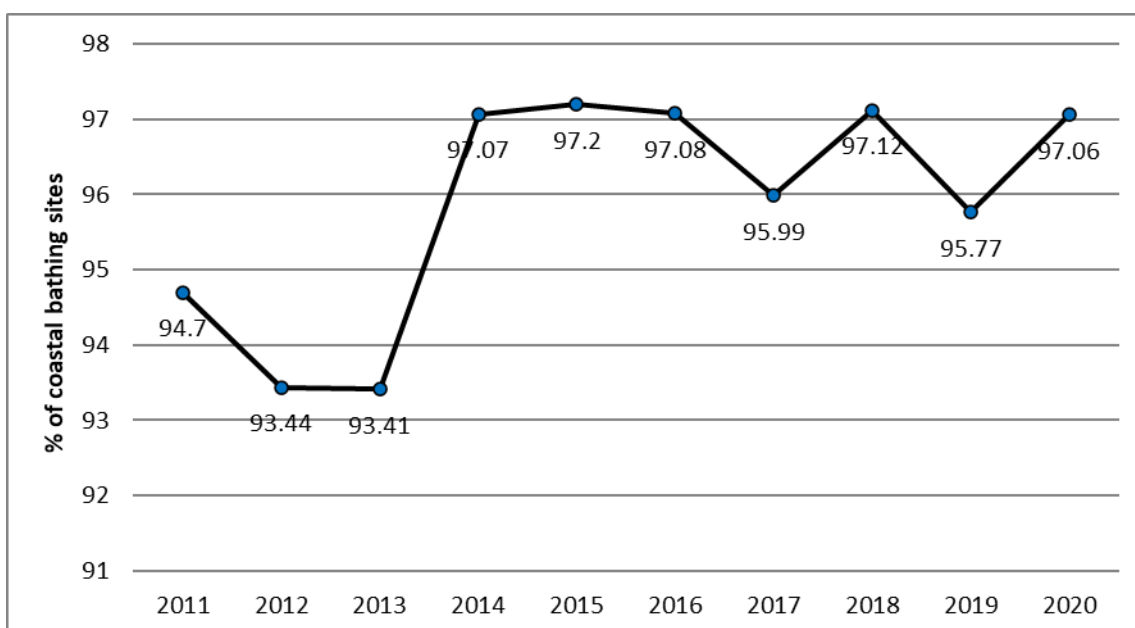


Table 53: Bathing sites with excellent water quality

Year	Coastal water excellent (%)
2011	94.70
2012	93.44
2013	93.41
2014	97.07
2015	97.20
2016	97.08
2017	95.99
2018	97.12
2019	95.77
2020	97.06

15. LIFE ON LAND

Surface of terrestrial sites designated under Natura 2000

The indicator measures the surface of terrestrial sites designated under Natura 2000. The Natura 2000 network comprises both marine and terrestrial protected areas designated under the EU Habitats and Birds Directives with the goal to maintain or restore a favourable conservation status for habitat types and species of EU interest.

Figure 54: Surface of terrestrial sites designated under Natura 2000

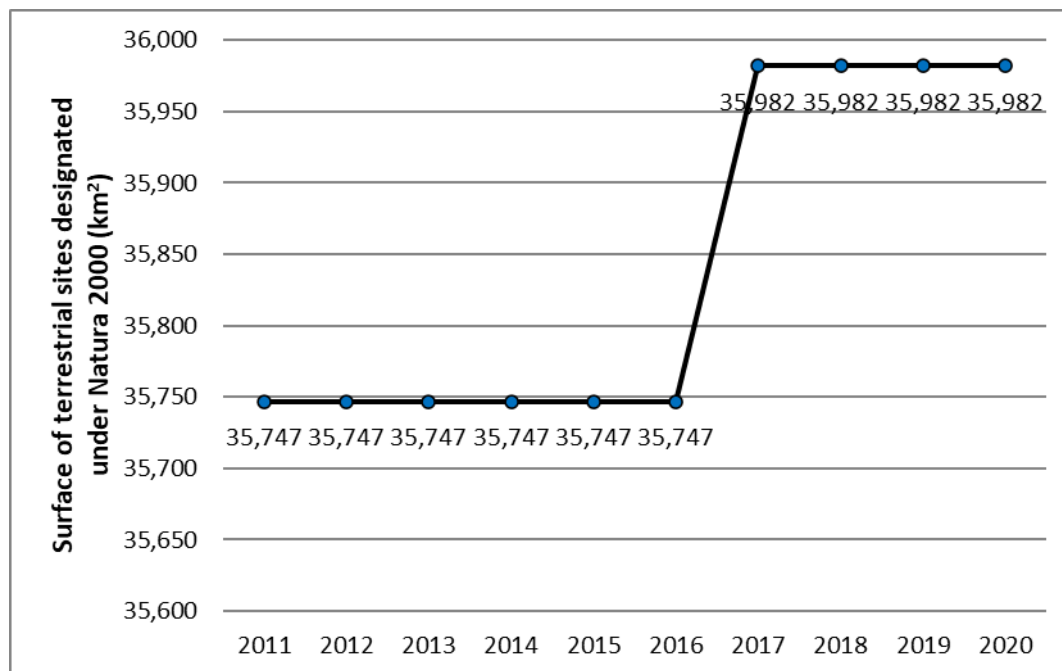


Table 54: Surface of terrestrial sites designated under Natura 2000

Year	Surface of terrestrial sites designated under Natura 2000 (km ²)
2011	35,747
2012	35,747
2013	35,747
2014	35,747
2015	35,747
2016	35,747
2017	35,982
2018	35,982
2019	35,982
2020	35,982

SDG 16 - Peace, justice and strong institutions

Standardised death rate due to homicide by sex

The indicator measures the standardised death rate of homicide and injuries inflicted by another person with the intent to injure or kill by any means, including 'late effects' from assault (International Classification of Diseases (ICD) codes X85 to Y09 and Y87.1). It does not include deaths due to legal interventions or war (ICD codes Y35 and Y36). The rate is calculated by dividing the number of people dying due to homicide or assault by the total population.

Figure 55: Standardised death rate due to homicide by sex

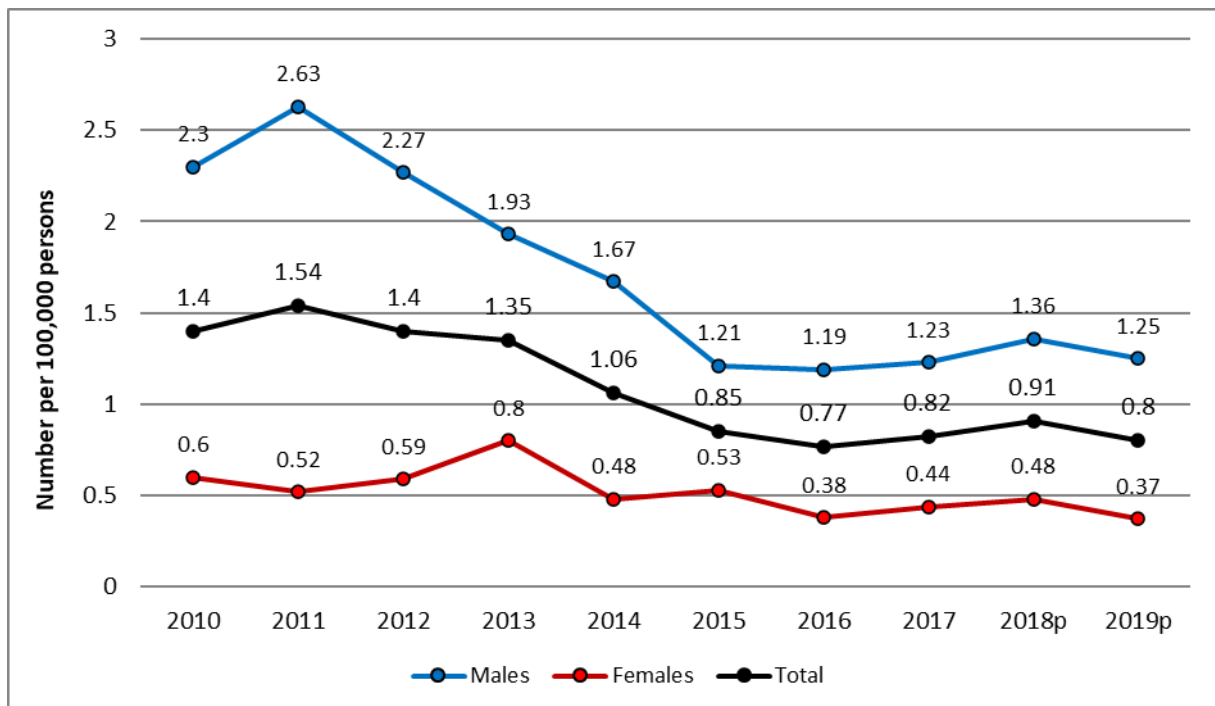


Table 55: Standardised death rate due to homicide by sex - number per 100,000 persons

Year	Total	Males	Females
2010	1.4	2.3	0.6
2011	1.54	2.63	0.52
2012	1.4	2.27	0.59
2013	1.35	1.93	0.8
2014	1.06	1.67	0.48
2015	0.85	1.21	0.53
2016	0.77	1.19	0.38
2017	0.82	1.23	0.44
2018 ^p	0.91	1.36	0.48
2019 ^p	0.8	1.25	0.37

p: provisional

Population reporting occurrence of crime, violence or vandalism in their area by poverty status

The indicator shows the share of the population who reported that they face the problem of crime, violence or vandalism in their local area. This describes the situation where the respondent feels crime, violence or vandalism in the area to be a problem for the household, although this perception is not necessarily based on personal experience.

Figure 56: Population reporting occurrence of crime, violence or vandalism in their area by poverty status

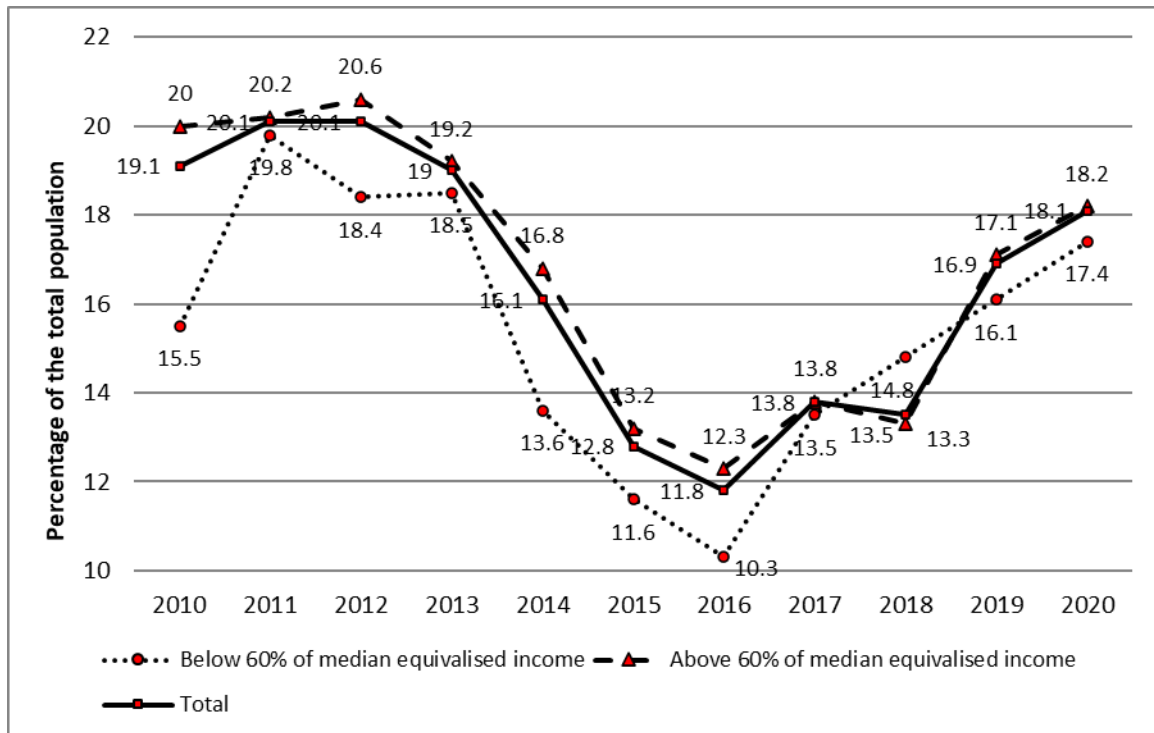


Table 56: Population reporting occurrence of crime, violence or vandalism in their area by poverty status - % of population

Year	Below 60% of median equivalised income	Above 60% of median equivalised income	Total
2010	15.5	20.0	19.1
2011	19.8	20.2	20.1
2012	18.4	20.6	20.1
2013	18.5	19.2	19.0
2014	13.6	16.8	16.1
2015	11.6	13.2	12.8
2016	10.3	12.3	11.8
2017	13.5	13.8	13.8
2018	14.8	13.3	13.5
2019	16.1	17.1	16.9
2020	17.4	18.2	18.1

General government total expenditure on law courts

The indicator refers to the general government total expenditure on 'law courts' according to the classification of the functions of government (COFOG). This includes expenditure on the "administration, operation or support of administrative, civil and criminal law courts and the judicial system, including enforcement of fines and legal settlements imposed by the courts and operation of parole probation systems, and parts of legal aid, i.e. legal representation and advice on behalf of government or on behalf of others provided by government in cash or in services". It includes administrative tribunals, ombudsmen and the like and excludes prison administrations.

Figure 57: General government total expenditure on law courts

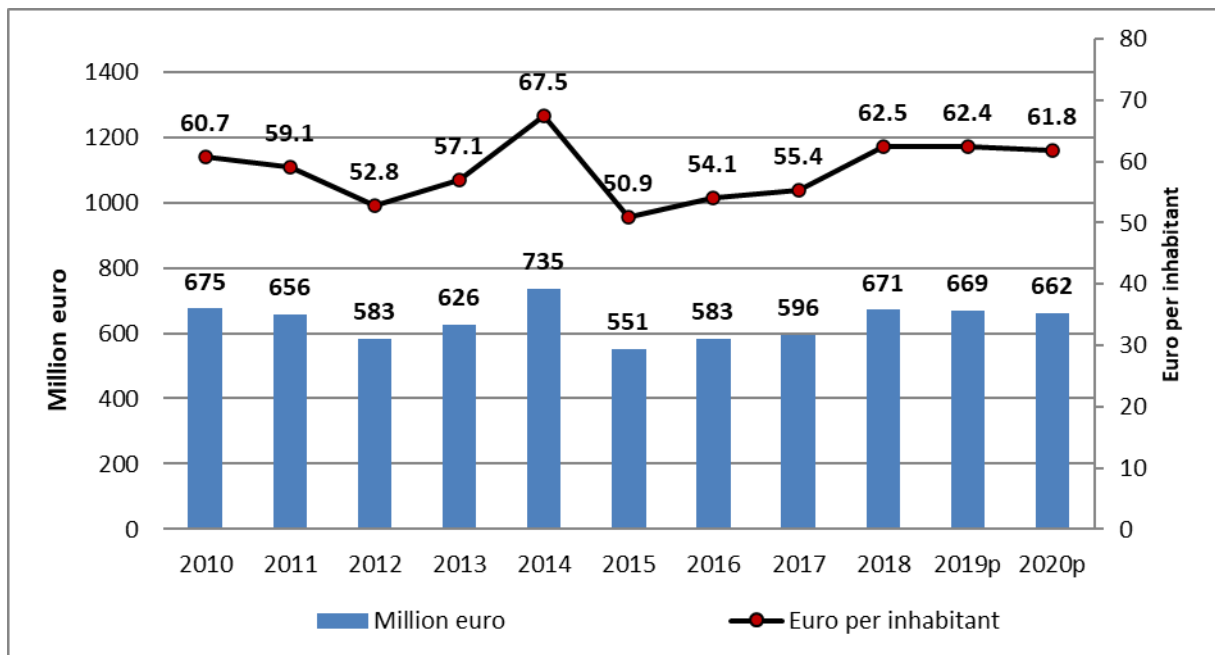


Table 57: General government total expenditure on law courts

Year	Million euro	Euro per inhabitant
2010	675	60.7
2011	656	59.1
2012	583	52.8
2013	626	57.1
2014	735	67.5
2015	551	50.9
2016	583	54.1
2017	596	55.4
2018	671	62.5
2019 ^P	669	62.4
2020 ^P	662	61.8

SDG 17 - Partnership for the goals

Official development assistance as share of gross national income

Official development assistance (ODA) consists of grants or loans that are undertaken by the official sector with the objective of promoting economic development and welfare in recipient countries. Disbursements record the actual international transfer of financial resources, or of goods or services valued at the cost of the donor. ODA is here presented as a share of Gross National Income (GNI). GNI at market prices equals Gross Domestic Product (GDP) minus primary income payable by resident units to non-resident units, plus primary income receivable by resident units from the rest of the world. The list of countries and territories eligible to receive ODA is determined by the OECD's Development Assistance Committee.

Figure 58: Official development assistance as share of gross national income (GNI)

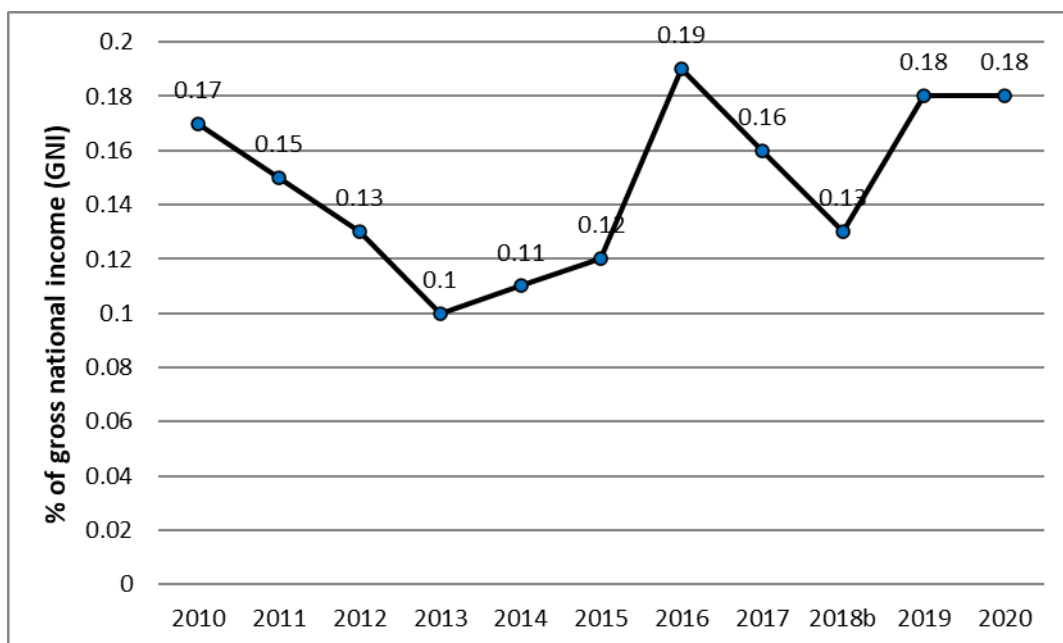


Table 58: Official Development Assistance as share of gross national income - % of gross national income (GNI)

Year	O.D.A.
2010	0.17
2011	0.15
2012	0.13
2013	0.10
2014	0.11
2015	0.12
2016	0.19
2017	0.16
2018 ^b	0.13
2019	0.18
2020	0.18

b: break

General government gross debt

The indicator is defined as the ratio of government debt outstanding at the end of the year to gross domestic product at current market prices. For this calculation, government debt is defined as the total consolidated gross debt at nominal value in the following categories of government liabilities (as defined in ESA 2010): currency and deposits (AF.2), debt securities (AF.3) and loans (AF.4). The general government sector comprises the subsectors of central government, state government, local government and social security funds.

Figure 59: General government gross debt

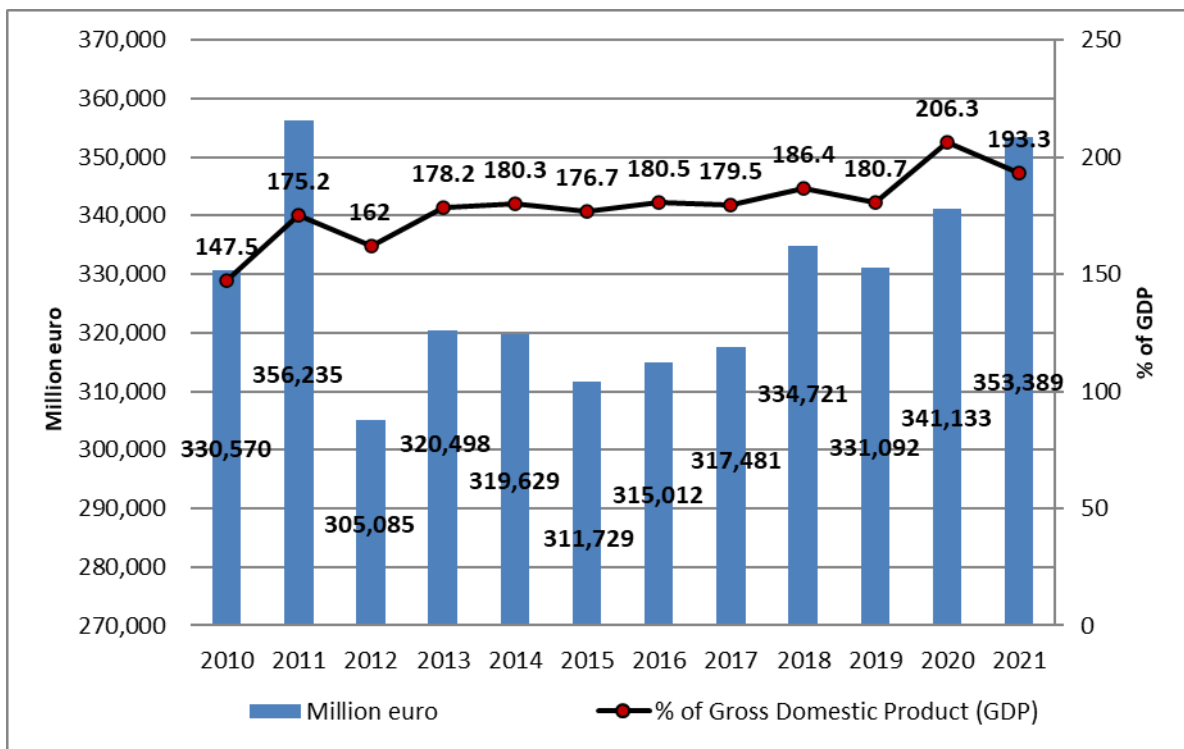


Table 59: General government gross debt

Year	% of Gross Domestic Product (GDP)	Million euro
2010	147.5	330,570
2011	175.2	356,235
2012	162.0	305,085
2013	178.2	320,498
2014	180.3	319,629
2015	176.7	311,729
2016	180.5	315,012
2017	179.5	317,481
2018	186.4	334,721
2019	180.7	331,092
2020	206.3	341,133
2021	193.3	353,389

ANNEX II

RESEARCH CENTERS

1. ATHENA Research Center

The Athena Research and Innovation Center (ATHENA) is the only Research Center in Greece that focuses exclusively on Information, Communication and Knowledge Technologies. It includes three Institutes and eight Units.

Industrial Systems Institute

The Industrial Systems Institute is a public research institute of the Athena Research Center. Relevant research work is associated with projects funded by national, European and private sources. The main contribution of the Industrial Systems Institute concerns **SDG 9**, with a number of projects dealing with industry, manufacturing, innovation promotion and critical infrastructures. Focus is placed on circularity both in the context of manufacturing and industry as well as in the context of smart and circular cities, where the Institute leads an IEEE Special Technical Committee, addressing **SDGs 11** and **12**. Several outcomes of the Institute are related to energy issues with reference to both renewables and energy efficiency and consumption reduction, thus contributing to **SDGs 7** and **13**. Different projects of the institute have dealt with pollution issues contributing to **SDGs 13, 14** and **15**. Research focus on e-health and telemedicine as well as peace of mind services contributes to **SDG 3**. The overall research outcome of the Institute contributes to the wider economic growth and enhancement of employment, contributing to **SDG 8**. Finally, emphasis is placed on high quality education and training as well as on gender equality issues contributing to **SDGs 4** and **5**.

Sustainable Development Unit: The Greek Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN Greece)

The UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN), set up in 2012, promotes practical problem solving for sustainable development, including the design and implementation of the SDGs. Its members are organised into national or regional networks promoting sustainable development projects and solutions through training materials and action plans. The Greek chapter of SDSN ([SDSN Greece](#)) has been included in the SDSN network and is co-hosted by Athens University of Economics and Business [RESEES laboratory](#) (Research laboratory on Socio-Economic and Environmental Sustainability), PESD (Political Economy of Sustainable Development Lab of the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens) and [ATHENA Sustainable Development Unit \(ATHENA SDU\)](#). It started operating in September 2015 and its main purpose is to include the country's university and research institutes engaged in sustainable development in the international network and to coordinate efforts towards the achievement of the SDGs. Currently, 28 universities and research centres around the country are members of the SDSN Greece community, on a path to incorporate a sustainable agenda within education at a university level. To this end, SDSN Greece has launched an action plan to universities that urges them to promote the SDGs agenda through a number of educational and training activities and initiatives. Following the adoption of the SDGs, SDSN Greece, RESEES, PESD and **ATHENA SDU** is now committed to supporting the implementation of the SDGs at local, national, and global scales. The Cluster has undergone a series of projects, initiatives and publications, spanning across the range of the 17 SDGs ([SDSN EGD SWG](#), [H2020 DOORS](#), [H2020 SEAWise](#), [H2020 IntelComp](#), [EIT CLIMATE KIC Maritime ClimAccelerator](#), [CE Beacons](#), [H2020 DESIRA](#), [H2020 ARSINOE](#), [H2020 IMPETUS](#), [H2020 BRIDGE -BS](#), [H2020 AWSOME](#)).

Unit of Environmental and Networking Technologies and Applications (ENTA)

The ENTA [Unit](#) of ATHENA Research Center is related to **SDG 13** for “Climate Change Mitigation - National Climate Adaptation Plans” and **SDG 12** for “Sustainable Consumption and Production - Materials Footprint”. In the first case, the Unit established the need for determining a new aircraft take-off mass and/or airport runway length, in the single runway island airports, whereas in the second case it established the need to calculate the energy and carbon footprint in Greek viticulture and viniculture industry.

2. Centre for Research and Technology-Hellas (CERTH)

The Centre for Research and Technology-Hellas (CERTH), founded in 2000, is a leading Research Centre in Greece and in the EU, consisting of five research Institutes: the Chemical Process & Energy Resources Institute (CPERI), the Information Technologies Institute (ITI), the Hellenic Institute of Transport (HIT), the Institute of Applied Biosciences (INAB) and the Bio-economy and Agro-technology Institute (IBO). Areas covered include sustainable & clean energy; environmental technologies; chemical & biochemical processes; advanced functional materials; informatics, telematics and telecommunication technologies; artificial intelligence; advanced robotics; internet of things; planning and development of transportation infrastructure; autonomous vehicle technologies; impact assessment of land, maritime, air, and multimodal transport services; smart cities; agri-biotechnology; health translational research; informatics for big bio-data; agri-technology; bio-systems engineering and rational environmental management are the scientific and research fields around which CERTH’s institutes are organized. Combining unique research facilities, highly qualified research personnel, extended network of industrial collaborators and great capability in transforming research results into innovative technological solutions, CERTH greatly contributes to the critical needs of society and economy at national and international level. Leveraging public and private funding through highly competitive procedures, CERTH devises numerous innovative projects, enhancing the resilience of the human, natural and economic environment, in accordance to **SDGs 2, 3, 6, 7, 9, 11, 12, 13** and **14**. “Food as Medicine”, “Personalized Medicine”, “Digitalization”, “Industry 4.0”, “Sustainable Mega-cities”, “Decentralized Production”, “Decarbonisation” and “Circular Economy” are the research challenges that CERTH prioritizes and uses as driving forces for the strategic planning of its research agenda and facilities investment. Moreover, as a one of the top research and development employers for highly qualified personnel in 6 regions and 7 cities, and having acknowledged its human capital importance, CERTH applies policies for creating a non-discriminating working environment (**SDGs 8, 10**), using accountable and transparent procedures (**SDG 16**) and respecting Gender Equality (**SDG 5**).

3. Foundation for Research and Technology – Hellas (FORTH)

The Foundation for Research and Technology – Hellas (FORTH) actively contributes towards the achievement of the SDGs, through its 9 Institutes: Institute of Molecular Biology and Biotechnology (**SDGs 2, 3, 6, 7, 15**), Institute of Computer Science (**SDGs 3, 4, 11**), Institute of Applied and Computational Mathematics (**SDGs 4, 6, 13, 14**), Institute of Electronic Structure and Laser (**SDG 7**), Institute for Mediterranean Studies (**SDGs 5, 16**), Institute of Chemical Engineering Sciences (**SDGs 6, 7, 11, 13**), Institute of Astrophysics (**SDG 4**), Institute of Geoenergy (**SDGs 7, 11, 13**), Biomedical Research Institute (**SDGs 2, 3, 6, 7**); and through its 3 Units: Crete University Press (**SDG 4**), PRAXI Network (**SDGs 9, 17**), Science and Technology Park of Crete (**SDGs 9, 17**).

4. Hellenic Centre for Marine Research (HCMR)

The HCMR is a governmental research organisation operating under the supervision of the General Secretariat for Research and Innovation (GSRI) of the Ministry of Development and Investments. The HCMR is participating on a long-term basis in a series of municipal, national, European and international research projects and actions associated mainly with **SDGs 2, 4, 6, 7, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15** and **17**. In particular, the HCMR contributes to the implementation of these SDGs through the development and operation of research infrastructures and active participation in pan-European ones (EMBRC, EMSO, Euro0Argo, LifeWatch), monitoring and observing the marine and freshwater environment, the analysis of the effects of climate change in both marine and freshwater ecosystems, aquaculture and the sustainable production of healthy seafood, the exploration of the underwater cultural heritage, the integrated water resources management and the conservation and sustainable use of terrestrial and inland freshwater ecosystems and their services. It also develops and offers services, implements science-based management plans and monitoring actions, and studies the increasing appearance of invasive species in the Mediterranean, for the purpose of designing and applying measures aimed at preventing their introduction on water ecosystems by human activities. More recently is applying -omics and biotechnological approaches for the discovery and utilization of active substances from marine organisms. In addition, the HCMR offers scientific support to policy-oriented research projects and actions contributing to the implementation of European directives and long-term strategies, such as the EU Water Framework Directive, the Marine Strategy Framework Directive and the Blue Growth Strategy. It also provides guidelines to local government and competent ministries on issues relative to the integrated water resources management, the integrated coastal zone management and the marine protected areas, and submits strategic environmental impact assessment studies to the Ministry of Environment and Energy. The HCMR also provides educational services related to the aquatic environment primarily by involving undergraduate and graduate students in research projects, but also by disseminating knowledge and research results to all different levels of education and the public through its cooperation and partnership with non-governmental organizations.

5. Hellenic Pasteur Institute (HPI)

HPI actively supports **SDGs 3, 4, 9, 17**, by the biomedical research undertaken and by the participation in the International Network of Pasteur Institutes/INPI. Ensuring health and promoting well-being is essential to sustainable development, regardless of the age, the biological and the social gender. Health emergencies, such as COVID-19, pose a global risk, and the HPI focuses on the research conducted to infectious diseases, and the discovering of new therapies and novel vaccines (which has been the ultimate goal of the HPI research, with the support of an operational Vaccines Unit), as well as the training provided on public and global health issues (**SDGs 3.3, 3.8, 3.b, 3.c**). Sustainable development, worldwide, requires skills, which cannot be developed without quality education. The HPI cooperates with the educational community (students, teachers and parents) with multiple activities promoting the holistic approach of One Health, with emphasis on the interaction of the environment with human and animal health. It is worth noting that in conjunction with **SDG 3**, STEM education is promoted, with a special effort to motivate girls and young women to continue university education, breaking down stereotypes (**SDG 4**). The open access technology platforms of the HPI and the participation in related European and national networks enables users to implement research projects in a high-throughput technological environment (**SDG 9.1**). The HPI is a founding member of

the INPI and a member of the Sustainable Development Solutions Network/SDSN (SDGs 17.6, 17.16).

6. National Centre for Social Research (EKKE)

EKKE is a public legal entity supervised by the General Secretariat of Research and Innovation of the Ministry of Development and Investment. Since 1959, it has been monitoring, recording and researching the socio-political, demographic, socio-economic as well as environmental and climate-related structures and trends of Greece. It has carried out surveys and secondary research on SDG related issues, including poverty, employment, income distribution, social economy, environment, climate change, migration, multiple and cross-sectional social discriminations, political culture and electoral geography, deviant behavior and incarceration institutions, cultural practices, tourism, urban and rural studies, education and training. EKKE carries out a significant number of research projects and programmes which focus on poverty (SDGs 1.2, 1.b), quality education (SDGs 4.4, 4.5, 4.7), gender equality (SDGs 5.1 - 5.6), elimination of exclusion and inequality, focusing on social, economic and political inclusion of all, irrespective of age, sex, race, ethnicity and religion (migration and social policy issues) (SDGs 10.2, 10.3, 10.4, 10.7), urban development (SDG 11.a), climate change mitigation and adaptation policies, strategies and planning, awareness raising and institutional capacity (climate policy and social issues) (SDGs 13.2, 13.3) and protection of marine environment and biodiversity, effective management of marine protected areas, sustainable use of natural resources and reduction of overfishing (environmental policy issues) (SDGs 14.1, 14.2, 14.5). The multi and inter-disciplinary nature of implementing research ensures that issues are dealt with in a comprehensive manner that facilitates national and international cooperation and develops interlinking networks between and amongst groups of relevant stakeholders, professionals and academics, thus contributing effectively to the achievement of SDG 17. In addition, EKKE publishes a significant number of scientific articles, policy papers, working papers and books on SDG oriented issues aiming at the widest possible dissemination of activities.

7. National Hellenic Research Foundation (NHRF)

The [National Hellenic Research Foundation \(NHRF\)](#), one of the largest research centers in Greece, consists of the following three research institutes, which pursue frontier research and acquire strong expertise, addressing some of the SDGs, as follows:

- The [Theoretical and Physical Chemistry Institute \(TPCI/NHRF\)](#) covers renewable and sustainable energy (solar, water, hydrogen) conversion and storage, efficiency, and alternative fuel technologies (SDG 7); urban development and sustainable living, including clean/green technologies and engineering, sustainable building/green buildings and waste management (SDGs 9, 11); health and well-being, including nanomedicine solutions for cancer therapy, disease diagnostics, water treatment and sustainable and productive agriculture. (SDGs 3, 2, 6, 12).
- The [Institute of Chemical Biology \(ICB/NHRF\)](#) focuses on the development of new bioactive compounds against selected therapeutic targets and the evaluation in relevant preclinical disease models, in order to utilize their potential for innovative approaches of disease prevention and treatment (SDGs 3.3, 3.4, 3.8). ICB/NHRF's research also focuses on the identification and validation of biomarkers related to disease and drugs through modern holistic approaches for degenerative diseases, such as cancer, neurodegenerative diseases but also for aging and parasitic diseases. ICB/NHRF is also involved in SDG 9 through the development of new knowledge in order to foster

industrial innovation for health, food, and cosmetics sectors as well as environmental friendly technologies.

· The [Institute of Historical Research \(IHR/NHRF\)](#) is involved in research programs for the preservation, documentation and promotion of material and intangible cultural heritage (**SDG 11.4**), as well as in research programs for the study of environmental history and the management of natural resources (**SDG 13**), with the aim to produce new knowledge and improve awareness and relevant policies.

8. National Observatory of Athens (NOA)

The National Observatory of Athens is a research center operating under public law rules and procedures and is supervised by the General Secretariat for Research and Technology of the Ministry of Development and Investments. The Center was established in 1842 offering since then its services to research, science, and society. The National Observatory of Athens with its highly skilled human resources and important infrastructure plays today an important role in research in the fields of Astronomy, Astrophysics, Space applications, Environment, Energy and Meteorology, Seismology, and Geodynamics, at European and international level. Main strategic objectives of NOA, are (i) the development and enhancement of Innovative Forecasting, Detection, Monitoring and Management Services and tools regarding Natural and Anthropogenic Disasters (**SDGs 9, 11, 13**) and (ii) the promotion of NOA as a national pole regarding Research and Services in the Fields of Data Collection, Mitigation and Adaptation to Climate Change" (**SDGs 7, 9, 11, 13**). A strategic pillar of NOA is the monitoring of seismicity in Greece and related research, the monitoring of the earth's surface, atmosphere and near and outer space through ground-based and satellite systems, the study of climate and meteorological conditions, as well as the transformation of the research outcome into innovative services, regarding forecasting (where possible), the location, monitoring and managing of the effects of severe natural phenomena and natural disasters. In this context, the aim is to continue developing research excellence, which has already been achieved in various units of NOA, that provide such innovative services, based on applied research developed in-house. Another strategic objective of NOA is to further enhance the Center's R&D actions in the field of specialized data collection and study of the phenomenon and the results of Climate Change and the coordination at national level of all relevant actions to strengthen response, as well as to enhance the accuracy of information given to the State in support of its national and international obligations. In order to achieve the research actions and the further development of relevant services, there has been a significant increase in the number of NOA's ground-based stations and other tools during the last five years. The recipients of NOA services and tools are public and private sector, Greek and European agencies (Ministries, Civil Protection agencies, Fire Department, Local Government, Regional Services, Environmental Organizations, etc.).

ANNEX III

ANNEX III Social partners & civil society

1. ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL OF GREECE
2. ENPE (Association of Greek Regions)
3. KEDE (Central Union Of Greek Municipalities)
4. SEV and SEV BCSD
5. GSEE
6. SETE
7. EEE
8. CSR HELLAS
9. United Nations Global Compact Network Hellas
10. National Confederation of Disabled People
11. Greek Patients Association
12. HELMEPA
13. ELIAMEP
14. Hellenic Platform for Development
15. Women on Top
16. Women Act
17. SOS Children's Villages
18. Together for Children
19. YWCA
20. Action Aid
21. QualityNet Foundation
22. Organisation EARTH
23. The Green Tank
24. Boroume
25. Hellenic Antipoverty Network
26. HELLENIC YOUTH WORKERS ASSOCIATION
27. ERASMUS STUDENT NETWORK



**ECONOMIC
AND SOCIAL
COUNCIL
OF GREECE**

**CONTRIBUTION OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL OF GREECE ON
SDG AGENDA 2030**

MARCH 2022

The Economic and Social Council of Greece (ESC of Greece) is actively involved in the public consultation with the official national social partners and European institutions, as well as with the international organizations for the monitoring and appraisal of the Sustainable Development Goals attainment, as set out in the United Nations Agenda 2030, United Nations (UN).

Based on its statutory role, ESC of Greece is essentially responsible for monitoring and evaluating actions related to SDG indicators, in line with the assessment of economic and social policy objectives, social welfare and cohesion policies, sustainable development and environmental goals, civil society participation on decision making and social dialogue.

ESC of Greece has systematically highlighted the need to monitor Sustainable Development policies, through the creation of consultation channels and the collection of opinions by the social partners on this regard. *"The main objectives of this initiative were to systematically monitor developments in the Greek economy and society and to assess the impact of reform actions and policies on competitiveness, human resources and employment, social cohesion and the environment, based on the principle of sustainability"*.

Recently, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals updated the necessity to formulate a national plan for Sustainable Development and National Strategy.

In 2018, ESC of Greece participated, at the highest representation level (by the former President G. Vernikos) in the United Nations High Level Political Forum for Sustainable Development, held in New York (July 9-18, 2018). At the same time (2018), at the request of the government, ESC issued an Opinion on the Sustainable Development Goals, thus contributing to the setting of national priorities set in the official growth strategy. ESC opinion¹ included an extensive list of recommendations for the effective implementation of key economic, social and environmental aspects of the SDG objectives at national level.

¹ https://www.oke.gr/sites/default/files/op_318.pdf

At a later stage, in the Joint Declaration of the social partners and civil society stakeholders on the National Development Plan, ESC of Greece presented the main growth and development priorities, which include reducing unemployment and increasing quality employment, attracting innovative investments and improving entrepreneurship qualities, enhancing export activity and modernizing productive capacity in all sectors of the economy, upgrading human capital and adapting skills to contemporary market demands, reducing poverty and inequality, and protecting natural and cultural heritage.

The major, even tectonic, transformations that have occurred internationally with the pandemic crisis, but also in addition with the accelerating climate crisis that it impacts severely, with visible results, both international community (see energy policies) and regional micro-scale societies (local disasters), have been on the core concern of ESC agenda in identifying specific areas for policy intervention.

In 2020, ESC of Greece issued a series of two own-initiative opinions² on the impact of the Pandemic on economic and social life, business, households' welfare and social cohesion, presenting a set of short-term and long-term recommendations.

At the same time, ESC of Greece published an opinion on the legal aspects and social implications of the implementation of teleworking, and prepared certain opinions on ongoing environmental policies (circular economy, energy upgrading, spatial and urban planning).

The draft opinion initiative on Climate Change and response policies at national and European level has just been under review, outlining key proposals for productive restructuring, preparation and support for businesses (primary, secondary, tertiary sector) and households for the green transition and energy crisis management.

In the field of institutional reform and capacity building development, ESC of Greece is leading the public consultation, either by organizing open events on major issues such as social dialogue in the context of the Conference on the Future of Europe (where the Joint Statement by ESC of Greece President Y. Paidas and EuESC

² <https://www.oke.gr/sites/default/files/keimeno1.pdf>

President C. Schweng was published³), or at a regional level through the implementation of the action for the creation of an integrated Multilevel Consultation Mechanism that will improve the quality, representativeness and speed of decision-making process at local level (municipalities, regions, etc).

Conclusively, and based on the above actions and initiatives undertaken by the Economic and Social Council of Greece recently, the main priorities related directly or indirectly to monitoring and evaluation, and achieving the following goals of sustainable development are summarized and updated below.

1. SDG 3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING– Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages

Emphasis on the following targets

3.8 Achieve universal health coverage, including financial risk protection, access to quality essential health-care services and access to safe, effective, quality and affordable essential medicines and vaccines for all

3.d Strengthen the capacity of all countries, in particular developing countries, for early warning, risk reduction and management of national and global health risks.

2. SDG 5 GENDER EQUALITY– Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls

Emphasis on the following targets

5.5 Ensure women’s full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life.

5. a Undertake reforms to give women equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to ownership and control over land and other forms of property, financial services, inheritance and natural resources, in accordance with national laws.

³ <https://www.oke.gr/el/events/diaskepsi-gia-mellon-tis-eyropis-dimosios-dialogos-gia-mellon-tis-eyropis-me-tin-protovoylia>

3. SDG 7 AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY– Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all

Emphasis on the following targets

7. By 2030, ensure universal access to affordable, reliable and modern energy services.

7.2 By 2030, increase substantially the share of renewable energy in the global energy mix.

4. SDG 8 DECENT WRK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH – Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all

Emphasis on the following targets

8.3 Promote development-oriented policies that support productive activities, decent job creation, entrepreneurship, creativity and innovation, and encourage the formalization and growth of micro-, small- and medium-sized enterprises, including through access to financial services.

8.9 By 2030, devise and implement policies to promote sustainable tourism that creates jobs and promotes local culture and products.

8. By 2020, develop and operationalize a global strategy for youth employment and implement the Global Jobs Pact of the International Labour Organization.

5. SDG 9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE – Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation

Emphasis on the following targets

9.1 Develop quality, reliable, sustainable and resilient infrastructure, including regional and transborder infrastructure, to support economic development and human well-being, with a focus on affordable and equitable access for all.

9.4 By 2030, upgrade infrastructure and retrofit industries to make them sustainable, with increased resource-use efficiency and greater adoption of clean and environmentally sound technologies and industrial processes, with all countries taking action in accordance with their respective capabilities.

6. SDG 10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES– Reduce inequality within and among countries

Emphasis on the following targets

10.4 Adopt policies, especially fiscal, wage and social protection policies, and progressively achieve greater equality.

10.7 Facilitate orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility of people, including through the implementation of planned and well-managed migration policies.

7. SDG 13 CLIMATE ACTION – Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts

Emphasis on the following targets

13.1 Strengthen resilience and adaptive capacity to climate-related hazards and natural disasters in all countries.

13.2 Integrate climate change measures into national policies, strategies and planning.

13.3 Improve education, awareness-raising and human and institutional capacity on climate change mitigation, adaptation, impact reduction and early warning.

8. SDG 15 LIFE ON LAND– Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss

Emphasis on the following targets

15.1 By 2020, ensure the conservation, restoration and sustainable use of terrestrial and inland freshwater ecosystems and their services, in particular forests, wetlands, mountains and drylands, in line with obligations under international agreements.

15. By 2030, combat desertification, restore degraded land and soil, including land affected by desertification, drought and floods, and strive to achieve a land degradation-neutral world.

15.4 By 2030, ensure the conservation of mountain ecosystems, including their biodiversity, in order to enhance their capacity to provide benefits that are essential for sustainable development.

9. SDG 16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS– Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels

Emphasis on the following targets

16.3 Promote the rule of law at the national and international levels and ensure equal access to justice for all.

16.5 Substantially reduce corruption and bribery in all their forms.

16.6 Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels.

16.7 Ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels.

16.α Strengthen relevant national institutions, including through international cooperation, for building capacity at all levels, in particular in developing countries, to prevent violence and combat terrorism and crime

16.b Promote and enforce non-discriminatory laws and policies for sustainable development.

10. SDG 17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS – Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development

Emphasis on the following targets

17.13 Enhance global macroeconomic stability, including through policy coordination and policy coherence.

17.14 Enhance policy coherence for sustainable development.

17.15 Respect each country's policy space and leadership to establish and implement policies for poverty eradication and sustainable development Multi-stakeholder partnerships.



ΑΚΡΙΒΕΣ ΑΝΤΙΓΡΑΦΟ

ΚΟΖΑΝΗ, 31/05/2022

Α. Π.: 85339

ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΗ ΔΗΜΟΚΡΑΤΙΑ
ΠΕΡΙΦΕΡΕΙΑ ΔΥΤΙΚΗΣ ΜΑΚΕΔΟΝΙΑΣ
ΓΡΑΦΕΙΟ ΠΕΡΙΦΕΡΕΙΑΡΧΗ

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Προς: Γενική Γραμματεία Συντονισμού
του Κυβερνητικού Έργου

Θέμα: Ο ρόλος της τοπικής αυτοδιοίκησης στην επίτευξη των στόχων Βιώσιμης Ανάπτυξης.

Οι νέες διαμορφούμενες οικονομικές, κοινωνικές και περιβαλλοντικές πτυχές της πραγματικότητας οδηγούν την κοινωνία να υιοθετήσει πρακτικές που είναι λιγότερο σπάταλες, έχουν μεγαλύτερο δείκτη βιωσιμότητας, είναι πιο πράσινες και οικολογικές και με τη σειρά τους οδηγούν σε αλλαγές στις επιχειρηματικές και κοινωνικές δραστηριότητες και αντιλήψεις. Ο συντονισμός των διάφορων τομεακών στρατηγικών έχει γίνει εμφανής και η περαιτέρω αποτελεσματική εφαρμογή των βέλτιστων πρακτικών και η λήψη απόφασης μέσω συντονισμένων προσπαθειών και εποικοδομητικής συνεργασίας φαίνεται να είναι κάτι περισσότερο από υποχρεωτικό.

Είναι σημαντικό να τονιστεί ότι η βιωσιμότητα μιας δραστηριότητας αφορά τη μακροπρόθεσμη επέκτασή της στο μέλλον. Η βιωσιμότητα αναφέρεται σε διαδικασίες μέσα σε πεπερασμένο οικοσύστημα και αποτελεί εξελικτική διαδικασία βελτίωσης της διαχείρισης φυσικών και ανθρώπινων συστημάτων μέσω καλύτερης κατανόησης και ολοκληρωμένης γνώσης. Ο κύριος στόχος της βιωσιμότητας είναι η επιβίωσή και υπό αυτή την έννοια είναι ανθρωποκεντρική, αλλά είναι τελείως διαφορετική από την «άγρια» ή απεριόριστη ανάπτυξη, που αντιπροσωπεύει η κλασική οικονομία, για τον απλούστατο λόγο ότι επιβάλλει περιορισμούς. Θα μπορούσε να πει κανείς ότι είναι μια έννοια πολύ ευρύτερη από την προστασία του περιβάλλοντος, γιατί προϋποθέτει και μακροπρόθεσμες πολιτισμικές αλλαγές. Βασική προϋπόθεση είναι η ικανότητα προσαρμογής ενός κράτους / λαού / πολιτισμού, της ανθρωπότητας. Εκτός από την ικανότητα προσαρμογής, η προσπάθεια για βιώσιμη ανάπτυξη προϋποθέτει μεγάλη καινοτομία σε ιδέες, τεχνολογία, δράσεις κ.λπ. Τα προβλήματα που έχει να αντιμετωπίσει η ανθρωπότητα στον 21^ο αιώνα δεν μπορούν να λυθούν μόνο με τον παραδοσιακό τρόπο.

Οι προκλήσεις για την αειφόρο ανάπτυξη είναι τόσο διαφορετικές και πολύπλοκες όσο η ποικιλομορφία των ανθρώπινων κοινωνιών και των φυσικών οικοσυστημάτων στην υφήλιο. Ενδεικτικά προβλήματα είναι α. εξάντληση πεπερασμένων πόρων (καύσιμα, εδάφη, ορυκτά, είδη), β. Η άναρχη χρήση ανανεώσιμων πηγών ενέργειας (δάση, ψάρια και άγρια ζωή, γονιμότητα του εδάφους), γ. Ρύπανση (αέρας, νερό, έδαφος), δ. Ανισότητες (οικονομικές, πολιτικές, κοινωνικές, εθνοτικές) και τέλος ε. Απώλεια ειδών (απειλούμενα είδη και είδη υπό εξαφάνιση).

Η πανδημία Covid-19 έχει προκαλέσει παντού εμπόδια στη βιώσιμη ανάπτυξη. Για πρώτη φορά από την υιοθέτηση του στόχου το 2015, ο παγκόσμιος μέσος όρος του Δείκτη Βιώσιμης Ανάπτυξης το 2020 μειώθηκε σε σύγκριση με το προηγούμενο έτος. Η μείωση οφείλεται σε μεγάλο βαθμό στην αύξηση της φτώχειας και της ανεργίας μετά την πανδημία.

Ενώ η πανδημία του κορωνοϊού έχει μπλοκάρει την παγκόσμια ανάπτυξη και έχει επιβραδύνει τα δεδομένα στις περισσότερες χώρες σε όλο τον κόσμο, η Ελλάδα είναι μια από τις λίγες χώρες που κατάφερε να βελτιώσει τη συνολική της εικόνα μέσα σε ένα χρόνο. Ως αποτέλεσμα, από την 43η θέση το 2019, το 2020 έχει ανέβει στην 37η από 193 χώρες του ΟΗΕ και στην αντίστοιχη κατάταξη των χωρών του ΟΑΣΑ βρίσκεται στην 32η θέση από 37 χώρες του οργανισμού.

Μερικές καλές πρακτικές που έχει υιοθετήσει η Ελλάδα είναι:

Προστασία των οικοσυστημάτων και της βιοποικιλότητας με την αξιοποίηση των σχεδίων διαχείρισης βόσκησης που επιτυγχάνουν την προστασία της φύσης, τη ρύθμιση του υδατικού ισοζυγίου και τον εμπλουτισμό των πηγών - υπέργειων και υπόγειων υδροφορέων.

Προστασία του περιβάλλοντος μέσω πολλών δράσεων που στοχεύουν στην εξοικονόμηση ενέργειας, τη μείωση της σπατάλης νερού, τη μείωση των τροφοχιλιομέτρων και των εφοδιοχιλιομέτρων, την ενημέρωση του κοινού για το θέμα αυτό κ.λπ.

Στη Δυτική Μακεδονία δημιουργείται το πρωτοποριακό Δημόσιο και Πιλοτικό έργο πανελλαδικής εμβέλειας, το αγροτικό κτηνοτροφικό κέντρο Κοζάνης. Οι δομές αποτελούνται από ένα σύγχρονο Γεωπονικό και Κτηνιατρικό Εργαστήριο που θα λειτουργεί σε συνεργασία με τον Ελληνικό Αγροτικό Οργανισμό Δήμητρα (ΕΛΓΟ ΔΗΜΗΤΡΑ) ως Κέντρο Αριστείας στον αγροτικό και κτηνιατρικό τομέα, την Αγροδιατροφική Σύμπραξη Δυτικής Μακεδονίας και τον Δημοτικό Κτηνίατρο. Η στήριξη της κτηνοτροφίας, ως διαχειριστής του φυσικού περιβάλλοντος με την βόσκηση και η πρότυπη ενεργειακή αναβάθμιση του κτιρίου, η χρήση καινοτόμων ΑΠΕ και συστημάτων αποθήκευσης ενέργειας και η σύμπραξη παραγόντων της τριπλής έλικας της οικονομίας - Δημόσιο, Έρευνα και Επιχειρήσεις - θα ενισχύσουν τη μεταξύ τους συνύπαρξη και συνεργασία, ενισχύοντας παράλληλα τον εκπαιδευτικό και κοινωνικό χαρακτήρα που θα έχει το

Κέντρο μέσα από την εξέλιξή του σε Βιωματικό Εργαστήριο αποτελώντας τελικά όχι μια καλή αλλά μία **Άριστη** πρακτική.

Newly emerging economic, social and environmental aspects of reality are leading society to adopt practices that are less wasteful, have a higher sustainability index, are greener and greener and in its turn lead to changes in business and social activities and perceptions. The coordination of the various sectoral strategies has become apparent and the further effective implementation of best practices and decision-making through coordinated efforts and constructive cooperation seems to be more than mandatory.

It is important to emphasize that the viability of an activity is about its long-term expansion in the future. Sustainability refers to processes within a finite ecosystem and is an evolutionary process of improving the management of natural and human systems through better understanding and integrated knowledge. The main goal of sustainability is survival and in this sense it is anthropocentric, but it is completely different from the "wild" or unrestricted growth that the classical economy represents, for the simple reason that it imposes restrictions. one could say that it is a concept much broader than the protection of the environment, because it also presupposes long-term cultural changes. A basic condition is the ability to adapt a state / people / culture, of humanity. In addition to the ability to adapt, the pursuit of sustainable development requires great innovation in ideas, technology, actions, etc. The problems that humanity has to face in the 21st century can't be solved only in the traditional way.

The challenges to sustainable development are as diverse and complex as the diversity of human societies and natural ecosystems around the world. Indicative problems are a. depletion of finite resources (fuels, soils, minerals, species), b. The uncontrolled use of renewable energy sources (forests, fish and wildlife, soil fertility), c. Pollution (air, water, soil), d. Inequalities (economic, political, social, ethnic) and finally e. Loss of species (endangered species).

The Covid-19 pandemic has hampered sustainable development everywhere. For the first time since the target was adopted in 2015, the global average of the Sustainable Development Index in 2020 decreased compared to the previous year. The decrease is largely due to the increase in poverty and unemployment after the pandemic.

While the coronavirus pandemic has blocked global growth and slowed data in most countries around the world, Greece is one of the few countries that has managed to improve its overall picture within a year. As a result, from 43rd place in 2019, 2020 has risen to 37th out of 193 UN

countries and in the corresponding ranking of OASA countries is in 32nd place out of 37 countries of the organization.

Some good practices that Greece has adopted are:

Protection of ecosystems and biodiversity by utilizing grazing management plans that achieve nature protection, water balance regulation and enrichment of resources - aboveground and underground aquifers

Protecting the environment through many actions aimed at saving energy, reducing water waste, reducing mileage and supply mileage, informing the public about this issue, etc.

In Western Macedonia, the pioneering Public and Pilot nationwide project is being created, the agricultural livestock center of Kozani. The structures consist of a modern Agricultural and Veterinary Laboratory that will operate in collaboration with the Hellenic Agricultural Organization Dimitra (ELGO DIMITRA) as a Center of Excellence in the agricultural and veterinary sector, the Agri-Food Partnership of Western Macedonia and the Municipal Veterinarian. Supporting livestock, as the natural environment manager by grazing and standard building energy upgrades, the use of innovative RES and energy storage systems and the partnership of the triple propeller of the economy - Public, Research and Business - will strengthen coexistence and cooperation, while strengthening the educational and social character that the Center will have through its development into an Experiential Laboratory, ultimately being not a good but an **EXCELLENT** practice

Με εκτίμηση,

Ο Περιφερειάρχης Δυτικής Μακεδονίας

Γεώργιος Κασαπίδης



Central Union Of Greek Municipalities

Central Union of Greek Municipalities (K.E.D.E.) participates responsibly and seriously in the national effort to formulate a realistic plan as to make a good use of the resources coming from the Recovery Fund and the goals of sustainable development, for the benefit of all Greek Municipalities. Dealing with the effects of the pandemic on the economy, employment and growth requires planning and consensus 2022 is a critical year for Greece.

We propose projects and interventions that enhance extroversion, promote innovation and take advantage of the great opportunities offered by the integration of new technologies in the daily operation of the Greek State, for the benefit of our local communities.

Central Union of Greek Municipalities highlights the modern look of local authorities that participates equally and expresses his positions in the formulation of policies that concern the future of Greece and serve the needs of our local communities. Local authorities that leave behind past logics and practices and invest in the cooperation with all the levels of the State administration.

It proposes interventions and projects that are realistic, applicable and cost-effective, which can contribute to the substantial and long-term development of the national and local economy.

It claims horizontal actions aimed at both the alleviation of intra-regional inequalities and decentralization.

The political priorities served by Central Union of Greek Municipalities proposals on the 17 goals of sustainable development and the degree of maturity emphasize policies such as

- The operation in the coming years of digital municipalities and smart cities, through the wide promotion of digital convergence and digital interconnection of all government services, as a necessary element of modernization, which will adopt all modern digital tools in the daily operation of our municipal services, so that we can serve the citizens immediately, at a low cost and remotely, without hassle and unnecessary transportation. Smart applications will make everyday life of citizens better.

- Enhancing extroversion, by highlighting our local comparative advantages, which can be turned into power multipliers of our national economy.

- •The promotion of local development, aiming the employment strengthening and the permanent improvement of local incomes and, consequently, of the gross national product.

- Highlighting Local Authorities as a protagonist in terms of the adoption of "green policies" and the use of environmentally friendly types of energy, in the daily operation of our municipalities and cities, which not only protect the environment and the quality of life of our citizens, but will allow us to save valuable resources, which we will direct to other productive activities. The adoption of electric vehicles for all vehicles currently available to municipalities across the country, would give a boost at the national level in the effort to make Greece a pioneer at European level in this field.

- The promotion of modern models of waste management with priority in recycling but also the energy utilization of residues, by creating a modern infrastructure, with priority on the islands, purchase modern equipment by municipalities but also organized actions of awareness, education and activation of citizens in order to adopt new habits.

- Enhancing the sense of security of citizens, through the implementation of projects that make the infrastructure of our cities safer for their lives.

- The adoption of a new model of civil protection, with inter-municipal business centers, modern equipment and execution of the necessary

infrastructure projects, which will protect as much as possible citizen's lives and properties from the effects of climate change.

- The provision of incentives for the re-industrialization of the country and the strengthening of our productive capacities, in combination with the new infrastructures acquired by the country (new roadways, ports, railway networks, etc.).
- The expansion and modernization of networks (gas, water supply, fiber optics) throughout the country, in each municipality.
- Searching even more resources, through strategic partnerships with the private sector.
- Enhancing the participation of women in decision-making centers.

12 Important interventions of Local Government that will change Greece

KEDE has submitted twelve proposals, which include specific projects and actions, costed, which reflect the priorities by sector, in the view of the first degree local government, in order to achieve the goals of sustainable development under the establishment and operation of the European Recovery Fund.

These 12 proposals are:

1. **Green transformation of cities-Municipalities as to face environmental and climate challenges.** An integrated program to promote the transition to green cities and climate neutrality is proposed, which will include, inter alia, the production of electricity using RES. The energy upgrade of municipal infrastructure. The strengthening of Electrification and the creation of local municipal networks. The implementation of awareness programs. The targeting and operation of monitoring systems for the energy footprint of cities, etc. In addition, there is a planning for smart energy management through the Municipalities action plans, the respective interventions and projects as well as the expansion of the natural gas network in all municipalities.

2. Waste Management - We reduce waste - we strengthen prevention and modern management. The most important action concerns the central waste management by region or through inter-municipal collaborations with special attention to, among others, the minimization and management of solid waste. The production of alternative fuels from the residues of MEA and KDAW. The management of solid and liquid waste in the island Municipalities. The implementation of smart collection and recycling management systems aiming at gradually increasing the recycling rate at source, with a corresponding reduction in the percentage of mixed waste.

3. Digital Decalogue for smart and sustainable cities. The aim of the action is the digital transformation of municipalities through concrete steps (request recording platforms, "smart" management systems of a series of functions such as parking, municipal fleets, public markets, citizen consultation platforms, education and training of employees, recruitment and training of employees schools, upgrading of digital school infrastructures, smart transport systems, promotion of municipal infrastructures through applications for the service of the citizens and the visitors etc.

4. Digital Local Government - The next step. It concerns the utilization of digital technologies as the next administrative and operational reform of the public administration, aiming at the internal reorganization of the local authorities, their systematic cooperation with the other levels of the public administration and the improvement of the services to the citizens.

5. Development of 5th Generation networks by the Municipalities - 5G Plug n 'Play Cities. It concerns the utilization of municipal infrastructure (electricity network, traffic lights, municipal infrastructure) through PPPs, for the development of new 5th generation mobile telephony networks, aiming at leasing them to mobile telephony companies but also serving national, municipal and other purposes such as education, trade, etc.

6. Upgrading Social Structures with a view to the future. It concerns, among others, the creation of a Panhellenic Network of Primary Health Care, the upgrading of Primary Social Care and Welfare, the action of strengthening entrepreneurship and work in vulnerable social groups.

7. **Towns of Greece- Utilizing the national advantages, in order to attract quality investments.** Development of Ports and Marinas. Support for spa tourism. Utilization of municipal property. Development of theme parks and strengthening of special theme tourism.

8. **Better Infrastructure - Accessible Towns.** The goal concerns projects that improve the living standards of local communities, through the creation of new ones as well as strengthening the existing municipal infrastructure, by implementing first Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans (SBAK) and then the elaboration of Local Spatial Plans that will crystallize land uses. By upgrading the roads of the islands, enhancing the accessibility for the disabled as well as reconstructing the roads of our towns.

9. **Durable Towns, with Strong Civil Protection.** It concerns the financing of projects improving the resilience of towns and the more effective protection of human lives and property from natural phenomena and disasters (strengthening of rainwater networks, stabilization and landslide control projects, coastal erosion control projects, creation of inter-municipal protection centers, etc. protection of water balances using digital meters.

10. **New Entrepreneurship Receptors.** Greece utilizes the new road and railway axes (Design and Creation of new craft and industrial areas. Establishment of special incentives. Financing of expropriations, etc.)

11. **Reform of the Social Policy System at local level - Creation of an Inter-Municipal Social Network.** The aim of the action is the homogenization of social policy at the local level, a critical need for an integrated, interoperable and effective social safety net, for the integrated support of vulnerable groups.

12. **Social integration of refugees-immigrants in local communities. Their integration into the labor market.** The purpose of the proposed project is the integration of asylum seekers refugees and immigrants in Greek society and workplace. In this direction, four main actions are proposed: Enhancing Greek learning. Familiarity with public services. Support for beneficiaries through intermediaries. Family counseling with students. Certification of Beneficiaries in skills.

13. A realistic and workable plan of projects and interventions was formed.

14. Along with collaborations and consensus, we will win the growth bet within the 17 goals of sustainable development.

Dimitris Papastergiou

Mayor of Trikala

President of Central Union of Greek Municipalities



SEV and SEV BCSD Contribution to 2022 SDG Voluntary National Review

Since its establishment in 1907, [Hellenic Federation of Enterprises](#) (SEV) has consistently fostered business development in Greece, representing a growing range of national economic activities.

Being the largest business network in the country, SEV has been instrumental in promoting the growth prospects of the national economy. While focusing on scaling-up industry's contribution to 15% of national GDP by 2030, SEV supports the emergence of Greece as a dynamic center of the European region, with solid institutions and an attractive economic and social environment fostering innovation, sustainable growth, cohesion and equal opportunities.

SEV acknowledges the [2030 Agenda for sustainable development](#) as a comprehensive, globally accepted, framework that facilitates integration of sustainability at the core of corporate strategy, decision making and governance. Via the 17 SDGs, companies will better manage their risks, address consumer demand and societal needs, secure access to valuable resources and strengthen their supply chain.

SEV's action plan is built and developed across 6 priority areas that are strongly linked with the sustainable development agenda, namely 1. Innovation, 2. Skills for everyone, 3. Green Growth, 4. Digital Transformation, 5. Industry scale-up and 6. Strengthening links with society.

SEV is an active member of BusinessEurope, the leading European business organization, Business at OECD and the International Organisation of Employers and actively interacts with a [large network](#) of collaborating institutions across the business community, for many of which it is a founding member (*inter alia*, Foundation for Economic and Industrial Research (IOVE), Hellenic Institute for Occupational Health and Safety (ELINYAE), Alba Graduate Business School, Hellenic Corporate Governance Council, [Global Compact Network Hellas](#) and [CSR Hellas](#)).

Since 2008, SEV is committed to the UN Global Compact (UNGC). The recent [UN Global Compact Communication on Engagement](#) presents SEV's activity in addressing the most pressing social, economic and environmental challenges of the referred period, within the SDG framework.

With numerous surveys and observatories, SEV tracks the business perspective on both challenges and priorities that should be addressed for business to grow and plot a course towards unlocking the value represented at the SDGs.

According to the most recent "[Business Pulse](#)" survey¹, launched in 2021 for a 5th consecutive year:

- Corruption/low level of transparency and low capacity of institutions are classified in the **top 3 obstacles** to business operation (Table 1 in Annex).
- Almost **one out of four** companies acknowledge as **priorities**, initiatives directly linked with the promotion of **SDGs 1, 4, 8, 9**, namely generating quality jobs, enhancing innovation and infrastructures and strengthening the links between the education system and the labour market (Table 2 in Annex).
- **Green transition** is assessed as an **important** issue for **almost 81%** of the companies, with over 40% of small, medium and large companies acknowledging it as very important or important (Tables 3 & 4 in Annex).
- However, the need for raising awareness of the challenges and prospects of green growth is also identified, as **only 28.7% of micro** companies consider it very important compared to **50% in large** companies (Table 4 in Annex).
- Similarly, almost **70%** of the companies interviewed are planning to proceed in the short-term with **investments enabling their green transition** (Table 5 in Annex).
- Finally, the majority of companies, regardless of size, consider the provision of **salary increases and training/development opportunities** to employees as the **main pathways for strengthening society's trust in entrepreneurship**, (Table 6 in Annex).

¹ The "Business Pulse" annual survey is conducted by SEV Business Environment Observatory, with the support of MRB Hellas. The objectives of the survey are: To measure the expectations for country's and companies' economic performance; To systematically monitor and assess investment barriers (both within the macro and the micro environment); To identify feasible and realistic solutions for a business-friendly investment environment; To assess the impact of recent reforms and To evaluate the quality of services provided by public administration to companies. It is a reliable and influential tool for both public administration and companies, aiming to achieve a business-friendly environment for all. The 2021 survey was tailored to the circumstances of the pandemic and focused on the challenges that emerge for the day after, both for business and public administration.



SEV Business Council for Sustainable Development

[SEV Business Council for Sustainable Development](#) (SEV BCSD) was established in 2008 by SEV and member companies with the mission to actively promote the value of incorporating social and environmental criteria into business strategies and bring the business perspective and experience in the necessary stakeholders' dialogue.

During its 14 years of presence, SEV BCSD remains the leading business organization in the field of sustainable development having introduced to both business and the national dialogue topics as climate change and water scarcity since 2009, energy efficiency in buildings since 2010, circular economy and the Agenda 2030 since 2016.

At this time of uncertainty, SEV BCSD seeks to scale-up strong and visionary business leadership towards achieving the transformation needed to unleash the inclusive and sustainable economic growth that the SDGs represent.

SEV BCSD's work is currently focused on the smooth transition to a green economy in conformity with EU's landmark Green Deal policies and the UN Sustainable Development Goals framework (SDGs 7, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15). Over the last two years, SEV BCSD actively promoted the sustainability agenda having engaged in:

- 51 public interventions (articles, conference interventions, reports),
- 43 memos/regulatory interventions,
- 61 meetings of its working groups,
- 166 meetings with national stakeholders and international partners,
- 2 public events, and
- more than 70 participations in 3rd party events and workshops.



Σύγχρονες Επιχειρήσεις, Σύγχρονη Ελλάδα



As a national partner of the [World Business Council for Sustainable Development - WBCSD](#), SEV BCSD is sharing with Greek business state-of-the-art expertise and best practices, as well as useful insights on the deployment of sustainability issues across business strategy and priorities.

SEV BCSD is also a trusted partner at the National Council for Circular Economy, the National Council for Climate Change Adaptation, the National Committee for Energy and Climate and the Climate Change Scientific Committee.

The way forward

SEV and SEV BCSD seek to leverage the SDG platform to catalyse collaborative action at scale through dialogue and partnership across sectors, supply chains and necessary stakeholders.

In this regard, we see of great value the formation of a small group of experts that could assist national authorities in preparing their plans on the SDG agenda across four key design pillars:

- 1. Risks of inaction**
- 2. Arising opportunities**
- 3. Governance and transparency**
- 4. The need for collaboration**

The structured involvement of the business sector in this process is of particular importance for sharing best practices, diverse ways of engagement and firsthand experience on achievements, expectations and barriers to overcome.



ANNEX

In its 2021 "Business Pulse" survey, SEV examined for a 5th consecutive year the companies' views on the main challenges to business operation and the priorities that should be addressed for the country's recovery from the pandemic, along with their views on specific sustainability issues focusing on the materiality of green growth (transition) and related expectations.

Table 1 – Source: [Business Pulse 2021](#)

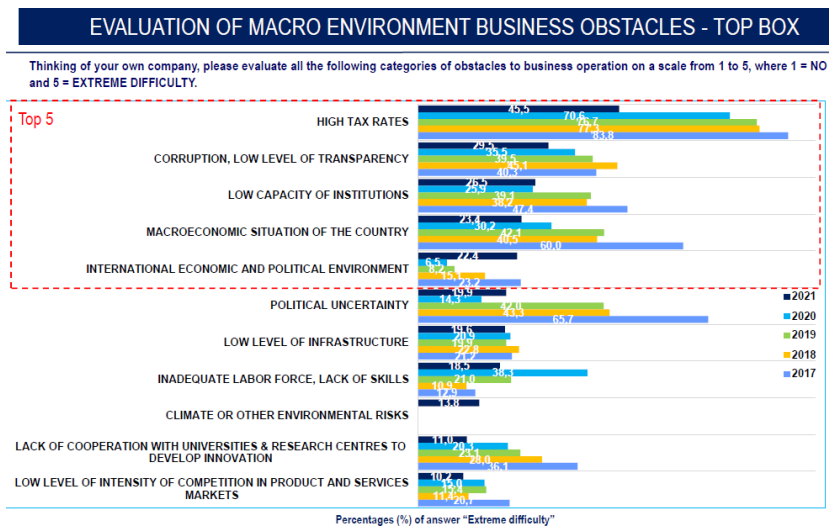
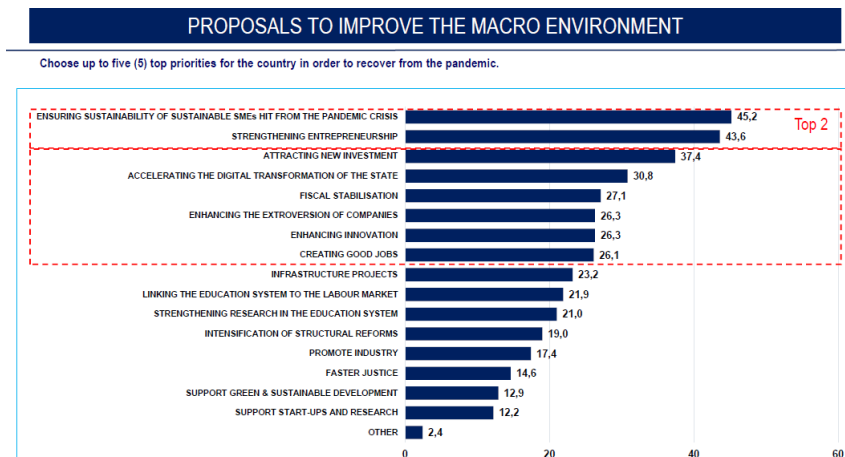


Table 2 – Source: [Business Pulse 2021](#)



Note: Option for five answers.

Table 3 – Source: [Business Pulse 2021](#)

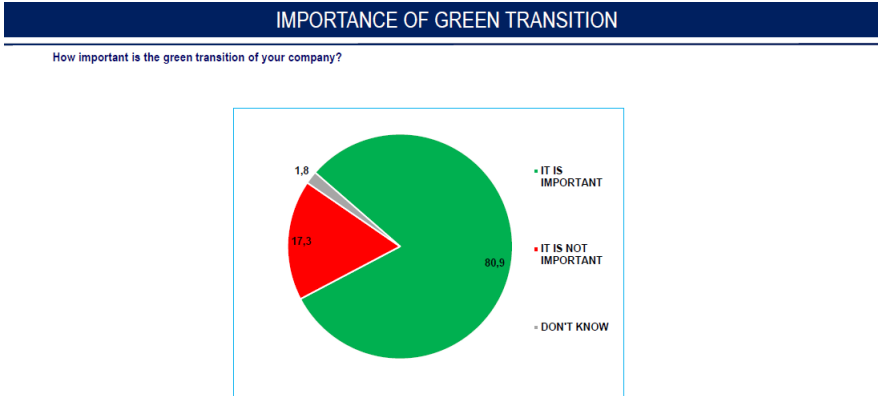


Table 4 – Source: [Business Pulse 2021](#)

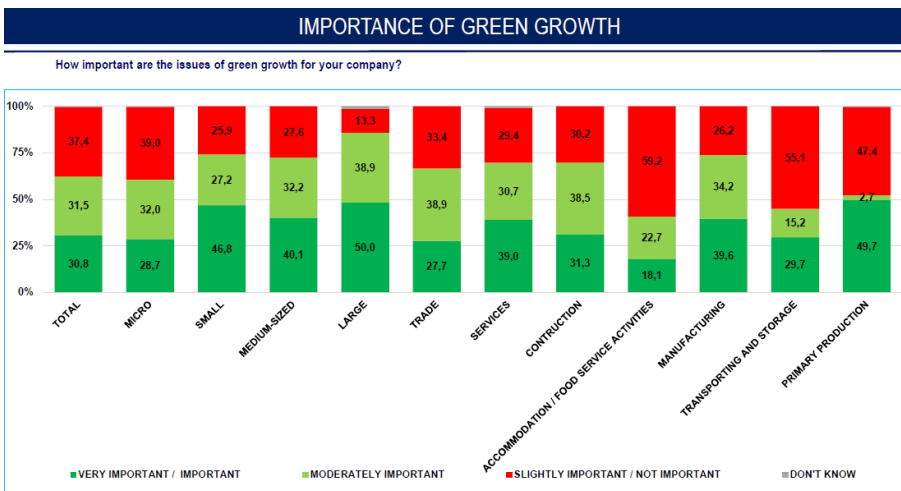




Table 5 – Source: [Business Pulse 2021](#)

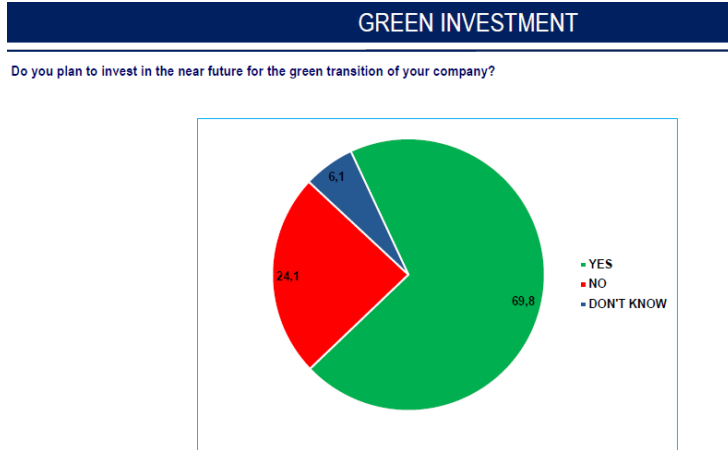
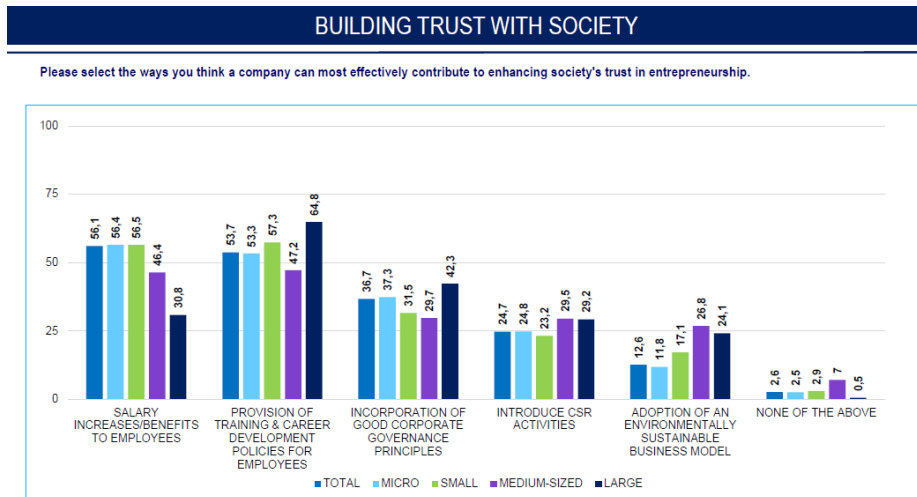


Table 6 – Source: [Business Pulse 2021](#)



Note: Multiple answers allowed.

INE GSEE¹: Monitoring the SDG 8

Among the multiple goals of our research targeting the promotion of a sustainable, inclusive and faire model of economic development in Greece, the SDG 8 of the United Nations' 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development merits special attention, as it perfectly fits with our commitment to full and productive employment and decent work for all. Regarding the SDG 8, in many of our research studies we have underlined the following:

More than one decade after the eruption of the sovereign debt crisis, the Greek economy and society are still struggling to offset the effects of prolonged austerity, while responding to the new challenges posed by the pandemic and inflation. The impact of this multiple crisis is evident in every aspect of socio-economic life, especially in the labour market. Although labour income and employment have mildly recovered over the past few years,² several factors that determine working conditions and job quality remain problematic, injecting uncertainty, macro-financial fragility and socio-economic problems.

Evidence is striking, in this respect. Despite the recent increases in the minimum wage, in 2020 average real compensation per employee has been 23.1% lower than that in 2009. Moreover, households' disposable income is currently being eroded by inflation, with minimum wage in January 2022 having lost 14.1% of its purchasing power within one year.³ Meanwhile, households' living conditions and well-being have been aggravated by high levels of work intensity, with the share of those working long hours in 2020 standing at 16.1% and of those working shift at 28.7%. Job quality has also been undermined by the deterioration of the terms of employment. For instance, in 2018 in the business economy the gender pay gap has reached 17.5%, while, according to the OECD, the labour protection strictness index for Greece has declined from 3.13 in 2009 to 2.45 in 2019.

¹ INE GSEE is the Research Institute of the General Confederation of Greek Workers.

² With the exception of 2020, largely due to the pandemic.

³ INE GSEE (2022).

Equally worrying are the increasing episodes of atypical employment, with the share of those working involuntarily part-time in 2020 being 65.4% compared to 49.8% in 2009. Precarious work has proliferated in parallel with poor employment prospects, provided that Greece's unemployment rate, albeit in constant decline since 2014, is still well above its pre-crisis level and long-term unemployment stands today at 59.7%. This development severely impacts the prospects of sustainable and inclusive growth, increasing inequalities and undermining human capital. In this regard, it is worrying that Greece has recorded in 2020 the second lowest participation rate of those aged 25-64 years in training and education, as well as in 2019 the second lowest transition rate for employed to the same or higher employment status in the Euro area. Last but not least, the country also scores poorly in terms of social dialogue and collective interest representation; in 2017 the rate of collective bargaining coverage has fallen to 14.2% (compared to 100% in 2009), while in 2016 trade union density has stood at only 19%. The abovementioned developments have contributed to making Greece the country with the lowest job quality index across the Euro area.⁴

Such evidence underscores the need for immediate and effective measures to improve job quality in Greece. This would not merely help the country meet its national sustainable development goals, but also improve its macro-financial and social conditions and resilience to future shocks. This is because a safe working environment and well-paid jobs tend to reduce households' uncertainty about the future, thereby stimulating consumption, firms' cash inflows and private sector's solvency with further favourable effects on economic activity. On the other hand, good jobs also imply that employees are able to fulfil their aspirations, organise their personal time and meet their personal needs, which significantly contributes to life satisfaction. As a result, improving job quality could act as an effective means of increasing people's well-being and delivering a more prosperous and more inclusive society.⁵

⁴ Greece's job quality index has declined from 0.50 in 2009 to 0.31 in 2019 (Koratzanis, 2021).

⁵ See Koratzanis (2021) for an exposition of the effects of job quality on macro-financial and social stability.

For this to happen, several measures need to be taken. First and foremost, it is required the complete abolition of all labour market deregulation measures taken over the last decade as part of the internal devaluation strategy, coupled with the full restoration of free collective bargaining. Furthermore, a further increase in the minimum wage, along with the institutionalisation of a new approach to wage-setting that would ensure wage levels compatible with decent living standards are also vital.⁶ This is particularly true at the current juncture, when inflation is constantly diminishing households' income and purchasing power. Improving job quality also requires the mobilisation of sufficient NGEU resources for training and education to improve employees' skills, as well as the financing of a permanent Job Guarantee scheme to bolster employment and labour income, support labour market reforms, combat inequalities, while facilitating green transition.⁷ Strengthening the labour inspectorate body to impose adherence to employment protection law could finally be highly supportive of job quality.

References

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- INE GSEE (2022). The INE GSEE proposal for the minimum wage in 2022, available at: <https://www.inegsee.gr/ekdosi/i-protasi-tou-ine-gsee-gia-ton-katotato-mistho-to-2022/> (in Greek).
- Koratzanis N. (2021). 'Job quality in Greece: developments and prospects', Policy Brief 20, INE GSEE, Athens (in Greek)

⁶ See INE GSEE (2022)

⁷ See Argitis and Koratzanis (2021) for the potential contribution of Job Guarantee schemes to well-being and sustainable development.



SETE Contribution – 2nd VNR on SDGs (June 2022)

The Greek Tourism Confederation (SETE) has as its primary goal to support and promote the views of Greek tourism as a whole, both in Greece and abroad. In this context, SETE already undertakes initiatives for the strategic empowerment of the Greek tourism product and, by extension, of the national economy.

Historically, the Tourism sector is contributing significantly to Greece’s economy and social support, as -pre-pandemic- it contributed directly and indirectly more than 25% of the country’s GDP. In 2022 alone, and as part of the post-pandemic recovery plan, the Tourism sector is expected to create more than 50,000 job positions. This is expected to have a direct, positive and measurable impact to the country’s GDP, social inclusion and growth.

In the period 2018-2022 the Tourism sector in Greece made solid steps towards its sustainability transformation.

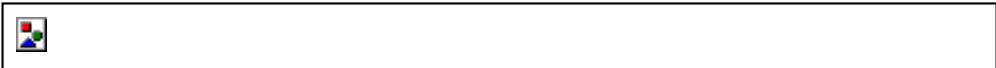
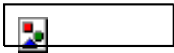
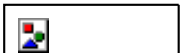
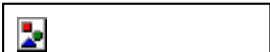
These were led by two of the sector’s largest hotel companies (Sani-Ikos and Mitsis groups), as well as by the aviation industry (Aegean Airlines, Athens International Airport), who are publishing fully audited and SDGs compliant social responsibility reports. Additionally, in the period under review, numerous large and medium-sized tourism and travel enterprises, as well as the regional airport operator (Fraport) commenced their sustainability transformation, announcing goals and targets with emphasis on local community support, nature and biodiversity protection, waste management, energy management, minimization of carbon footprint; many SETE members were also awarded the Tourism sustainability certificate “Green key”.

Acknowledging the fact that the sector’s sustainability transformation is still at an early stage, Sustainability and ESG transformation of the Greek Tourism model, are key pillars of SETE’s “Greek Tourism 2030 Action Plans” strategic roadmap.

Specifically, SETE is aiming, in the period 2022-2024 to

- a. focus on its own sustainability transformation, including compliance with the GRI reporting principles, adoption of the SDGs and a gradual adoption of a structured sustainability strategy model (including the formation of internal sustainability committees, gap analysis, stakeholder mapping, materiality analysis, the presentation of the sustainability strategy and its action plans, monitoring mechanisms and sustainability communication channels).
- b. Coordinate the sector’s sustainability transformation, through a series of initiatives comprising the presentation of a sustainability roadmap, training & workshops on SDGs, ESG and the Green Deal, sharing of best practices, benchmarking with the sector’s leaders and international case studies, etc.

SETE [through its institutional role](#), is also committed to enhancing its footprint in the sustainability ecosystem at large, following best practices that are already in place since 2018, comprising, but not limited to, participation in sustainability and cyclical economy committees, [environmental and social studies undertaken by its research institute INSETE](#), its [educational programs and workshops](#) and other targeted activities promoting sustainable development.







Voluntary National Review (VNR) on the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Greece Private Sector's Engagement and Commitment

The 2030 Agenda acknowledges the role of the diverse private sector, ranging from micro-enterprises to cooperatives to multinationals, and that of civil society and philanthropic organizations in the implementation of the UN Agenda 2030. Moreover, as the world recovers from the COVID-19 pandemic, the private sector, and particularly purpose-driven businesses, will be indispensable in accelerating action regarding the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 2030.

It is important for companies to direct their attention toward the SDGs and include them in the plans, strategies, and management, as these are related to significant economic, social, and environmental corporate aspects. In that respect, corporate reporting can illustrate which SDGs are relevant to a company's business model, enabling on one hand both companies and investors to focus on those SDGs most likely to impact financial performance of specific entities, and on the other hand as a tool of information, transparency and accountability to its stakeholders.

CSR HELLAS has conducted secondary research to determine the actual presence or absence of SDGs implementation inside the process of value creation for businesses as an integral part of their practices about corporate disclosure. The data show that 62% of the Network's members have included the SDGs as a reporting framework in their annual reports. These are mainly large corporations, and it is noted that there is no consistent way of using the SDGs as a reporting framework. Moreover, when it comes to small and medium enterprises (SMEs), which in Greece account for more than 90% of the private sector, these lack both the capacity and the incentives when it comes to aligning their strategy and actions to the SDGs.

Moreover, according to another recent study by CSR HELLAS in partnership with the University of the Aegean most companies listed in ATHEX have adopted adjuvant international reporting standards (apart from national ones) to report to stakeholders, one of which are the SDGs.

In such a context a limited percentage of the corporate sector is taking notice of the importance of the SDGs with businesses trying to align their strategies to the SDGs. On the other hand, at national level there is a lack of an overarching long term strategy for the coordination of all stakeholders' initiatives towards their contribution to the 2030 Agenda. As SDGs are a voluntary reporting framework the private sector faces a number of challenges for incorporating them in the business model as well as assessing the progress of implementation. These include the lack of connectivity of individual business strategies to a concrete national long term strategy for achieving the SDGs as well as a lack of harmonious partnerships and cooperation among stakeholders, the scarcity of regulatory tools that incentivize the SDGs' adoption, the lack of monitoring and evaluating methods, and the low awareness on the part of businesses and of society as a whole.

In the context of the Agenda 2030, the private sector has a key part to perform in accelerating the achievement of the SDGs through effective public-private and civil society partnerships via SDG 17



National Partner



(Partnerships for the Goals). But for that to happen, it is essential for businesses to understand the sequential connection among the SDGs, which in turn will assist in specifying the prerequisite goal before planning to implement any other goal given the fact that some goals cannot be attained before the achievement of a prerequisite goal.

Furthermore, for gaining real and tangible results, all SDGs related targets and indicators should be in line with the national strategies and plans, and they should be agreed on the basis of a multi-stakeholder consultation framework including the state and the public sector as well as civil society, academia, and the private sector. As such a framework has not yet been set up, the exchange and sharing of good practices cannot be achieved, creating twofold obstacles for achieving the 2030 Agenda – firstly best practices are not incorporated in concrete policies, and secondly there are no guidelines for businesses for aligning their initiatives with the national action plan on the SDGs.

Collaborative Actions of CSR HELLAS during the period 2018 - 2022

At the core of CSR HELLAS' vision and strategy is *Goal 17 - Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development (Targets 17.16 and 17.17)* as a major lever for achieving the 2030 Agenda. In cooperation with members, but also including non-member companies, a series of initiatives were developed and implemented in line with the SDGs' targets during the last three years (since the 1st Greek VNR was presented in 2018). CSR HELLAS has also identified from an early stage the importance of *SDG 16 - Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels (Targets 16.6, 16.7, 16.a and 16.b)*.

It is worth mentioning that among the member companies of CSR HELLAS that publish annual reports, the Goals that appear to be more relevant and important to the business strategy and actions are: SDG3, SDG8, SDG12 and SDG13.



National Partner





Wildfires of 2018: CSR HELLAS joined forces with the Civil Protection and coordinated several actions taken by its member companies to address a range of issues, from the immediate basic needs of fire victims to the restoration and reforestation of areas affected by the wildfires.

- ↳ Participating CSR HELLAS Member companies: Hellas Gold, Interamerican, KAFKAS, Loulis Mills, Nereus, Novartis, Mellon Group, Philips Hellas, Siemens, Accountancy Greece, TITAN, Bank of Thessaly και Unilog
- * SDG15 → Targets 15.1, 15.5, and 15.a
- * SDG13 → Target 13.1
- * SDG11 → Targets 11.4, and 11.b

CEASE (Companies in Europe Associated to End gender-based violence): EU-funded programme with partners from civil society organizations and companies dedicated to the enhancement of the role of businesses in the fight against gender-based violence (more information [HERE](#) and [HERE](#))

- ↳ Participating CSR HELLAS Member companies: TITAN, TUV AUSTRIA HELLAS, Vodafone, AB Vasilopoulos, Hellenic Petroleum, HYGEIA Group, OTE Group of Companies, Papastratos - PMI, Public Power Cooperation, Public Power Cooperation Renewables
- * SDG5 → Targets 5.2, 5.5 and 5.c

“Nikos Analitis Student Competition for CSR”: educative initiative launched in 2015 by CSR HELLAS, while since 2020 the Competition focuses on a specific but different SDG every year (more information [HERE](#))

- ↳ Participating CSR HELLAS Member companies and organizations: Chipita, TITAN, Interamerican, Aegean, Vitex SA, Loulis Mills, AFEA, ACSMI, Attica Group, OTE Group of Companies, IMERYS, APIVITA, EUROCERT
- * SDG4 → Targets 4.4 and 4.7
- * SDG5 → Targets 5.a, 5.b and 5.c (2020 focus)
- * SDG12 → Targets 12.6, 12.7, and 12.8 (2021 focus)
- * SDG13 → Targets 13.3 and 13.b (2022 focus)

“Corporate Responsibility and Sustainability School” (CSR School): advanced professional annual training program since 2019, in cooperation with the University of Crete and ALBA The American College of Greece (additional information [HERE](#))

- * SDG 4 → Targets 4.3, 4.4 and 4.7
- * SDG 8 → Target 8.3
- * SDG 12 → Targets 12.6 and 12.8
- * SDG 13 → Target 13.3

Corporate trainings: educational workshops for the comprehension of basic concepts and principles of corporate responsibility and sustainability, addressed to key executives of smaller businesses that belong to the supply chain of the interested member company (additional information [HERE](#))

- ↳ Participating CSR HELLAS Member companies: Mytilineos
- * SDG12 → Targets 12.2 and 12.6
- * SDG9 → Target 9.3



National Partner





Sustainability Reporting Research: the University of the AEGEAN in partnership with CSR HELLAS, conducted secondary research focusing on the sustainability-related information disclosed in annual reports of 35 large companies listed in the Athens Stock Exchange

* *SDG12 → Target 12.6*

Greek Pact for Sustainable Industry (P4SI) (to be launched in the coming months): based on the European Pact for Sustainable Industry launched by CSR Europe in 2021, P4SI aims at scaling up the impact of individual efforts made by Greek companies, national industry federations, and Greek business leaders towards a Sustainable Europe 2030

* *SDG 12 → Target 12.6*

* *SDG17 → Target 17.16*

COVID-19 actions: creation of a special website <https://csrhellas-covid19.gr/> presenting actions and initiatives taken by CSR HELLAS member companies to assist both the Greek State and the Greek society in tackling the challenges and problems that arose due to the COVID-19 pandemic

↳ Participating CSR HELLAS Member companies: Aegean, Alpha Bank, Alumil, Antenna Group, APIVITA, Chipita, CocaCola 3E, CocaCola Hellas, EY, Ethos Lab, euro catering, exis, Grant Thornton, Interamerican, Intracom, J&P avax, Kleeman, KPMG, LAMDA Development, LODL, METRO, Motor Oil, Novartis, novo nordisk, Philips, Printec, PWC, Quest Group, SIGMA, Stoiximan, TUV Austria Hellas, TUV HELLAS, Vodafone, WIND, Heracles Group of Companies, AB Vasilopoulos, Independent Power Transmission Operator, Gefyra, PPC, ACSMI, Thessaloniki Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Egnatia Odos, Ethniki General Insurance Company, National Bank, Halcor, Cablel, Hellenic Petroleum, Hellas Gold, ERT, Athens Water Supply and Sewerage Company, Loulis Mills, Mytilineos, Eurobank, OTE Group of Companies, ELLAKTOR Group, TITAN, OPAP, Papastratos – PMI, Hellenic Federation of Industries and Enterprises (SEV), Federation of Industries of Greece, Corinth Pipeworks, Pireus Bank, Society for the Promotion of Education and Learning

* *SDG3 → Targets 3.5, 3.8, 3b and 3d*

Athens, March 2022



National Partner



United Nations Global Compact Network Hellas – Accelerating progress and scaling business impact towards the SDGs in Greece

As a special initiative of the UN Secretary-General, the United Nations Global Compact (UNGC) is the world's largest corporate sustainability initiative, with over 15,000 participating business and 3,800 non-business organisations based in over 160 countries and 69 Local Networks. Endorsed by chief executives globally, the UNGC supports companies to do business ethically by aligning their strategies and operations with Ten Principles on human rights, labour, environment and anti-corruption and take actions to advance the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) with an emphasis on collaboration and innovation.

United Nations Global Compact Network Hellas (UNGC Network Hellas) is the Greek, business-led network of the UNGC. The Local Network engages its members, which are increasing constantly. Our stakeholders are Greece's leading companies, civil society organizations and academia. Since 2021, UNGC Network Hellas serves as an independent entity, advances the corporate responsibility and the private sector's contribution to sustainable development using the 2030 Agenda as its overarching framework. With the UNGC Network Hellas, participating companies achieve sustainable value by delivering measurable impact to the world's most pressing challenges.

As a local cluster of this UN initiative, it supports the power of the private sector to engage responsibility and develop the SDGs in Greece. Working with values and principles towards a set of ambitious goals is the right step to create the world that we all want. For this purpose, seven strategic priorities are identified as focus areas where the business community can have an important effect on outcomes: Human rights, Labor and decent work, Climate change, Anti-corruption, Gender equality, SDG Integration. More specifically on how businesses can integrate the SDGs across their strategies and operations and how to be innovative and transform their governance.

Business-members of UNGC Network Hellas, as part of their commitment, are already taking actions to advance the SDGs and are disclosing this information through their annual Communication on Progress (CoP) report submitted to the UNGC. The CoP, in its new digitalized format includes a tool to monitor and gather information on corporate actions for the SDGs. Based on the content of their Communication on Progress, the three SDGs that are mostly reported are: Goal 8-Decent Work and Economic Growth, Goal 5-Gender Equality and Goal 13-Climate Action. The industries which have reporting policies on these SDGs are Construction & Materials, Financial & Support Services and Oil & Gas Producers ([more information](#)). Among the actions that businesses are undertaking are the alignment of core corporate strategy with the SDGs; the development of products and/or services that contribute to achieve the SDGs; the voluntary (financial or in-kind) contributions to NGOs; the organization or participation in key summits or major events related to the SDGs; the public communication of their best practices; and their impact on the engagement of the public-private partnerships projects.

Achieving the SDGs by 2030 remains a big challenge, globally and locally as well. Covid-19 affected this progress negatively, but also showcased the significance of sustainability and the importance of public-private partnerships towards a green and inclusive recovery. It is now more than ever necessary to raise ambitions and accelerate actions.

Despite of the progress made by businesses, there are challenges in taking actions to advance the SDGs, such as the lack of training and awareness for key decision makers across all business functions, the difficulty in extending sustainability strategy throughout the supply chain and the limited resources (tools, trained employees etc) - especially for the SMEs (Source: UNGC 20th-Anniversary Progress Report: Uniting Business in the Decade of Action). To address these challenges and promote the SDGs in Greece, UNGC Network Hellas enables, supports and connects business and stakeholders.

In December 2021, UNGC Network Hellas organized the event “Connecting the dots for Sustainable Development”; The representatives were from the United Nations, the Government, business, civil society and academia. The event had more than 100 attendees and highlighted the SDG 17- Partnerships for the Goals’, and raised awareness about the Greek Voluntary National Review. It also previewed the Government’s action plan towards the SDGs and launched a multi-stakeholder panel discussion on addressing climate change. Under the SDG 13-Climate Action, business-members are encouraged to attend the training program “Climate Ambition Accelerator” which is designed to equip them with the knowledge and skills they need to accelerate progress toward achieving net-zero emissions by 2050.

Moreover, in October 2021, UNGC Network Hellas has started the 6-month capacity-building program, “SDG Ambition Accelerator”, in collaboration with the UNGC Networks of Serbia and Croatia. The program challenges and supports business-members in setting ambitious corporate targets and accelerating the SDGs integration into their core business management. In addition, to strengthening the peer-to-peer collaboration. More than 25 professionals from Greece are attending the program and learn how they can strategically prioritize actions to contribute to the 2030 Agenda and set targets aligned with benchmarks.

Within the framework of the SDG 5-Gender Equality and in celebration of International Women’s Day (8 March 2022), UNGC Network Hellas collaborated with Athens Exchange Group in organizing the event “Ring the Bell for Gender Equality”. The event aimed to raise awareness of the pivotal role of private sector in advancing the SDG 5 and promote the adoption of the Women’s Empowerment Principles by participated companies. Furthermore, UNGC Network Hellas is scheduling to implement the holistic training program “Target Gender Equality” focusing on support business-members in setting and meeting ambitious corporate target to advance gender equality. The aim is to strengthen businesses’ contribution to the target 5.5, which calls for women’s full participation and equal leadership opportunities. The 2022 action plan also includes a major event engaging stakeholders in a dialogue about strategic actions for achieving Gender Equality in Greece.

The Greek VNR is a milestone for enhanced policies in Greece. To maintain the spirit of the VNR follow up activities are essential. These activities could be building a public-private sector cooperation on the SDGs, as well as creating a multi-stakeholder consultation mechanism. This will increase all stakeholder's engagement in order concrete collaborative SDGs actions. Moreover, they might organize a VNR working group, promote the UNGC's Ten Principles that represent the common ethical and practical framework and use the data from Communication on Progress, as mentioned previously.

UNGC Network Hellas will continue to stand by companies of all sizes and sectors that are willing to adopt corporate sustainability. The network will offer a diverse range of capacity building activities and initiatives while companies should embed best practices into their operations to contribute to the 2030 Agenda.



Πληροφορίες: Δημήτρης Λογαράς

Αθήνα: 06.04.2022

Αρ. Πρωτ.: 521

**ΠΡΟΣ: κ. Θ. Κοντογεώργη, Γενικό Γραμματέα Συντονισμού-Προεδρία
της Κυβέρνησης**

**ΘΕΜΑ: «Συμβολή της Ε.Σ.Α.μεΑ. στην 2^η Εθελοντική Έκθεση Αξιολόγησης
της χώρας για τους Στόχους Βιώσιμης Ανάπτυξη»**

Αξιότιμη κύριε Γενική Γραμματέα,

Σε απάντηση της από 18.03.2022 επιστολή σας σχετικά με τη συμβολή της Εθνικής Συνομοσπονδίας Ατόμων με Αναπηρία (Ε.Σ.Α.μεΑ.) -η οποία αποτελεί την τρίτοβάθμια κοινωνική και συνδικαλιστική οργάνωση εκπροσώπησης των ατόμων με αναπηρία, των ατόμων με χρόνιες παθήσεις και των οικογενειών τους στη χώρα, με πάνω από 550 δευτεροβάθμιες και πρωτοβάθμιες οργανώσεις πανελλαδικά, κοινωνικό εταίρο της ελληνικής Πολιτείας σε ζητήματα αναπηρίας και ιδρυτικό μέλος του Ευρωπαϊκού Φόρουμ Ατόμων με Αναπηρία που αποτελεί την μεγαλύτερη οργάνωση εκπροσώπησης των ατόμων με αναπηρία και των οικογενειών τους σε επίπεδο Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης-στη δεύτερη Εθελοντική Έκθεση Αξιολόγησης της χώρας για τους Στόχους Βιώσιμης Ανάπτυξης (ΣΒΑ), η Συνομοσπονδία με το παρόν σας αποστέλλει τις απαντήσεις της επί των ερωτημάτων που θέτετε στην προαναφερθείσα επιστολή σας.

Θα θέλαμε να επισημάνουμε ότι με το παρόν εκφράζουμε επίσης την επιθυμία να συμμετάσχουμε στον διάλογο για τη Βιώσιμη Ανάπτυξη, καθώς, όπως αναφέρουμε και στις απαντήσεις που ακολουθούν, αφενός στους Στόχους Βιώσιμης Ανάπτυξης περιλαμβάνονται πολλές αναφορές στα άτομα με αναπηρία, αφετέρου υπάρχει συνάφεια ανάμεσα σε αυτούς και στα άρθρα της Σύμβασης των Ηνωμένων Εθνών για τα Δικαιώματα των Ατόμων με Αναπηρίες, την οποία η χώρα μας κύρωσε με τον ν.4074/2012.

Ακολουθούν οι απαντήσεις μας.

α) Εάν οι ΣΒΑ αποτελούν αντικείμενο ενδιαφέροντος για τον φορέα σας

The National Confederation of Disabled People (NCDP) of Greece is significantly interested in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda at a national level since:

- SDGs are inclusive of persons with disabilities.

More specifically:



- Out of 17 Goals, 13 are mainly related to persons with disabilities, although only seven (7) targets have an explicit reference.
- Several other Goals and targets refer to vulnerable groups and thus include persons with disabilities because of the reference in paragraph 23 of the 2030 Agenda Preamble.
- The inclusive phrasing of many Goals and targets also makes them implicitly applicable for persons with disabilities, such as those referencing “for all” or “all women and men.”
- Even without any such references, all Goals and targets apply to persons with disabilities by simple virtue of the universality, which applies to all, and the overarching principle of “leave no one behind.”

- The 2030 Agenda is informed by international human rights treaties, one of which is the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UN CRPD), which has given the disability movement -at global, European, and national levels- a strong legal framework to advocate for the rights of persons with disabilities.

The 2030 Agenda commits, in the same spirit as the UN CRPD, to empower those at risk of vulnerability, including persons with disabilities. It also promotes universal respect for human rights, equality, and non-discrimination. However, the UN CRPD is legally binding, while the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs are a political vision for a better world to be achieved by 2030. The EU ratified the UN CRPD in 2010 (December 23) and Greece in 2012 through Law 4074/2012. Since Agenda 2030 was built upon existing international and national commitments such as the UN CRPD, there is considerable overlap between the UN CRPD articles and the SDGs. In the table that follows, you may find the associations between the SDGs and the UN CRPD articles.

Sustainable Development Goals of the Agenda 2030	Articles of the UN CRPD
SDG 1 - No poverty	All articles
SDG 2 - Zero hunger	Article 28
SDG 3 - Good health and well being	Articles 10, 11, 23, 25, 26
SDG 4 - Quality education	Article 24
SDG 5 - Gender equality	All articles
SDG 6 - Clean water and sanitation	Article 28
SDG 7 - Affordable and clean energy	Article 28
SDG 8 - Decent work and economic growth	Article 27
SDG 9 - Industry, innovation, and infrastructure	Articles 9, 20, 21
SDG 10 - Reduced inequalities	Article 5
SDG 11 - Sustainable cities and communities	Articles 9, 11, 19, 29, 30
SDG 13 - Climate action	Articles 21, 25



ΕΘΝΙΚΗ ΣΥΝΟΜΟΣΠΟΝΔΙΑ ΑΤΟΜΩΝ ΜΕ ΑΝΑΠΗΡΙΑ (Ε.Σ.Α.μ.Ε.Α.)
NATIONAL CONFEDERATION OF DISABLED PEOPLE (N.C.D.P.)

SDG 16 - Peace, Justice, and strong institutions	Articles 4, 10, 13, 15, 16, 18, 29
SDG 17 - Partnerships for the goals	Article 32

The European and national disability movement considers that the UN CRPD should serve as a guiding framework for implementing the SDGs. Inclusion and the rights of persons with disabilities can only be ensured by applying the UN CRPD to the implementation of the SDGs. This will prevent the creation and perpetuation of institutional, attitudinal, physical, and legal barriers, and barriers to information and communication technology (ICT), among other barriers to the inclusion and participation of persons with disabilities.

β) Εάν συμπεριλαμβάνονται στο σχεδιασμό της δράσης σας οι ΣΒΑ

In July 2019, the NCDP submitted to the Prime Minister its proposal for a “National Program for the Implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities”¹. In this program, there was a connection among the SDGs, the rights of persons with disabilities, and the demands of the national disability movement. Furthermore, on August 21, 2019, during an official meeting between the Prime Minister and the President of the NCPD in order to discuss the aforementioned proposal, the Prime Minister committed to the development by the Greek state of a “National Action Plan for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities”. A year later, in December 2020, the National Action Plan was a reality², with the Minister of State to be responsible for coordinating the whole drafting process since, according to article 69, par. 1 of law 4488/2017, is the Coordination Mechanism in the Government for the proper implementation of the UN CRPD. Even though in the National Action Plan for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2020-2023, there is no specific reference both to the SDGs and 2030 Agenda, its implementation will contribute to the implementation of the SDGs. More specifically, for the shaping of the National Action Plan, the Concluding Observations of the UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities on the initial report of Greece -where there are connections between the SDGs and the Committee’s recommendations- were taken into consideration.

Moreover, the NCDP, both through its written intervention to the Greek state and through the production of informative, educational, and other relevant material for the promotion of the rights of persons with disabilities, is trying to highlight the relevance of the UN

¹ The NCPD’s National Program is available at: <https://www.esamea.gr/publications/others/4257-ethniko-programma-gia-tin-efarmogi-tis-symbasis-gia-ta-dikaiomata-ton-atomon-me-anapiria>

² The National Action Plan for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities is available at: <https://primeminister.gr/2020/12/16/25470>



ΕΘΝΙΚΗ ΣΥΝΟΜΟΣΠΟΝΔΙΑ ΑΤΟΜΩΝ ΜΕ ΑΝΑΠΗΡΙΑ (Ε.Σ.Α.μ.Ε.Α.)
NATIONAL CONFEDERATION OF DISABLED PEOPLE (N.C.D.P.)

CRPD with the 2030 Agenda³, and, therefore, to stress the need of disability mainstreaming into all development policies, at national, regional, and local level. Apart from the abovementioned actions, the NCDP's "Observatory on Disability Issues"⁴ at this time is running a "Study on the specialization of statistical indicators for monitoring the implementation of the Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in Greece." This action aims to develop an Integrated Indicator System to specialize and make the indicators functional through the formulation of specific statistical measures that will allow the systematic monitoring of the rights of persons with disabilities at a national level. Among the indicators that will be specialized, there will also be indicators that exist in Agenda 2030.

γ) Εάν συμμετέχετε σε συνεργασίες για την προαγωγή των ΣΒΑ

The NCDP, despite its efforts to be involved, has not been invited to participate in the development, implementation, and monitoring of the SDGs in Greece. For us, the involvement of all civil society organization and at all stages of the implementation of the SDGs (development, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation) is particularly crucial so that "No one is left behind."

δ) Ποιες θεωρείτε ότι είναι οι κυριότερες δυσκολίες ή προκλήσεις για την υλοποίηση των ΣΒΑ

We consider "prioritization" as a challenge since there is a risk of focusing on easily achievable SDGs by, simultaneously, underestimating those SDGs whose implementation requires more effort.

ε) Ποιες προτάσεις έχετε για την αποτελεσματικότερη προσέγγιση των ΣΒΑ

Political will and commitment are necessary at all levels, that is, at EU, national, regional, and local levels. Additionally, we consider that for the SDGs to be achieved, it will be beneficial to utilise the conditionality approach of the European Structural and Investment Funds since, through this approach, the implementation of them will be promoted through the Operational Programs of the member states. Also, the effective

³ See, for example, <https://www.esamea.gr/publications/books-studies/5026-egxeiridio-gia-tin-enswmatwsi-tis-dikaiwmatikis-proseggisis-tis-anapirias-stis-topikes-koinwnikes-kai-anaptyksiakes-politikes-druseis-metra-kai-programmata>, or <https://www.paratiritirioanapirias.gr/el/results/publications/47/keimena-politikhs-gia-ena-sxoleio-xwris-apokleismos-eisagwgh-tis-dikaiwmatikhs-proseggishs-sth-syllogh-kai-analysh-statistikwn-dedomenwn-gia-thn-ekpaideysh-twn-ma8htwn-triwn-me-anaphria>

⁴ The program is co-funded by the European Union (European Social Fund) and national funds in the framework of the Operational Program "Human Resources Development, Education, and Lifelong Learning 2014-2020".



ΕΘΝΙΚΗ ΣΥΝΟΜΟΣΠΟΝΔΙΑ ΑΤΟΜΩΝ ΜΕ ΑΝΑΠΗΡΙΑ (Ε.Σ.Α.μ.Ε.Α.)
NATIONAL CONFEDERATION OF DISABLED PEOPLE (N.C.D.P.)

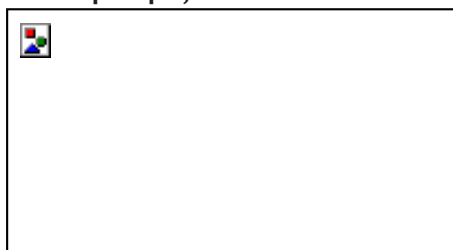
implementation of the SDGs requires on the one hand the strengthen of democratic values and governance and on the other the awareness and involvement of all bodies, authorities, companies, civil society organizations, professionals etc.

Αξιότιμε κύριε Γενικό Γραμματέα,

Είμαστε στη διάθεσή σας για οποιαδήποτε περαιτέρω διευκρίνιση.

Με εκτίμηση

Ο Πρόεδρος

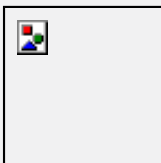


Ι. Βαρδακαστάνης

Ο Γεν. Γραμματέας



Β. Κούτσιανος



Προσβάσιμο αρχείο Microsoft Word (*.docx)

Το παρόν αρχείο ελέγχθηκε με το εργαλείο *Microsoft Accessibility Checker* και δε βρέθηκαν θέματα προσβασιμότητας. Τα άτομα με αναπηρία δε θα αντιμετωπίζουν δυσκολίες στην ανάγνωσή του.



To: Mr. Thanasis Kontogiorgis, General Secretary, General Secretariat for Coordination

Subject: Second Voluntary National Review on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

5/4/2022

Dear Mr., General Secretary

We would like to thank you for your kind invitation to participate in the second Voluntary National Review on the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. An Agenda ranking high on our Policy Priorities.

The Greek Patients Association, the confederation of more than 60 patients' organizations from all over Greece and across the spectrum of disease aims at defending the rights of health care recipients, the equal participation of patients in designing and implementing policies concerning them and their contribution to the promotion of public health.

We believe that in order to achieve our main goal for universal health, there is a need to develop a health in all policies strategy, a collaborative approach that integrates and articulates health considerations into policymaking across various sectors for improving health for all people and in every community.

WHO defines health as «a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity». In that sense we recognize that health is created by a multitude of factors beyond healthcare and, in many cases, beyond the scope of traditional public health activities. In addition, due to Covid-19 Pandemic, climate change and human intervention to wildlife, new health challenges emerge. Therefore, we believe that our organization shouldn't just pursue the third goal for sustainable development (to ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages) but to adapt an all-encompassing approach engaging in activities that promote most of the goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

There is increasing recognition that the environments in which people live, work, learn and play have an impact upon their health. Reshaping peoples economic, physical, social, and service environment can assist in ensuring opportunities for health and supporting healthy behaviors. The Public healthcare agencies alone, rarely have the capacity to make these changes. Responsibility for the social determinants of health fall to many nontraditional stakeholders and complex and urgent health problems will require collaborative efforts across many sectors and levels of government and there is a need to involve patients in the decision-making process.



Within this framework, the Greek Patient Association has been involved into several activities pursuing Sustainable Development Goals. Indicatively, we mention the following:

- **Patient Hub Networking:** Development of a comprehensive network aiming to strengthen extroversion, impact, administrative independence, financial sustainability and the cooperation of patients' associations and NGOs active in the health sector in Greece. It is a program sponsored by the Active Citizens Fund and managed by the Bodossaki Foundation. The actions of the project are developed in the following axes: Networking, Education, Communication, Research work for the scientific documentation of policy proposals, Policy interventions by the Greek Patients' Association, as the result of the above axes. (SDGs 3,16,17)
- **Panhellenic Patient Conference:** The conference is organized by the Greek Patients' Association, and it is the largest annual institution of dialogue between patients, bringing together members of more than 90 associations from all over Greece, becoming a bridge of interaction between patients, the State, parliamentary parties, representatives of the scientific community and the National Health System. Last year we celebrated the 10th anniversary since the first official meeting of all the patient associations of Greece, in a joint conference. The involvement of civil society in decision-making processes as a sign of the maturity of a Democratic society was the main message. (SDGs 1,3,4,5,8, 9, 10,16,17)
- **European Patients' Rights Day 2022:** The protection of patients' rights and advocacy actions are one of the main action pillars of the Greek Patients' Association and with this event, we aim to convey the message that every patient and every recipient of health services has statutory rights that provide him with a complete and acceptable level of protection. These rights must be inextricably linked to explicitly defined obligations of the State and Health Care Professionals. (Pursues 1,3,5,8,9,10,16,17 SDGs)

We remain at your disposal for any additional information concerning our involvement on the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Sincerely yours,

Nikos Dedes
President



Attn: Mr. Thanasis Kontogeorgis
Secretary General of Coordination
Presidency of the Government

Athens, 5 April 2022

Dear Mr. Kontogeorgis,

Initially, we would like to thank you for your letter inviting the Hellenic Marine Environment Protection Association (HELMEPA) to contribute to the second Voluntary Assessment Report on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of Greece.

With a view to contributing as effectively as possible to the Report, kindly find hereafter specific answers to the questions set in your letter.

a) if SDGs are of interest to your organization

For four decades, HELMEPA has been at the forefront in the protection of the marine and coastal environment, safety at sea and sustainable development, with multidimensional activity in Greece and abroad. Founded by the Union of Greek Shipowners and the Panhellenic Seafarers Federation in Piraeus in 1982 through the signing of the [Declaration of Voluntary Commitment "To Save the Seas"](#), **the Association constitutes an early pioneering initiative of the much necessary stakeholder cooperation and engagement to achieve the UN SDGs.**

Today, HELMEPA has grown into an open sustainable platform of likeminded stakeholders (seafarers, maritime professionals, shipping community, educational community, and wide civil society), that embraces the exchange of knowledge and sharing of experience, creating the conditions for collective multi-stakeholders' benefit in the fields of blue and green economy. Our membership comprises approximately **2,000 ships, 240 companies and organizations in Greece and abroad and 14,000 seafarers and maritime professionals.**

5, Pergamou Str., N. Smyrni 17121, Greece | tel: +30 210 93 43 088 | helmeпа@helmeпа.gr | www.helmeпа.gr **#saveourseas**

@helmeпа_savetheseas

Helmeпа

Helmeпа Maritime

Helmeпа GR

Helmeпа GR

Helmeпа





The Association's mission is to develop and nurture an environmental consciousness within shipping and across all levels of society by informing and educating the human element, thus supporting the effective implementation of international maritime legislation aiming at pollution prevention and safety at sea.

In line with the Sustainable Development Goals, its work for the health and protection of our seas and coasts, maritime safety and environmental awareness is carried out with the valuable contribution of its members, with action throughout Greece by a sustainable participatory network of communities and measurable impact on the seas and oceans of the world, where our members operate.

b) if they are included in your action plan

Committed to further contribute to the achievement of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals and constituting a bridge of knowledge, cooperation and joint action, HELMEPA focuses on the better understanding of the concepts and challenges so that **no one is left behind**.

Through the activities and programs it develops, HELMEPA contributes to the achievement of the goals, focusing on the following areas:

Goal 4: Quality Education

Goal 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls

Goal 13: Climate Action

Goal 14: Life below Water

Goal 15: Life on Land

Goal 17: Partnerships for the Goals

HELMEPA operates as a certified Maritime Training Centre for Pollution Prevention, Safety at Sea and Environmental Awareness. Since 1983, more than 24,000 merchant marine officers and companies' shore-based personnel have participated in its training programs, receiving a certificate of attendance. Every year [our Refresher Training Program](#) for seafarers and shipping professionals includes topics on Sustainable Shipping and SDGs.



With regards to environmental awareness of the wider society, since 1983 our legendary Seagull has raised generations of children and thousands of volunteers with the motto “No garbage, no plastics in the sea and on beaches”, who also act as “ambassadors” within their local regions or professional communities.

Over the past 40 years, HELMEPA has inspired more than 450,000 schoolchildren and youth and 8,500 teachers on marine environment protection & stewardship, climate change and sustainable development through educational programs, knowledge enrichment and leadership cultivation initiatives.

Since 1993, environmental education activities have focused on “HELMEPA Junior”, a flagship initiative engaging every year 8,000 kids aged 5-13, approved by the Ministry of Education and awarded by UNEP and the European Parliament, among others.

Additionally, HELMEPA has supported 46 young scientists with scholarships for postgraduate studies in European universities in maritime and environmental sciences.

Acting as national coordinator of international voluntary campaigns, HELMEPA has organized/coordinated more than 4,000 cleanups of beaches, seabed, lakes, forests and other coastal or land areas, in which more than 250,000 volunteers have taken part, removing 820 tons of waste, covering a total length of 1,900 km of shoreline.

As a partner of the “Blue Generation” EEA and Norway Grants Fund for Youth Employment, 40,000 young people between 15 and 29 years will be reached in order to pursue a sustainable career in Blue Economy in 6 European countries. The program offerses -among others- free mentoring, study visits, etc.

As coordinator of the project "Training the Guardians of our Seas", HELMEPA promotes healthy seas, by training marine professionals, promoting good practices in fish stock management and avoiding marine pollution.

With the implementation of the project "My plastic footprint", young people between 11 and 15 years are sensitized and informed about the reduction of plastic.



As part of HELMEPA's 40th anniversary celebrations, additional actions are planned in 2022 to promote sustainable development. Indicatively:

Sustainability Labs introducing the 17 Sustainable Development Goals to students, educators and HELMEPA Members. The main objectives of the workshops are for participants to get acquainted with the concept of sustainable development, to understand how modern environmental, social and economic challenges are interconnected, as well as to empower participants with knowledge and skills on issues related to sustainable development.

Sustainable Shipping - A comprehensive curriculum to be offered to postgraduate students and market executives on shipping sustainability.

BiG Focus (Blue is Green) - A program for mapping current challenges, trends and best practices in shipping for green and digital transition of shipping, to be offered to member companies and ships.

c) if you participate in partnerships to promote them

HELMEPA promotes cooperation between countries, governments, private sector and civil society. Through the long-term synergies with public and private bodies, educational organizations, associations, companies, national and international organizations, and with citizens, it fosters joint collaborations for a sustainable future.

HELMEPA supports the efforts of the International Maritime Organization (IMO) for "Safe Ships in Clean Seas" as Technical Advisor to the Greek Delegation, and as a Partner of the United Nations Mediterranean Action Plan (UNEP/MAP) since the mid-1980s and a member of the Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development, it is actively involved in international fora, with proposals, projects and distinctions on marine and coastal protection, safety in the shipping industry and environmental awareness.

It has also established long-standing working relations with maritime entities such as European Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA), US Coast Guard, Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA), Regional Marine Pollution Emergency Response Centre for the Mediterranean Sea (REMPEC), Baltic and International Maritime Council (BIMCO), International Association of Independent Tanker Owners (INTERTANKO),



International Association of Dry Cargo Shipowners (INTERCARGO), Rightship, Green Award Foundation, the World Maritime University (WMU), Seatrade and Posidonia Exhibitions. Especially with regards to the latter, HELMEPA's Conference at the 2022 Posidonia Exhibition, scheduled on 8 June, focuses on **Sustainable Shipping, Leadership and Transition**.

HELMEPA is also a Partner to the international initiative "1% for the Planet", which encourages businesses to voluntarily undertake the commitment to offer 1% of their revenues in the protection of the environment through selected, non-governmental, non-profit partners-NGOs.

Additionally, through the years HELMEPA has supported the founding of similar non-profit making, non-governmental organizations (MEPAs) in Australia, Cyprus, North America, Philippines, Ukraine, Uruguay and Turkey, who now cooperate under the umbrella network of the International Marine Environment protection Association (INTERMEPA).

In terms of collaborations at national level and aiming at the wider promotion of the Sustainable Development Goals, HELMEPA has long standing cooperation with the Minister of Maritime Affairs and Insular Policy - Marine Environment Protection Directorate, the Hellenic Chamber of Shipping, the Hellenic Bureau for Marine Casualties Investigation, the Hellenic Institute of Marine Technology, the Panhellenic Seamen's Federation, the Association of Greek Shipowners and WISTA Hellas. Since 2021, it has established in collaboration with Isalos-net the Oinousses **Sustainability Summer Bootcamp** for students from the University of Aegean and Merchant Marine Academies of Greece.

d) What do you consider to be the main difficulties or challenges for their implementation

- Conflict between nations, recent financial crisis, the problems caused by changing climate conditions and widespread epidemics, which has brought about growing insecurity.
- Prioritizing SDGs and targets by governments and turning development aims and targets into level local programs that are implemented and ensuring programs, policies and packages fit the local context.



- The way in which governance among nation-states is coordinated and facilitated, translated into political will to transform development programs into sustainable long-term practices.
- The lack of reliable data makes it difficult for countries to design and implement appropriate policies, evaluate how much progress is made over time and which policies worked.
- Reaching the SDGs requires collaboration, coordination and coherence within governments and engagement with a multitude of partners beyond national governments.

e) what suggestions do you have for the SDGs most effective approach.

→ Involve all levels of government

Goals need to be embraced across ministries and regional/municipal authorities and integrated into national planning and policies to deliver the integrated vision embedded in the SDGs.

→ Engage all Sectors of society

Participatory decision making and mobilizing the strength and innovation of local governments, the private sector and civil society are essential to implement the SDG agenda. Organizing a consultation process with a wide range of stakeholders outside national government is crucial for effective national policy prioritization and for efficient, coherent delivery. NGOs have an important role to play in progressing SDGs in Greece and HELMEPA is willing to participate and contribute its expertise to this process, where deemed necessary.

→ Demand for accountability

Reaching the SDGs requires collaboration, coordination and coherence within governments and engagement with a multitude of partners beyond national governments. The private sector should also be accountable, especially since Public-Private Partnerships are becoming an increasingly popular way of managing public resources. National leaders can engage public actors, civil society and companies report on sustainability, including environmental, social and labor issues, respect for human rights, equal opportunities, anti-corruption and bribery matters.



- Find the right balance between the three dimensions of sustainable development: economic, social and environmental. Policy-makers have to address several major balances on SDG implementation: for instance, between domestic and international policy pressures, which may be perceived to be in conflict, or between short- and long-term needs, and across the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development.

- Integrate SDGs into national and subnational development strategies and plans. As highlighted in recent reports of Eurostat and the UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network, although progress has been achieved a number of EU member states including Greece have quite some way to go with regards to national policy efforts and the strategic use of public practices in support of the SDGs.

- Democratise knowledge and ensure wider comprehension of SDGs
Raise awareness of the climate crisis among broad audiences and civil society stakeholders by adopting/creating common simple terminology and promote greening and sustainability practices in diverse areas of economy, culture and society

Wishing you a successful preparation of the 2nd Assessment Report, we are at your disposal to arrange a meeting and explore ways in which HELMEPA could further contribute to the national effort in pursuit sustainable development.

Sincerely,



Olga Stavropoulou
Director General



Think Tank ELIAMEP

The Hellenic Foundation for European and Foreign Policy (ELIAMEP) is an independent, non governmental, non-profit research institute and think tank, based in Athens, Greece. Its mission is to conduct policy-oriented research and provide policy makers, academics and the public at large with authoritative evidence-based analysis and policy recommendations regarding major European and foreign policy challenges.

ELIAMEP's expertise spans over a wide range of geographic and functional areas, which include among others: EU institutions & policies, foreign policy and security, management of migration, democracy, human rights, rule of law and civic participation, gender equality, and sustainability.

Specifically, ELIAMEP has a long-term interest in supporting initiatives relating to sustainable development and carrying out research work, awareness raising activities and identification of good practices from Greece and abroad; as well as engaging and cooperating with all relevant stakeholders in the public and the private sector, as well as civil society.

Indicative examples of ELIAMEP's ongoing activities are:

- Project "[Civil Society Network in the Context of UN's Sustainable Development Goals in Greece](#)", funded by EEA Grants, Active Citizens Fund (January 2022-December 2023). The project aims to create a new civil society network for the promotion of SDGs in Greece. Its key objectives are to mobilize both formal and informal groups in urban and in rural areas, create cross-subject and cross-organizational synergies, promote cooperation and partnerships, and strengthen advocacy and consultation with public bodies. The project promoter and project partner will use their long experience to start building a new Greek civil society community in the context of SDGs.
- Project "[Climate Resilient Regions through Systemic Solutions and Innovations](#)" (ARSINOE), funded by the European Commission Horizon 2020 Framework Programme (October 2021 - September 2025), bringing together 41 partners from 15 countries and intending to be a game-changer for shaping pathways to resilience by delivering regional innovation packages that build an ecosystem to develop and implement innovative climate change adaptation measures and solutions across Europe. ELIAMEP, as a partner of the ARSINOE consortium, will organize annually two Youth Assembly simulations, engaging secondary and tertiary education students, as well as one Training for Trainers (T4T) seminar with the participation of secondary education teachers and municipal employees of the Athens Metropolitan area.
- "[Hellenic Forum for Sustainable Development \(ELFOVA\)](#)". ELIAMEP together with FOGGS jointly established the forum in 2019, with main goal to facilitate the nexus between public authorities, representatives of the producing sectors, private and social enterprises, cooperatives, working unions, research and educational institutions as well as civil society in a concerted effort to analyze and apply good practices of sustainability in Greece that

have been –and will continue to be- highlighted in a national, European and international level.

- [“Europe Direct ELIAMEP Attikis”](#), hosted at ELIAMEP since 2009, informing citizens by offering multifaceted and documented information on European issues. In particular, ED ELIAMEP Attikis focuses on promoting EU’s policies in building a sustainable future. With an emphasis on the European Green Deal, it organizes webinars with useful information that can help citizens make their everyday lives more sustainable, such as the webinar titled: “Learning Green Habits” (introducing citizens with urban agriculture and tips on how to recycle properly), the “SustainabilityChallenge: Christmas Edition” (urging Instagram followers to adopt “greener” habits during the Christmas holidays, the simulation of the European Commission titled: “Athens EU Model 2021: Carbon neutrality and the European Climate Law, under the European Green Deal Framework” and regular informational visits to schools about the EU Green Deal, sustainability and the SDGs.
- [“Resilience and Recovery in Greece and SE Europe”](#) (June 2021 – December 2023), a program jointly implemented with Resilient Cities Catalyst (RCC) and Democracy & Culture Foundation (DCF) that will create a Hub for Climate Change. The Hub’s aim is to accelerate the design and delivery of transformative climate initiatives that drive local impact, while advancing progress toward Greece’s national resilience & recovery goals and SDG targets. The Hub aspires to collect all the country-related information in the form of a “one-stop shop” through an online platform. The platform will serve as the focal point and will include legal commitments, studies, scientific articles, best practices from the international community and the actions of stakeholders relative to climate change. Such information will be collected directly from these stakeholders, who will be mapped, providing significant added value to the project.

More information about ELIAMEP’s work related to sustainability is available at:
<https://www.eliamep.gr/en/topics/sustainability/>.



Hellenic Platform for Development
A Civil Society Umbrella Organization
Contribution to the 2nd Greek VNR

May 2022

Organization's Profile

The Hellenic Platform for Development (HPD), an official umbrella-organization that operates as a "national platform" of NGOs, was founded as a network of Greek Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) active in the fields of sustainable development education, humanitarian aid, global citizenship action and developmental support. Since 2015 and the adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals it has expanded its scope and now focuses on fostering partnerships among civil society using UN's Agenda 2030 as a common tool of collaboration, of advocacy and of public awareness raising.

The main objective of the Hellenic Platform is to influence *-through the joint action of its members-* policy makers in Greece, in the EU and internationally, for the improvement of policies and practices for sustainable development. Since the SDGs' adoption, HPD has been actively working towards their implementation, through projects, initiatives, advocacy, knowledge-sharing, and monitoring of the 2030 Agenda. Although Greek CSOs are primary partners, HPD often works in partnership with other sectors, including business, academia and policy makers (HPD was a contributor to Greece's first VNR).

Founding partners of HPD include: ACTIONAID HELLAS, CULTURAL FOUNDATION "THE ROUTES OF THE OLIVE TREE", ELIX, EQUAL SOCIETY, FAIR TRADE HELLAS, GREEK COMMITTEE FOR INTERNATIONAL DEMOCRATIC SOLIDARITY, HANDICAP CARE HELLAS, KENTRO ZOIS, KMOP, ORGANIZATION EARTH, POSITIVE VOICE, PRAKSIS, SCOUTS OF GREECE, UNESCO YOUTH CLUB OF THESSALONIKI, WORLD WITHOUT WAR AND VIOLENCE. However, HPD on several occasions during the last 7 years, has led broad civil society ad hoc networks that at instances overpassed the number of 300 organizations.

EU Level

SDG Watch Europe

HPD is an elected member of the Steering Committee of SDG Watch EU. Europe's largest EU-level, cross-sectoral Brussels-based Civil Society alliance of NGOs from development, environment, social, human rights and other sectors. Its goal is to hold governments to account for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (SDGs).



CONCORD

HPD represents Greek Civil Society in CONCORD, the European NGO Confederation for Relief and Development, which constitutes the main non-governmental interlocutor of EU institutions on the formation of the European Development Policy.

International Level

GCAP

HPD is also an elected member (representing European civil society organizations) at the Global Council of GCAP, a network of over 11,000 NGOs from 58 countries collaborating to combat inequalities and to advance social justice. GCAP works at local, national, regional and global levels to monitor the implementation of the SDGs in order to ensure that countries achieve the goals and meet and exceed the targets for all groups. GCAP focuses on a bottom-up approach to engage people and governments.

Action for Sustainable Development

Through its work within GCAP, HPD is affiliated with Action for Sustainable Development (A4SD), a global platform supporting civil society and citizen action for the delivery of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change.

Activities Related to the SDGs

National Level

Βιώσιμη Ευρώπη για Όλους-Βιώσιμη Ελλάδα για Όλους

Between 2017 and 2020, HPD implemented the biggest capacity building program for CSOs on the SDGs in Greece, as the national partner of "Make Europe Sustainable For All/Βιώσιμη Ευρώπη για Όλους" (MESA). Funded by the European Commission's Development Education and Awareness Raising Programme, MESA was a 3-year cross-sectoral project run by 25 national platforms from across Europe. Its aim was to promote ambitious implementation of the world's crisis plan, i.e. the 17 UN Sustainable Development Goals. The project's goal was to strengthen civil society networks working on SDG implementation across the EU and to highlight to the public and political leaders at the local, national, and European level that SDG implementation is crucial for an inclusive, sustainable and resilient future for all people and planet.

SDG Coalition

During that period, HPD led a loose but broad SDG Coalition of more than 90 organizations and grassroots initiatives that collaborated to offer more than 60 public events in 30 Greek



Cities with the participation of 39.000 citizens. HPD also established the annual national civil society campaign "17 Days 17 Goals", that takes place every year in September around the time of the UN General Assembly and the Global Action Week.

EU Level

HPD was a contributor -representing Greece- to the following SGDs themed Civil Society pan-european Reports:

"FALLING THROUGH THE CRACKS: Exposing Inequalities in Europe and Beyond". Published in June 2019 this report argues that despite the EU's commitment to Leave No One Behind according to the SDGs, millions of people are falling victim to widening inequalities. It maps various forms of inequality, both nationally and at the European level, including gender, age, disability, ethnicity and homelessness.

"WHO IS PAYING THE BILL? (Negative) Impacts of European Policies and Practices in the World". Again in 2019, this report highlights that despite the EU's commitment to the 2030 Agenda, EU reporting largely ignores the negative impacts that some of its actions have on the rest of the world. Policy coherence for sustainable development should take into account the externalities and spill-over effects of European policies, production and consumption patterns.

"TIME TO REACH FOR THE MOON - Civil Society SDG Monitoring Report"

Published in September 2020 this report argued that the EU's ambition to be a frontrunner for the SDGs has yet to be realized. That EU's SDG reporting creates an illusion of sustainability, whereas our economic system, characterized by resource depletion, overconsumption and waste is not sustainable, it has deepened inequalities and social exclusion, globally and within most Member States.

International Level

By collaborating with its global partners, detailed above, HPD has been involved throughout the years with the annual HLPF process, the Global Week of Action activations including participating in civil society fora at UN's Headquarters during 2019 UNGA and by organizing independent public discussions and events in several international fora, for example during UNECE's 2022 Regional Forum on Sustainable Development.

Greece's VNR and HLPF 2022

National Level

HPD has been working since November 2021 with other stakeholders to form a broad societal coalition, including businesses (UNGC-CSR Hellas-SEV) and academia (UNSDSN), in



advance of this year's HLPF. It has also been working (Spring 2022) towards leading civil society organizations to prepare an independent civil society report on national delivery of the SDGs in Greece (Peoples Scorecard).

EU Level

HPD through its role at SDG Watch EU, has been working with the European Parliament's SDG Alliance and the co-rapporteurs from the ENVI and DEVE Committees responsible to deliver the EP's SDG Report for 2022. The Report will be discussed in EP's plenary during June 2022 and then be delivered to the European Commission for further action and adoption.

International Level

By working with GCAP, A4SD as well as several other partners, HPD is collaborating with UN's Major Groups and other Stakeholders (MGoS) in order to represent Greek Civil Society at this year's HLPF. MGoS were integral to the development and adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and are also active in the annual follow-up and review process of the 2030 Agenda, which culminates in the yearly High-Level Political Forum for Sustainable Development.

Proposals Addressed to the Greek Government

1. Hellenic Multi-Stakeholder Platform on SDGs

Civil society, private sector, academia and other stakeholders engagement is one of the key prerequisites to implementing the SDGs. All stakeholders are an important part for a holistic policy strategy towards reaching the goals of the 2030 Agenda. Establishing the Hellenic Multi-Stakeholder Platform on SDGs, to be chaired by the Prime Minister's Office, would both accelerate implementation and also attract much needed support from the public and other partners. To assist the work of the Multi-Stakeholder Platform, a management committee will have to be set up as a sub-group, following the model of the European Commission. The management committee should be chaired by the General Secretariat for the Coordination of the Government.

To role of the Hellenic SDG Stakeholder Platform would be to:

- Support and advise the Greek State and all stakeholders involved on the implementation of the SDGs at National Level.
- Support and advise the Greek Government in relation to a structured on-going public consultation, not just on VNR years, as well as other Government-led events, projects and programmes in promoting sustainable development.
- Provide a forum for exchange of experience and best practice on the implementation of the SDGs across sectors and at local, regional, national and EU level.



Data for Sustainable Development/ELSTAT

To achieve the SDGs is not the only challenge. Monitoring progress towards the Goals represents an obligatory task for every government and an enormous challenge for every country's statistical systems. At the moment there are serious data gaps in assessing country-level progress towards SDGs, the trend applies to Greece too. (On average, countries had reported one or more data points on only 55% of the SDG indicators for the years 2015-2020. No country reported data on more than 90% of the SDG indicators, while 22 countries reported on less than 25% of the SDG indicators.)

Today, in our opinion ELSTAT is not equipped to report back on the SDGs' 231 Indicators in a fashion that would be contributing to the Greek Government's efforts to monitor SDG implementation at the National Level. In fact, most countries' statistical systems appear to be struggling to provide data on SDG indicators. However, the international statistics community has -as recently as 2021- managed to address methodological gaps in measurement and today the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on SDG Indicators considers the methodological development sufficiently advanced for all of the indicators to be tracked. A National Task Force at ELSTAT should be formed immediately to expedite the alignment with the global practices such as the World Bank's Statistical Performance Indicators (SPI), to learn from EUROSTAT's failure to include in its Annual EU SDG Report the spillover effects of EU's policies outside its borders or to identify widening inequalities even within Europe and finally to prepare a similar commitment that will be needed to fill data gaps.

Parliamentary Committee on Sustainable Development

The 2030 Agenda recognizes the cardinal roles of parliamentarians in ensuring political buy-in, financing and accountability to the SDGs. Above all, it calls for early and meaningful engagement of parliamentarians in national efforts to translate the global agenda into practice. Whether it will be decreed as a Permanent or a Temporary Committee (until 2030) of the Hellenic Parliament is not of major importance right now, as long as our Parliament "acknowledges the essential role of national parliaments through their enactment of legislation and adoption of budgets and their role in ensuring accountability for the effective implementation of our commitments" (*Para 45, General Assembly Res 70/1 - Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*).

As the Hellenic Government puts in place national processes for the implementation of the SDGs, it is important to ensure our Parliament plays its rightful role and assumes long term responsibility in giving political impetus towards localizing, implementing and monitoring progress on the SDGs.

To:
The Presidency of the Hellenic Government
Secretary General for the Coordination of the Government, Thanasis Kontogeorgis

Athens, 26 April 2022

Dear Mr. Kontogeorgis,

It is my honor, as the co-founder of Women On Top, a non-profit organization working for the economic empowerment of women and for gender equality at work and in the public life, to be offered the opportunity to contribute to this year's VNR.

The last two years have been seminal for the advancement of gender equality in Greece. The recent #metoo movement and the subsequent opening of the public discussion about gender-based violence, femicide and sexual harassment in the workplace, coupled with the indisputable and disproportionate negative impact of the pandemic on women everywhere, have brought SDG 5 to the forefront of CSO activity, policy making, corporate responsibility and collective sentiment. This doesn't mean that progress on SDG 5 has been remarkable or easy in Greece, it does mean, however, that preoccupation with this issue is bound not to fade soon. Our goal and our hope is that, before it does, it will have contribute to some lasting and meaningful change in all important areas for gender equality and inclusion in this country.

As a non-profit working for the economic empowerment of women and for gender equality at work and in the public life, Women On Top, which was founded in 2012, has been working on SDG 5 for the last 10 years through three main pillars of action:

1. Individual empowerment and community development for women of all ages and backgrounds, through mentoring, training, and networking.
2. Advocacy to create a more equitable and gender-inclusive work environment (corporate and otherwise), through consulting, training, and the implementation of gender-related initiatives.
3. Advocacy to create more gender-sensitive and inclusive institutions and communities, through content development and educational interventions.

Our work through these three pillars has led us to mentor and/or train more than 3500 women, build capacity for more than 3000 corporate agents and reach more than 12000 individuals through our initiatives and campaigns in Greece and beyond. This means that, beyond SDG 5, our work has also been focusing on a host of other SDGs that intersect with gender equality and both greatly influence but also get impacted by any progress or regression in that field.

These goals are:

SDG 4**Quality education**

Women On Top has been focusing on building capacity for educators and schools to create more equitable and gender-inclusive learning environments for Greek youth. Through the “School of no bias program”, funded by the Active Citizens Fund and implemented by Women On Top, along with Sociality and Openous CSOs, we aim to develop a network of educators and schools that can pioneer new tools and methodologies to bring more gender equity in the classroom.

SDG 8**Decent work and economic growth**

We work to boost female employment and women’s earning potential by helping them develop their employability and leadership skills, build their professional networks, and co-creating more equitable and gender-inclusive work environments along with male stakeholders and corporate decision-makers. We have been working with our collaborators and corporate supporters to research the [financial literacy of individuals in Greece](#) and to build [curricula](#) that will help boost financial literacy for women especially from vulnerable groups.

SDG 9**Industry, innovation and infrastructure**

In 2021, Women On Top was the training partner of the General Secretariat for Demographic and Family Policy and Gender Equality and of KETHI in the SHARE project that culminated in the awarding of 18 companies with the SHARE Gender Equality Label. We also conducted research on the [gender financing gap](#) for female entrepreneurs and have highlighted important proposed measures to be taken by the industry, the State and other stakeholders.

SDG 10**Reduced inequalities**

Our work on gender equality also encompasses many other aspects of equity, diversity, and inclusion. By empowering women and by gradually transforming their work environments we aim to ensure equal opportunities for women on any race, ethnicity or religion, of any age, gender identity or sexual orientation, as well as for migrant and/or disabled women.

SDG 11**Sustainable cities and communities**

Community development has always been one of our key action pillars. Before the pandemic we mostly focused on building physical communities around gender equality issues in Athens and Thessaloniki, through our mentoring schemes, book clubs, training programs and networking events. Since the pandemic started, we have both expanded

our existing communities online, involving women from all over Greece (and beyond), but we have also focused on creating more smaller hubs in remote areas of the country. Our goal for 2022 is to create the first women-focused co-working space and advocacy center with childcare in Athens, Greece, with the vision to expand this flexible structure to empower women and build more supportive and inclusive communities all over Greece.

SDG 13

Climate action

In April 2022, Women On Top published the first part of a two-part research aimed at highlighting the impact of the climate crisis on women and the role that women have and should play in all decision-making and action around sustainability. The first part of the study can be found [here](#) and the second one is expected to be completed in October 2022.

SDG 14

Peace, justice and strong institutions

Through all our initiatives we aim to strengthen women's voices not just in the workplace but in the whole of public life in Greece. To ensure stronger and more resilient democratic institutions women need to be equitably involved in politics, local governance, the civil society, mainstream and new media, the arts, and citizens fora everywhere. This is how we aim to ensure a true stakeholder democracy that respects human rights at all levels of social activity.

SDG 17

Partnerships for the goals

Over the last 10 years, we have partnered with more than 30 civil societies organisations, more than 110 businesses and corporations and a host of public institutions to design and implement initiatives that meaningfully move the needle on gender equality. We aim to continue building on these collaborations, as we believe that the more we work together the easier it is to create progress that will be bigger than what we could achieve by going forward by ourselves.

From our experience the intersectionality that is evidenced from our brief account above is where we need and will see more meaningful progress in the years to come. In other words, while Greek society has been gradually waking up to the urgency of issues such as gender equality, the climate crisis, and the protection of democratic institutions, as well as to the importance of the SDGs as tools for improving outcomes, nonetheless it hasn't yet fully grasped the interdependence and interrelationship of those issues with one another.

In this context of intersectionality, SDG 5 proves to be one of the most impactful of all the Goals. We cannot achieve climate adaptability nor economic growth without gender equality and, at the same time, falling behind on any of the SDGs poses great risks for gender equality all over the world. That relationship is something that we believe eludes the understanding of both the public and key decision makers and this gap creates one of the

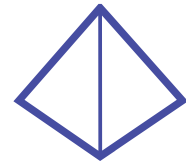
biggest challenges we are facing in of long-term work. That is why we aim to continue working on as many intersectional and inter-goal initiatives as we can and trying building wider awareness around the importance of this approach for all relevant stakeholders.

It goes without saying, that we remain at your disposal for any additional information we can provide and for future synergies that will contribute to the easier, faster and more sustainable achievements of our societies' most crucial goals.

Yours sincerely,

Stella Kasdagli

A small, square, light gray box containing a handwritten signature in black ink. The signature is stylized and appears to be the name 'Stella Kasdagli'.



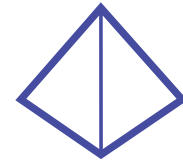
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empowering leadership

www.women-act.org

Women Act is a non-partisan and non-profit organization which was founded in Athens in 2017 by 8 women with the aim of empowering women in leadership positions in the public sphere of Greece. This goal is achieved through networking, educational and campaigning activities. We focus on building up networks for women by hosting our monthly Women Act Aperitifs where women meet role models and listen to inspirational speakers thus building their own networks. We give them the tools necessary for leadership through our Leadership Academies, a very intensive workshop that focuses on branding, public speaking, media presence, social media use and many more issues affecting women disproportionately in the public sphere. Finally, we have large scale campaigns for the public where we place issues of gender equality at the forefront of public dialogue. Our activities have so far benefited more than 3.000 women and we have expanded with hubs in Thessaloniki, Kavala, Alexandroupoli, Patra, Larissa, Thiva, Rhodes and Kefalonia. More are to come within the year in Crete, Corfu, Lamia, Serres, Kozani and Ancient Olympia.

We believe that women in Greece lack the visibility that will put them at the forefront of the public sphere. Another problem is the lack of role models as very few women do make it to the top and there is also the issue of mentoring which is not done to the scale it is done abroad. Finally, we should not forget that there are many societal stereotypes that limit the opportunities and ambitions of women. We do not believe that there is an ambition gap but instead women face more challenges in their public, professional and private lives. We fear that unless we act now we will continue to have few women protagonists in the public sphere of Greece.

This year at Women Act we have focused on the issue of female underrepresentation in politics. The numbers of elected women are continuing to be disappointing and as a result we have initiated our "Women CANDidates" project in order to address this. With the support and funding of the US State Department we have designed a program whereby women who wish to run for office are given access to a groundbreaking platform enabling them to design



WOMEN ACT
empowering leadership

www.women-act.org

and run their own campaigns. In this platform not only do they have online courses and webinars enabling them to learn how to run for office but they also build their own community which will stay with them beyond the next elections. It is also a tool that can be used by the entire female population regardless of their location. Interested women have case to speakers from within and outside Greece enabling them to look far for role models. The number of women which will benefit is estimated to be 700 for the first year of "Women CANDidates" (www.womencandidates.gr)

We have also continued to address the issue of female underrepresentation in the panels of fora, conferences and events in Greece. It is often the case that an entire panel of 5-6 speakers only has one woman as a moderator or even none. This is not only a problem as female voices are not heard but also a vicious cycle as they remain invisible thus not being selected for leadership positions and higher profile roles. Our ongoing campaign "No More Manels" is addressing this by asking the leading think tanks, organizations and event organizers of Greece to pledge that they will have more women on their panels. We aim to take this a step further by initiating a platform that will enable women to propose themselves as experts on issues thus removing the visibility barrier they often face.

Women in Greece deserve to have leading roles in the public sphere and Women Act aims to help them achieve just that.



Mr. Thanasis Kontogeorgis
 Secretary General for Coordination
 Presidency of the Government
 Vas. Sofias 15
 106 74 Athens
 office@gSCO.gov.gr

Athens, 2/5/2022

Dear Mr. Kontogeorgis,

Thank you very much for your invitation, with your letter of 18/3/2022, to participate and to contribute to the preparation of the second Voluntary National Report (VNR), and therefore to the important national effort to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the UN in Greece.

As a leading Child Protection organization worldwide, [SOS Children's Villages have actively advocated](#) for the rights of the most vulnerable children, i.e. those living outside the family environment, in the UN consultations on the creation of the SDGs, as well as in the United Nations programming.

The Sustainable Development Goals which mainly concern children are Goal 1 (Eradication of Poverty), Goal 4 (Education for all), Goal 8 (Professional Opportunities for All), Goal 10 (Reducing Inequality) and Goal 16 (Promoting Peace and Inclusive Societies). In order to achieve all these objectives, the protection of children without families and the support of vulnerable families in the community, with a view to prevent family separation, is of key importance.

Based on the developments and needs in our country, we prioritize the creation of a holistic effective child protection system, and the progress of Deinstitutionalization, as the main priority areas.

Child Protection must be set up as a single holistic policy system at community level

Further holistic systemic reform in child protection – from supporting the vulnerable family, to placing children in foster care without the intermediary presence of the institution – is necessary. This holistic reform concerns social services in Prefectures, social services in Municipalities, as well as the primary provision of health and mental health services with a child – centric approach. This role at community level, however crucial, has thus far not been realized, primarily due to a lack of an institutional framework, protocols, procedures, adequate staffing with qualified and adequately trained staff, coordination and interministerial agreements and day-to-day cooperation in the field and supervision.

Deinstitutionalization requires braver reforms

In Europe, deinstitutionalization – the gradual replacement of closed-type institutions with alternative care support systems – has been a reality for years in most countries, including those in Eastern Europe. Best practice in child protection is achieved when a child which has to be removed from its biological family is immediately placed in a family environment through foster care (in all its forms), until either its reunification with its biological family, or until its permanent



family rehabilitation through adoption. Where this is not possible, preference is given to placing the child in alternative care family-type childcare structures, while efforts continue to reintegrate them into their biological family (if this is in their best interest) or to rehabilitate them into a family through foster care or adoption. Infants and toddlers under the age of three will never go through a child institution in countries that have made progress in deinstitutionalization.

So far, the significant deinstitutionalization efforts in Greece, through the implementation of Law 4538 and the Child Guarantee programs, are an initiative of the Ministry of Labour and Social Solidarity and are being implemented primarily through the lead of the childcare institutions themselves.

However, deinstitutionalization is a complex process which mainly concerns the framework of families in the community – with an active and primary role for local government, municipalities and the prefectures. In our country, the request for the establishment of Social Welfare as an independent cross-Ministry department is pending. Community social services are strewn into bodies of at least seven different Ministries and their directors are not supervised by central government. However, without the active involvement of community social services that will support vulnerable children and families before the social need becomes a real danger, requests for childcare institutional admissions will never stop.

We also note that the recent legislative initiative for the establishment of a framework for the operation of child protection institutions, for as long as they exist, indeed covers a long-standing institutional gap of childcare protection and was a constant request of SOS Children's Villages; yet the framework has great potential for improvement, both in terms of guaranteeing higher level quality care for children in institutions, as well as in terms of their inclusion in the National Deinstitutionalization effort - we have submitted detailed comments and proposals during the consultation and to the attention of the Ministry, which we also attach for your reference.

Foster Care needs significant further support

Foster care placements are still very few in relation to the needs, while foster care still attracts parents who want to adopt faster: despite efforts, foster care still seems to serve as a prelude of adoption for most families. Although this is not a bad thing for many children, for hundreds of other children with complex legal loose ends, it means that they will remain in institutions for many years. These children urgently need 'real fosters': people who will take care of a child temporarily, and immediately, without necessarily aiming for adoption.

We note that, according to [EKKA data](#), while 85% of the children in institutions are assigned for foster care, 87% of the parent candidates want adoption. We also note that 97% of the children in institutions are older than 6 years old, 50% are older than 12 years old, hundreds have some physical or intellectual disability, mental issues, and many are of different ethnic or racial origin. For these children, unfortunately, there is no interest from prospective foster or adoptive parents.

International experience clearly tells us that foster care will never be developed at the desired level, which is to entirely replace institutions as a form of care, unless professional foster care, with adequate compensation, is extended to cover all children – today it is legally foreseen (although not implemented) only for children with a disability of 67% or more. Professional foster care means that professionals will take care of a child temporarily, at home, instead of placing it in



an institution. Any form of foster care is based on and depends on a tight and strict framework of supervision and continuous support from the supervisory bodies – either the public childcare institution, where it exists, or the Prefecture.

The protection of vulnerable children and their rights are non-negotiable. Childcare reform must be national priority and Greece has a very long way to go. Further, holistic and inter-ministerial institutional reforms are needed. We also need to systematically educate society into changing the perception of what constitutes appropriate child protection and to cultivate a culture in favor of foster care, while understanding that institutional care, in all its forms, is de facto harmful to children.

The experience and know-how of SOS Children's Villages

SOS Children's Villages is a major proponent of Deinstitutionalization and a partner, at an international and national level, both to the European Union and its member states, as well as in international initiatives and collaborations - such as the Opening Doors for Europe campaign. With extensive presence in 136 countries (including 24 EU states) and 70 years of experience in protection, prevention, foster care and supported independent living programmes, SOS Children's Villages is a leading actor in protecting children's rights worldwide.

In Greece, SOS Children's Villages is implementing innovative programs that promote systemic change in child protection, with emphasis on Foster Care and Deinstitutionalization, in collaboration with state agencies, as well as supporting vulnerable families in the community with prevention programs.

Within the framework of the implementation of the Child Guarantee in Greece, SOS Children's Villages is the strategic partner of UNICEF and the Greek State for the implementation and promotion of Foster Care, focusing on the creation of protocols and the training and support of professionals at the Social Welfare Center of Attica and in private child protection structures. The Child Guarantee program followed SOS Children's Villages programs for the support of a total of 10 public child protection structures throughout Greece, in the promotion of Foster Care and the support of professionals and children in other critical areas of protection, since 2017.

The Child and Family Support Centers, the service hub for the support of thousands of vulnerable families and their children on a community level in 9 cities nationwide, has been providing critical services since 2011 to more than 14,000 families in crisis. It is the largest and most experienced family support program in the country, which is based on the international experience of SOS Children's Villages through their Family Strengthening Programs.

Yours sincerely,
For SOS Children's Villages Greece

Professor Kon. N. Syrigos
President of the Board of Directors

Giorgos Protopapas
National Director



1. Sustainable Development Goals and Together for Children

Civil society organizations, by definition, work towards the well-being of society and its people and the protection of the environment. In this sense, the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) have documented, systematized and prioritized in some way the work we go at Together for Children Association, giving us a clear action plan for each important pillar of development.

In specific, Together for Children, an Association of public benefit organizations that counts more than 25 years of social contribution, immediately embraced the introduction of SDGs and applied their principles to its programs, recognizing that this is the only way to move forward and increase the Association's social impact.

Also, the introduction of the SDGs brought in an important new parameter which did not exist until 2015: SDGs gave us clear instructions on how to achieve the goals, either through collaborations (Goal 17) or through the inclusion and integration of society in decision-making (Goal 16). These two goals, as far as Together for Children Association is concerned, are the cornerstone for achieving all goals.

Lastly, we consider of imperative importance our alignment and continuous support of the SDGs since we work systematically to eliminate inequalities, poverty and hunger, to provide equal opportunities in health and education services, to combat child violence and to build infrastructure where there is a need.

Along with our member associations and our collaborating network of more than 200 child protection organizations in Greece, we can proudly say that we are a strong component and advocate to the implementation of the SDGs in all aspects of our field of work.

2. Are SDGs included in your action plan?

The goals are integrated in Together for Children's strategy, both for the short and long term planning. All of the Association's programs, actions, and interventions are based on one or more goals and follow a bottom up approach to development planning. Our job at the Association is to listen to the needs of society and create people-centered programs that respond to these needs in a direct and effective way and support the SDGs on their implementation.

Specifically, our counseling services for parents, children and educators, focus on preventive interventions in the context of psychological health so as to ensure a healthy structure for families with under aged children. This program has specific



deliverables that were enhanced with the introduction of the SDGs so as to achieve the maximum social impact.

Another intervention we are applying, refers to the population living in remote areas of Greece: there, we have a specific implementation plan which applies to a wider range of the SDGs and aims at creating equal opportunities in education and health for children and their families living in remote areas, through the provision of equipment, the creation of modern infrastructure, and by enabling synergies between remote communities and communities in big cities, with the aim to combat inequalities.

Lastly, it is safe to say that all of the Association's programs along with the ones of its members cover almost all of the SDGs. Specifically, Together for Children and its members implement more than 200 programs that provide specialized intervention in areas such as disability, poverty, physical and mental health, abuse, education, and elimination of inequalities.

3. Is Together for Children involved in partnerships to promote the SDGs?

At Together for Children Association, we are proud to collaborate with companies from the private sector and public organizations and authorities to create social impact and promote the SDGs. Our network of collaborations from the nonprofit sector is also fully aligned with the SDGs and, together, we strive to maximize our partnership impact.

Specifically, through our program "PROSFERO" (I GIVE), we partner with the municipalities and NGOs for children from all Greek regions and offer products that social services are in need for, with the goal to eliminate POVERTY (Goal 1).

The program we run in remote areas of Greece, in order to reduce the inequalities in health and education faced by the youth of those areas, supports Goal 11 for Sustainable Cities and Communities whereas it also enhances the goals 1,3, 4, and 8.

Lastly, our Holistic Program for the support of poor families with under aged children aims at creating synergies with companies from the private sector and redistribute funds to our beneficiaries in collaboration with social services form municipalities and other NGOs. In addition to the financial support of our beneficiaries we also cater for the health and educational needs of children from vulnerable families.

To maximize our positive impact, we collaborate with ELIAMEP, the Hellenic Foundation for European and Foreign Policy. ELIAMEP is an independent, non-governmental, nonprofit think tank, established in Athens, Greece, in 1988. Its mission is to conduct policy-oriented research and provide policy makers, academics



and the public at large with authoritative information and substantiated policy recommendations, to contribute to the development of evidence-based responses to major European and foreign policy challenges.

We also contribute to the Quality Net Foundation's calls to action. Quality Net Foundation is a specialized Non-Profit Sustainable Development Organization, which since 1997, is active in Greece with a view to creating a Sustainable Economy and Society that develops with environmental sensitivity and social cohesion.

Lastly, with our contribution to this consultation we aim at giving our feedback to the importance of the SDGs to all programs run by nonprofit associations.

4. What are the challenges or difficulties to SDGs implementation?

Although the UN SDGs set out a clear framework for action at a global level, this is not enough when there is no clear action plan and prioritization at national level. Specifically, in Greece, although many remarkable initiatives are implemented to achieve the goals, there is a big deficit in terms of central planning and coordination. It is safe to say that if we were communicated a long term development plan with clear goals and priorities for the next decade and with measurable KPIs, then we would be in a better position to plan strategically our next steps and we would be aware of the work still left to be done. In addition, there is lack of information about the objectives and sources of information from which we could all draw valid data in order to plan social interventions more coordinated.

5. What are your suggestions for the SDGs most effective approach?

We suggest the compilation of a long term national development plan with clear goals and priorities for the next decade and measurable KPIs in consultation with all the driving forces of the Greek economy including NGOs and at the same time the creation of a national index to measure progress against goals, retrieve reliable data and exchange good practices towards the SDGs.



Best practices

1. Food Relief Program

The program activities include:

1. Access to nutritious food: we provide the beneficiaries of the program with food stamps of 50€ per family member for a period of 6-9 months
2. Psychological support: our scientific team of psychologists, psychotherapists, and social workers provide counseling to individuals and school communities who use the service for free
3. Volunteering: Private companies, schools and individuals are invited to a number of activities that include: collecting food products at local super markets to distribute to our partnering members, collecting and giving Christmas & Easter goodies to the beneficiary children, and visiting our partnering foundations for volunteer activities

Supports GOALS 1, 2, 10, and 17.

2. Helpline 11525

The program activities include:

1. Free of charge counseling via telephone/online.
2. The provision of free psycho-educational seminars for children, parents and educators within schools and municipalities.
3. The provision of free parent groups.

Supports GOALS 3, 4, and 17



ΧΕΝ ΕΛΛΑΔΟΣ

ΣΥΝΟΠΤΙΚΗ ΑΠΟΤΥΠΩΣΗ ΔΡΑΣΕΩΝ ΓΙΑ ΤΗΝ ΠΡΩΘΗΣΗ ΤΩΝ ΣΤΟΧΩΝ ΒΙΩΣΙΜΗΣ ΑΝΑΠΤΥΞΗΣ

The YWCA of Greece – short presentation

YWCA of Greece, one of the oldest women's, voluntary organizations in Greece and worldwide, has been working systematically to achieve its collective vision so that, *“By 2035, 100 million young women and girls will transform power structures to create justice, gender equality, and a world without violence and war; leading a sustainable YWCA movement, inclusive of all women.”*

This collective vision, as adopted at the YWCA World Council in 2015, has taken into account the Sustainable Development Goals, which include achieving effective gender equality and ensuring that all women, young women and girls are empowered, innovate and lead, with access to education, health services and financial opportunities.

YWCA fully embraces diversity in race, ethnicity, health, status, social class, caste, special abilities, citizenship, age, sexual orientation, gender identity and faith.

Every national YWCA - member of the World YWCA, such as YWCA of Greece, has since adapted its long-term and medium-term planning, in order to promote and support the Goals for the benefit of all women, young women and girls.

In this context, either independently or in synergy with other civil society organizations, it invests resources (both human and financial) in prevention and awareness programs, support services and advocacy actions, at national and local level, focusing on the empowerment of all women.

For further information about our actions please visit the official website of YWCA of Greece <https://www.xen.gr/>

1. Programs & Services

1.1. "Athena" free housing program

Both World YWCA and other international organizations are concerned that young women often face additional difficulties due to their gender in terms of equal and unhindered access to educational opportunities and that targeted interventions are required.



YWCA of Greece, with the free housing program "Athena", recognizes and promotes the right of equal access of young women to higher education (indicatively SBA 4).

The program concerns female students, in Universities and Technical Universities of Athens and Piraeus, coming from different parts of Greece, who face financial difficulties as a result of which they risk losing this right and is implemented in the privately owned building of YWCA in Ilioupoli, in facilities of international standards.

1.2 The "Career Counseling Program - Femina Career Lab"

The "Career Counseling Program - Femina Career Lab", provides free modern career and career management services to women (<https://www.xen.gr/femina-career-lab/>).

The modern methodology and the appropriate psychometric tools of professional counseling are utilized, so that the services provided respond quickly and effectively to the modern needs of every woman who strives to develop in the complex labor market (**indicatively SDG 8 and 10**).

The services

- are provided live and online in the physical structure (Athena MultiCenter - Ilioupoli),
- will be included in the web portal (portal) of YWCA that is in the process of creation,

thus ensuring access to women living in areas other than Athens.

1.3 Social Service - Femina Support Lab:

The provided free services of Femina Support Lab include individual counseling, information, liaison & referral to competent bodies (<https://www.xen.gr/femina-support-lab/>).

They aim at the empowerment and support that women of all ages need for their personal development in the prevailing conditions and intensify gender discrimination in critical areas of her life and the violence that exists (**indicatively SBA 1, 3 and 5**).

The services are provided live and online in the physical structure (Athena Services Center - Ilioupoli), utilizing the possibilities of new technologies to serve women from other parts of the country.

In addition, they will join the web portal (portal) of YWCA of Greece which is in the process of creation.

2. Other actions



2.1 YWCA of Greece web portal: Designed to provide information, support, interconnection of women with services and agencies based on needs, always in a safe and secure environment, utilizing new technologies to their advantage (**indicatively SDG 1, 3, 4, 5, 8 and 10**).

The three pillars of the YWCA - Feminalab digital space will briefly include:

Gender Equality - Femina Rights Lab:

- the definition and glossary of Equality,
- legislation and national enforcement mechanism (government agencies),
- surveys and statistics,
- self-presentation of civil society actors working and promoting gender equality,
- equality tools.

Career Counseling - Femina Career Lab:

Women who visit it will be able to be informed about topics such as writing a resume, preparing for a job interview, planning a career plan, connecting to the job market, etc. It will also include information on events, seminars, current announcements, etc. , while there will be useful links regarding educational options, the labor market, labor legislation, etc

Social Service - Femina Support Lab:

It will include information on issues that concern women (eg violence, addiction, mourning, mental and physical health, etc.), services that can be addressed for their psycho-emotional and social support as well as legal information based on the triptych: information -services and useful links.

3. Our actions on violence against women and domestic violence

Raising and addressing the phenomenon of violence against women, sexism and domestic violence is a priority for YWCA of Greece, as both the economic crisis of the past years and the current health crisis have, cumulatively, had a negative impact on the lives and the safety of women who are already discriminated against because of their gender (**indicative SDG 5**).

YWCA of Greece is fighting

- through informing and raising awareness to highlight the causes and manifestations of the phenomenon of violence against women,
- by putting pressure and through advocacy actions for
 - the adoption of policies from a gender perspective,
 - the change of laws and regulations that reproduce stereotypes and patriarchal perceptions,



- the strict implementation of international conventions that promote and protect women's human rights
- More specifically:
To address gender-based violence in the COVID-19 era, it organized four free online awareness and empowerment workshops and a series of five "Community Dialogues" for women entitled "*Light... in the Shadow*" - *Gender-Based Violence in the Covid-19 era*, under the auspices of the World YWCA and the Bread for the World Organization. For further information please visit <https://www.xen.gr/workshop-fos-sti-skia/>.

Following its nation-wide advocacy action (2017-2018) for the ratification of the Istanbul Convention by the Greek Parliament <https://www.xen.gr/2018/03/08/%ce%b7-%cf%87%ce%b5%ce%bd-%cf%83%cf%84%ce%b7%cf%81%ce%af%ce%b6%ce%b5%ce%b9-%cf%84%ce%b7%ce%bd-%ce%b5%cf%80%ce%b9%ce%ba%ce%b5%ce%af%ce%bc%ce%b5%ce%bd%ce%b7-%ce%ba%cf%8d%cf%81%cf%89%cf%83%ce%b7-%cf%84/>

YWCA of Greece

- submitted its actions to be included in the national report to be submitted by the national authorities to the Committee of Experts of the Council of Europe (GREVIO).
- participated either autonomously or collectively in actions of protest and pressure from women's and feminist organizations for the violation of the Istanbul Convention with the proposed reforms in Family Law and the Civil Code regarding the protection and safety of victims of violence.
- was summoned to a hearing in Parliament during the joint meeting of the Standing Committee on Public Administration, Public Order and Justice and the Special Standing Committee on Youth Equality and Human Rights (12.05.2021), on the agenda of the continuation of the drafting and further of the Ministry of Justice "Reforms regarding the relations between parents and children and other issues of family law" (<https://www.xen.gr/2021/05/14/press-release/>).

was Invited by the Deputy Minister of Labor and Social Affairs, Mrs. M. Syregela, in an informative internet event-discussion on the occasion of the completion of 10 years from the signing of the Istanbul Convention (<https://www.xen.gr/2021/06/15/%ce%b4%ce%b5%ce%bb%cf%84%ce%b9%ce%bf-%cf%84%cf%85%cf%80%ce%bf%cf%85/>)

Labor Bill / violence against women in the workplace:



- In May 2021, a meeting was held between the President and members of the Bureau with the Deputy Minister Dim. & Economic Policy & Gender Equality Ms. M. Syregela, during which issues were raised regarding the disadvantaged position of women in terms of unemployment, especially during the pandemic and in relation to the violence suffered by women and made specific proposals concerning (a) the repeated training of police officers who have first contact with women who have suffered violence & (b) the reform of the institution of legal aid for women with the participation of experienced lawyers <https://www.xen.gr/2021/05/31/ypergasias-syregela-gkini-xen/>.
- YWCA of Greece submitted its positions to the Hellenic Human Rights Committee on specific articles and implementing laws introduced by the labor bill in compliance with the International Convention on Sexual Harassment.

YWCA of Greece also designed and implement the nation-wide two-year program "An_Na violence against women in space and time" in collaboration with the local YWCA Centers (2019-2021). The aim of the program is to raise awareness, to educate and inform not only women but the wider community as well regarding the phenomenon, forms and manifestations of violence that women experience in all social sectors. <https://www.xen.gr/2020/10/19/xaraktiras-anna/>.

The program in 2021 included:

- the online campaign "Dialogue with the news" with topics such as gender-based violence, murders, family law reform, prostitution, always decoding the news and implemented for the third year. <https://www.xen.gr/blog-posts/>.
 - the synergy at the local level with the YWCA of Rhodes and the Prevention Center "DIODOS", for the construction of a board game entitled "Meet An_na" for students of the last grades of Primary School and High School in order to inform and raise awareness of students and teachers on the topic of gender-based violence of a multiplier nature.
1. In 2019, in the framework of the 29th World Council of the World YWCA (Johannesburg), the Greek delegation tabled a resolution for the adoption of the term "femicide" by the movement when referring to murders of women because of their gender, which was voted in favor. The Council was attended by delegations from more than 80 countries. <https://www.xen.gr/2019/11/27/%ce%bd%ce%b1%ce%b9-%cf%83%cf%84%ce%b7%ce%bd-%cf%80%cf%81%cf%8c%cf%84%ce%b1%cf%83%ce%b7-%cf%84%ce%b7%cf%82-%cf%87%ce%b5%ce%bd-%ce%b5%ce%bb%ce%bb%ce%ac%ce%b4%ce%bf%cf%82-%ce%b3%ce%b9%ce%b1-%cf%85%ce%b9/>.



At the same time, to this day, it continues to exert pressure through advocacy actions

- letters to the state and political leadership of the country
- relevant posts on the social media available <https://www.xen.gr/2020/10/16/epikairota-gynaikoktonia/>)
- synergy with women and feminist organizations in the context of the " Initiative against Femicide". Indicatively, we mention relevant posts <https://www.ertnews.gr/eidiseis/ellada/protovoylia-kata-ton-gynaikoktonion-18-organoseis-kai-sylogikotites-kalovn-se-drasi/> ΚΑΙ
<https://www.xen.gr/2021/12/06/femicide-2/>

for the recognition of femicide as an autonomous criminal offense, with the aim of highlighting this escalating phenomenon and taking measures to address it.

On the occasion of the 13 women who were murdered until October 2021, an art / map was created, which is updated in each new femicide (<https://www.xen.gr/2021/12/14/femicide-16/>)

with a link on the YWCA of Greece website and the text "Patriarchy kills: to recognize femicide as an autonomous criminal offense." <https://www.xen.gr/2021/07/21/femicide-gynaikoktonia/>).

On 25.11.2021 the YWCA of Greece, at the invitation of the World YWCA, represented the organization in a Webinar organized by the World Council of Churches on "Femicides and Sexual Violence". Presented its multifaceted action on the issue of femicide at international and national level (interviews, resolution to the World Council, online awareness campaigns, synergies for advocacy and pressure to institutionalize the term) <https://www.xen.gr/2021/12/15/press-release-3/>

2. World YWCA Campaign "Week without Violence" (October 18-24): in this context, YWCA of Greece conducted the online campaign "Maybe ... the time has come" which focused on the partnership and its characteristics strongly or less strongly , which, however, constitute violence. <https://www.xen.gr/2021/10/19/week-without-violence-2021/>.
3. UN Women global campaign "Orange the World - 16 days of activism" (25.11.-10.12): as every year, YWCA of Greece participated in collaboration with the local YWCA Local Centers throughout the country with the information action "Did η come the time". A leaflet was created containing steps for designing a safe escape route for women who are being abused and support lines specifically designed to hide. The executives of the local Centers made sure that the booklet (20,000 pieces) reaches those who need the information, through its



dissemination to 45 local retail and catering companies across the country.
<https://www.xen.gr/2021/11/22/16-days-of-activism/>.

4. Conducted a primary survey among its members (2020) on how they perceive gender-based violence and what actions they take in relation to it, which is included in the collective volume on "Gender-based violence against women" to be published in honour of Kaiti Kostavara, which is compiled on the initiative of the Laboratory of Gender Studies of Panteion University .
5. Collaboration with the Kakogiannis Foundation in the context of the opening of the Exhibition "She`s gone" which took place under the auspices of SA. of the President of the Republic <https://www.xen.gr/2021/12/16/shes-gone-xen-ellados/>.

In the context of the Exhibition

- o A conference entitled "Gender-Based Violence & Femicide" was held in collaboration with the General Secretariat for Demographic and Family Policy and Gender Equality, during which the President of YWCA Greece, with her presentation in the section "Stereotypes and prejudices. "The incrimination of women", he referred to the stereotypes that are reproduced, creating fertile ground, for the root of gender-based violence, which is intensifying and escalating.

- o three live information & awareness workshops were organized by the scientific staff of XEN Greece on 26.11. and on 11.12.2021:

- o The first entitled "Gender Violence: How do we get there? - From abusive behavior to abusive act. Perpetrator, victim, environment "aimed at informing about the historical context of the world day for the elimination of violence against women, the social and legal framework of gender & domestic violence and its emotional & psychological manifestations.

- o The second entitled "We are by your side - Gender-based violence - From the 'I' of the victim to the 'we' of solidarity and advocacy" through teamwork aimed at capturing the role of all of us in dealing with gender-based violence.

- o the third concerned adolescents, who through active participation techniques negotiated with the help of the coordinators concepts such as the right - protection - violation and escalation to violence, etc ..

4. Participations and representations

- Participation in the open consultation for the National Action Plan for Gender Equality (GGDOIKIF): YWCA of Greece submitted its views and proposals on the NSRF both in the Open Consultation and in its memorandum to the General Secretariat on the adoption and implementation Equality policies in all Ministries.



- **The leadership of young women in practice:**

In the context of the empowerment and support of young women to take leadership positions both inside and outside the organization, in order to promote the issues that concern them, two young women, members of XEN in Greece, represent the European XEN in international fora. The former was elected as one of the two representatives of European XEN on the Governing Board of the European Women Lobby (EWL) and the latter was appointed as one of its two representatives in the European Youth Forum (EYF).

<https://www.xen.gr/2021/06/11/%ce%b7-%ce%b7%ce%b3%ce%b5%cf%83%ce%af%ce%b1-%cf%84%cf%89%ce%bd-%ce%bd%ce%ad%cf%89%ce%bd-%ce%b3%cf%85%ce%bd%ce%b1%ce%b9%ce%ba%cf%8e%ce%bd-%cf%83%cf%84%ce%b7%ce%bd-%cf%80%cf%81%ce%ac%ce%be%ce%b7/>

5. Creation of educational material

- **Women's Leadership:** YWCA of Greece prepares the pilot implementation of a program for activating and developing the leadership skills of young women and the corresponding educational material is created.
- **Sexual and reproductive health:** the development of an educational tool aimed at informing, developing skills and developing healthy / safe behaviors for adolescents and young women (aged 15+) as a primary target group and parents of adolescents, as well as YWCA members as secondary groups. This tool follows the existing "Secrets & Lies" folder and will take into account the needs of young women for valid information and empowerment due to new conditions, such as e.g. the greater involvement of young people with the internet, the beginning of an active sexual life at a younger age, the violence in relationships, etc.)

On behalf
of the YWCA of Greece
Eleni Kyriazakou
Representative at the National
Dialogue Group



To: Mr. Athanasios Kontogeorgis, Secretary General for the Coordination of the Government - Presidency of the Government

Re: ActionAid's follow-up comments on the consultation of the report of the Voluntary National Review process on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

Athens, 30 May 2022

Dear Mr. Secretary General,

Regarding the recent public consultation of the report of the Voluntary National Review of the progress made in Greece for the implementation of the SDGs, in the present letter you can find ActionAid's follow-up comments with emphasis on the challenges identified as well as recommendations and good practices. We welcome the decision of opening the dialogue on the content of the national report that will soon be submitted to the UN High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development and we encourage the Greek State to maintain communication channels with the Civil Society organizations regarding the SDGs and other human rights related critical issues.




It is a matter of fact that the Greek State has undergone major crises since 2010 that have hindered the progress that the country could have made under more favorable conditions. In such an adverse context of a ten-year national depression, with persisting economic and social issues, as the introductory paragraphs of the Voluntary National Report state, any attempt towards development faces important challenges. The SDGs have been a part of the national policy framework since 2015, but the way the Greek society understands them is rather fragmented. The COVID-19 pandemic and the repercussions of the war outbreak within the European continent aggravated the existing challenges underlying the need for more ambitious steps to systemic changes that will include all the affected parts of our society, especially the ones that are more vulnerable and often marginalized. In this respect, the SDGs can play a pivotal role in promoting equality, combatting discriminations and achieve social justice for all.

We would like to highlight that although the Agenda 2030 sets ambitious goals, the same level of ambition is not always demonstrated in the Greek context, especially regarding persisting social issues such as gender inequalities e.t.c. This is indicated by the country's performance in international indices, such as the EIGE index, in which Greece has registered the lowest score among the EU member states. As we referred to in the public consultation, the social aspect of the SDGs needs to be further elaborated on with the aim of responding to systemic challenges and progressing the understanding of the Goals' importance by the Greek society. At this point, it would be an omission not to mention the role that the Civil Society Organizations have played in the promotion of the SDGs. In an attempt to turn the theory into concrete action, the Civil Society Organizations implement a series of activities to raise awareness, encounter the challenges they identify in their course of their action regarding the SDGs and develop good practices that emerge as the result of the interaction with the society and the institutions. To this end, more examples of the Civil Society Organizations' targeted interventions could have been included in the report.

Following the aspirations of the Agenda 2030, ActionAid seeks to contribute to the fight for social justice with emphasis on gender equality, better education for all and climate justice. The principle of leaving no one behind is core in our strategic planning. We implement programs that address the root causes of inequalities in partnership with local and international organizations and networks. By bringing the perspective and the voice of the people we are working with in the programmatic and advocacy work that we perform, we acknowledge that social justice needs to be approached in a gender sensitive, intersectional, inclusive, and participatory way. The methodology and the tools of community building are key in safeguarding that people we are working with are empowered to participate in decision making processes and claim their rights.

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Since 2015, ActionAid is an implementing partner in EU funded projects that focus on the SDGs, such as “Faces of Migration” that links the SDGs with migration, “Climate of Change” about the climate induced migration and youth participation in climate decision making processes e.tc. Our participation in EU-wide consortia has facilitated the development of a regional/ international understanding of the SDGs that we try to infuse in our activities considering which of the elements that we encounter can be of added value for the Greek context. Our active involvement in European and national networks and platforms (i.e. the Hellenic Platform for Development, CONCORD e.tc.) enriches our work and our vision on collective action for the achievement of social justice.

To facilitate the implementation of the SDGs in Greece, we would like to suggest the following recommendations and best practices that have been identified in the framework of the aforementioned collective forms of work. We would also like to bring to your attention a more detailed list of recommendations that is included in the report [“The Road to Equality”](#) for the research process of which ActionAid has been a national focal point. The findings of the report have been presented to and welcomed by representatives of the European Commission. Based on ActionAid’s experience, the road to the successful implementation of SDGs requires:

- The development of an updated national strategy on the SDGs that will focus on the policy coherence element by substantially linking Greece’s National Strategies and Action Plans of different areas of action. In other words, Greece should develop SDGs mainstreaming tools and methodologies that will be infused in public administration and other branches of the society. Improving data collection and developing specific indices to measure the progress made on the SDGs should be a priority. The competent SDGs coordination body described in the report should also be strengthened to ensure among others the monitoring and evaluation of the policies and practices in the field.
- The design and implementation of wide scale awareness-raising campaigns on the SDGs to elaborate social understanding that will further support the realization of SDGs until 2030. Targeted educational activities in the school system and in professional settings would be beneficial.
- The active involvement of the Civil Society Organizations in the official SDGs related dialogue that should be expanded beyond the official consultation periods.
- The regular interaction with countries that demonstrate good progress on the implementation of SDGs for the transfer of tools, expertise and practices that can be adjusted to the specificities of the Greek context.

Most of the best practices that we have identified are relevant with the establishment of dedicated institutions that coordinate the national work on the SDGs, the enhancement of social dialogue on the Agenda 2030 and the tools and methodologies that are used.

We anticipate that the aforementioned observations will be of use, and we confirm our commitment in the promotion of human rights in Greece.

Best Regards,

Gerasimos Kouvaras,
Director General



QualityNet Foundation
We foster for a Sustainable Future

QualityNet Foundation (QNF) is a non-for-profit organisation dedicated to sustainable development. It has been operating in Greece since **1997**, aiming to foster a sustainable future by establishing a Sustainable Economy/Society based on environmental consciousness and social cohesion, as the main lever for ensuring quality of life for this and the future generations.

It supports the adoption of the 2030 Agenda and the Global Goals

Through developing:

- **networks and dialogue for sustainable development** with a large number of stakeholders
- **initiatives that contribute to raising awareness and mobilising** the Greek society in general
- **tools and methodologies that support organisations** in adopting sustainable policies
- **educational work** that contributes to shaping the active citizens of the future,

QNF Constitutes a multistakeholder network for the Sustainable Development. To achieve networking and the development of structured thematic dialogues for Sustainable Development, QNF has created a unique multi-stakeholder Network with Partners representing the whole of Greek society.

The Network of Responsible Organizations & Active Citizens numbers 150 Institutional Organizations, 1280 Businesses, 345 Civil Society Organizations, 250 Local Government Organizations, 4500 School Units and 63.000 Active Citizens.

QualityNet Foundation (QNF) carries out its work through the following pillars:

1

ACTING AS AN SDGs ACCELERATOR & monitoring the implementation of the SDGs in Greece

The adoption of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by the UN General Assembly reflects the modern challenges posed by global problems and constitutes a road map towards balanced, inclusive growth.

QNF, as a member of the [Global Forum for National SDG Advisory Bodies](#), records the implementation of the 2030 Agenda by monitoring how the Greek society matures in terms of sustainable development issues, organises awareness campaigns, and supports their implementation, in partnership with the country's institutional bodies.

A.1 Monitoring

QualityNet has designed and runs a regular monitoring mechanism such as:

- the **Sustainable Development Observatory**, a unique national mechanism for monitoring practices and initiatives taking place in Greece monitor the level of maturity of and involvement in the SDGs nationally, based on the initiatives undertaken by institutional, academic, business and social bodies.



- an annual report that outlines the trends and prospects, as these arise from recording actions and initiatives taking place in Greece. The annual report is forwarded to national, European, and international institutional bodies, and is a tool for providing broad information on the level of maturity of the country in terms of the 2030 Agenda and the 17 SDGs, as well as for supporting the formulation of public policies.

Please refer to our latest report concerning the [Analysis of Sustainability Initiatives](#) developed the period 2018-2022.

Overall, the **Sustainable Development Observatory** online platforms hosts a number of 1584 active initiatives. The table below shows in details the initiatives' mix.

ORGANIZATIONS' TYPE	NUMBER OF ORGANIZATIONS	NUMBER OF INITIATIVES
Businesses	368	904
Cities and Regions	147	315
NGOs	245	311
Professional Bodies	29	35
Academic Institutions	19	19

A.2 Organising a national SDG awareness campaign

In combination with the global UN act4SDG awareness campaign, QNF organises every year a corresponding national awareness campaign, in partnership with institutional, business and social bodies. By following the messages generated annually by the UN, it raises awareness among the Greek society regarding global challenges, calling for national action based on the priorities set by the government.

Aiming to introduce a national week of actions for the SDGs, the QNF has established the In Action SDGs Week. A multi-stakeholders initiative with 37 partners that instigates personal and collective actions for more than 250.000 active citizens every year.

<https://inactionforabetterworld.com/sdgs-week-2021/>
<https://inactionforabetterworld.com/sdgs-week-2020/>

B. Providing education for the 17 Global Goals

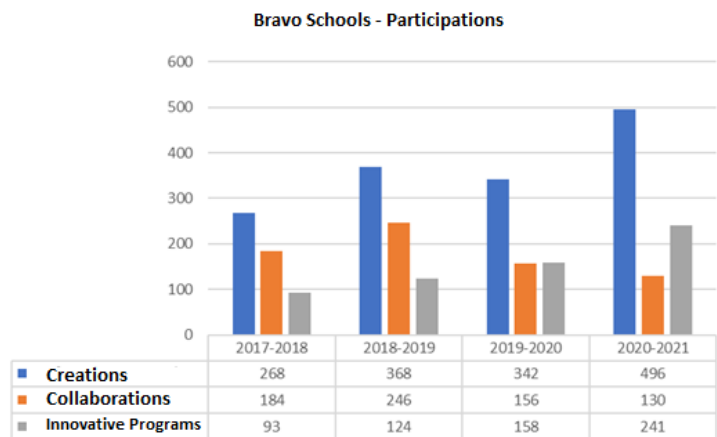
In collaboration with UNICEF, UNESCO, and PROJECT EVERYONE we launch in Greece the official program of UN for SDGs The World Largest Lesson, addressed to primary and secondary schools, aiming to develop an overall educational approach, and supporting education on sustainable development. It is based on the official educational programme of the UN, enriched with the Greek SDGs Library, experiential programmes and digital learning platforms, and supported by the teachers. Every year a total amount of 100.00 students follow the SDGs education tool kit.

The Bravo Schools Nationwide School Competition complements the educational process, showcasing the proposals of children for a better world, while also acting as a wide-scale awareness mechanism for the Greek society. Our educational work is carried out through the Experiential School <https://www.biomatiko.gr/en/>

and through the educational part of the initiative **in action for a better world – Creating a better world** <https://inactionforabetterworld.com/για-εκπαιδευτικούς/>, which offers the country's educational community a holistic approach in terms of education in sustainability.

2





C. Organizing the SDGs Hub- in action for a Better World

The **SDGs Hub- in action for a Better World** is a holistic approach platform promoting the 17 SDGs within the Greek society aspiring for the active participation of responsible organisations and active citizens, and the adoption of responsible practices that improve the quality of life. It has been developed with the support of **international & European bodies**, such as Project Everyone, which runs The World's Largest Lesson initiative by the UN, UNESCO, UNICEF, the German Council for Sustainable Development and the European Sustainability Development Network, a government network responsible for promoting sustainable development policies across Europe, **under the auspices of national bodies**, such as the Archbishop of Athens and all Greece, the Ministry of Environment & Energy, the Ministry of Economy & Development, the Central Union of Municipalities of Greece, and the Union of Greek Regions.

The **in action for a better world** initiative consists of 3 parts the **educational part**, the **informational part**, is addressed to businesses, local government, the civil society, families and active citizens, with proposals for participating in actions and adopting responsible practices in their everyday lives, the **collaboration and action programme on a local level**, aiming at the active participation of local communities in promoting the SDGs, by developing local interventions. www.inactionforabetterworld.com

It was distinguished by the European Commission at the 2019 European Sustainability Awards as the best NGO programme for creating awareness and disseminating the SDGs across Europe.

B1. Bravo Sustainability Dialogue & Awards

The **Bravo** Initiative seeks to foster dialogue and initiatives that promote sustainable development. It focuses on promoting systematic social dialogues, aiming to create a platform for exchange of views, information, and open deliberations, as well as develop a broader culture on sustainable development issues. It is based on the development of a multi-stakeholder dialogue on Sustainable Development, at a national level, based on the initiatives and actions implemented in our country by Businesses, Cities & Regions, NGOs, Professional Bodies, Academic Institutions, and Schools.

With the goal of creating a broader culture on sustainable development issues in our country, the Bravo Institution is developing on the triptych of recording, presenting achievements, developing a multi-stakeholder dialogue as well as highlighting initiatives that support a sustainable future, creating the Greece of Tomorrow!



<http://bravosustainabilityawards.com>

Bravo Initiative is a strong social engagement mechanism, with the active participation of more than 160 Organizations with 300 initiatives and the participation of 350 Stakeholders that consists of the Evaluation & Dialogue Groups and the participation of 60,000 citizens in its activities every year.

B2. Sustainable Greece 2020 Initiative

That was a multi-stakeholder initiative that commenced in 2015 till 2020, with the active participation of the business community. Through systematic dialogue, it mainly attempts to: support the level of information and awareness on sustainable development issues in the domestic market, shape proposals, methodologies and tools to support the organisations in adopting the sustainable development and responsible entrepreneurship practices and to support the efforts of the Greek state to formulate public policies aiming to promote sustainable development

With following founding members such as Hellenic Federation of Enterprises (SEV), Hellenic Bank Association, Athens Exchange Group, Federation of Hellenic Food Industries (SEVT), Greek Tourism Confederation (SETE), Hellenic Association of Pharmaceutical Companies (SFEE) and Athens Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ACCI). **It was established** under the auspices of institutional bodies (Ministry of Development and Ministry of Environment), in partnership with European and international organisations (European Commission, European Sustainability Development Network (ESDN), German Council for Sustainable Development (RNE) and World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD)) **with the participation of 35 business organisations, 65 businesses, 44 civil society organisations and 17 local government organisations.**

As a result, it has developed a sustainability toolbox, which consists of:

- the [Sustainability Observatory](#), a national mechanism for recording initiatives carried out in Greece and noting how the Greek society/market has matured in terms of the SDGs and other sustainable development issues,
- the [Bravo Sustainability Awards](#), a mechanism for showcasing and awarding the best practices adopted in Greece,
- the [Greek Sustainability Code](#), a European reference framework for measuring the impact of organisations on the Economy, Environment and Society, based on international standards for reporting non-financial performance (ESG), adapted to the unique features of the Greek market,
- the [Sustainability Performance Directory](#), a sustainable development business index that establishes the Sustainability and Responsible Entrepreneurship Map for Greece based on sustainability assessment.

4

www.sustainablegreece2020.com
<https://www.sustainablegreece2020.com/en/sdgevent2020>

For a comprehensive overview of our Organisation & activities, please visit

<https://qualitynetfoundation.org/en/home/>
<https://inactionforabetterworld.com/en/in-action/>
<https://inactionforabetterworld.com/en/sdgs-week-2020-en/>





Organization Earth Good Practices Contributing to the UN SDGs

Environmental Education

One of the core activities of Organization Earth is the implementation of active learning activities for students of all ages as well as for adults, promoting sustainable living. The Environmental education programme aims to shape participants' thoughts, feelings, and skills through "green" learning and re-connecting with nature by addressing thematic categories including sustainable food and food waste, composting, upcycling, urban gardening and farming, wellness, and fitness. Moreover, we deliver purpose-built interactive games through which both children and adults learn about the SDGs.

Environmental education contributes to SDG 3, good health and wellbeing, SDG 4, quality education, SDG 12, responsible production and consumption, SDG 13 climate action, SDG 15, life on land.

Urban Greening & Community Engagement

Our interventions include designing and constructing pocket parks, organic edible gardens, green rooftops, and urban forests by focusing on community building and fostering citizens' participation through co-designing green spaces. Urban greening interventions aim to aesthetically improve neighbourhoods, improves access and ownership of public space, promote circular practices (renewable energy, sustainable & smart water management, reuse/recycle), capture CO2 in the long run, improve the microclimate by reducing urban heat islands and flooding, increase biodiversity (flora and fauna) and improve public health.

Our urban greening interventions contribute to SDG 2, zero hunger, SDG 3, good health and wellbeing, SDG 11, sustainable cities and communities, SDG 12, responsible production and consumption, SDG 13 climate action, SDG 15, life on land

Center of the Earth

"Center of the Earth", one of Organization Earth's core projects, is a vegetable and permaculture garden situated 6km from the center of Athens that serves as an environmental education hub for experiential community activities. "Center of the Earth" community activities include building green skills for students, adults, the elderly and vulnerable groups, organizing open Sundays, collective cooking, CSR corporate events and volunteerism and thematic tours.

The Center of the Earth activities contribute to SDG 2, zero hunger, SDG 3, good health and wellbeing, SDG 11, sustainable cities and communities, SDG 12, responsible production and consumption, SDG 13 climate action, SDG 15, life on land and SDG 17, partnerships for the goals.

ΟΡΓΑΝΩΣΗ ΓΗ

Για την κοινωνία και το περιβάλλον Αστική μη κερδοσκοπική εταιρεία

Έδρα: Λεωφόρος Δημοκρατίας 67, 131 22 Ίλιον, Τ. 210-23 25 380, www.organizationearth.org



Hope Sports

The Hope Sports program, an Organization Earth initiative since 2016, uses sports as a tool for the empowerment of vulnerable groups. The programme aims at facilitating participants' integration in local communities, developing participants' life, social and green skills, promoting sports and a healthy way of living and promoting social cohesion locally.

Hope Sports activities contribute to SDG 1, no poverty, SDG 3, good health and wellbeing, SDG 4, quality education, SDG 5, gender equality, SDG 10, reduced inequalities, SDG 11, sustainable cities and communities and SDG 15, life on land.

Activities for the Promotion of the SDGs

2017, "The Athens We Need" a 6 month-long collaborative project, aiming to implement the Sustainable Development Goals in urban centers.

2017, "Global Goals 2nd Anniversary": Organization Earth hosted the Hellenic Platform of Development and its program "Make Europe Sustainable for All".

2018, "Hope 2030": Organization Earth was a key co-organizer, along with the Hellenic Platform for Development, ActionAid Greece and the World Human Forum, for Greece's first event led by a coalition of Civil Society Organizations promoting the SDGs to a general audience.

2018, "1000 days SDGs": To mark the occasion of completing 1000 days since the announcement of the SDGs by the UN, Organization Earth hosted Greece's 1st open to the general public discussion of all relevant stakeholders.

2018, "17 Days for 17 Goals": Organization Earth participated and was one of the co-organizers of the largest raising awareness campaign in Greece for the Global Goals.

2018, "SDG Info Hub": Organization Earth, for the duration of the first in Greece "Global Goal Action Week in Greece", turned its community center in Athens, to an "SDG Info Hub".

2019, "SDGs: Hype or Hope?": On the 3rd anniversary of the global adoption of the SDGs, Organization Earth invited Greek Civil Society Organizations to an open discussion about the progress and value of implementing the SDGs.

2019, "Goal for the Global Goals" Organization Earth and Barca Foundation, organized a football tournament dedicated to the 17 Sustainable Development Goals.



2020, Urban Green Deal: As part of the World Urban Campaign, Organization Earth in cooperation with the KOSMOS, conducted the “Urban Green Deal” webinar.

Proposals for the Promotion of the SDGs

In terms of promoting the SDGs effectively, we feel that it is imperative that public awareness initiatives for all ages are scaled up. Such initiatives should include interactive, experiential learning programs. In addition, an integrated communication strategy targeting the public through all available channels (social and traditional media) involving all society, could be an effective tool for establishing SDGs as a “yardstick” according to which society actors can measure and demonstrate their progress. Moreover, the creation of a permanent consultation method and monitoring mechanism with the involvement of the academic community, the business world and civil society would be vital for the implementation of the SDGs.

ΟΡΓΑΝΩΣΗ ΓΗ

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5 April 2022

Ref. No. 4/2022

The Green Tank's contribution on the 2nd VNR of Greece on SDGs

The upcoming years to 2030 will determine the success of humanity's shift to a sustainable trajectory that will integrate environment protection in all facets of economic and social activity. While sustainable development is a recognized global objective, as expressed in the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the challenge of its attainment remains.

Greece has already progressed in including Agenda 2030 and the SDGs in its development policies. However, much remains to be done to achieve sustainability in all areas on the ground. During the next years, Greece will have an unprecedented level of EU funds available, which constitute a rare opportunity for the country. Used properly, the EU funds can act as a catalyst for change in the country's strategy and development perspective, in line with the provisions of the European Green Deal and the SDGs. The period of Covid-19 pandemic, the ongoing energy crisis and the recent war in Ukraine make it even more imperative to take actions that combine the attainment of the EU's environmental and climate targets with sustainable development. With this perspective, the Green Tank is working to develop policy solutions for a sustainable future.

The Green Tank's contribution to the 2nd Voluntary National Review (VNR) of Greece based on the questions posed by the General Secretariat of Coordination (letter sent on 18.03.2022) follows:

1. SDGs of interest to the organization

The Green Tank works to accelerate the transition to sustainability through research, analysis and policy recommendations, in collaboration with stakeholders at local, regional, national and European level focusing particularly on issues regarding climate, energy, biodiversity conservation and sustainable development. While it is clear that the SDGs are interconnected and the environmental dimension transcends all SDGs, we concentrate on and contribute mainly to the following: SDG 7: affordable and clean energy, SDG 13: climate action, SDG 14: Life below water, SDG 15: life on land and SDG 16: peace, justice and strong institutions.

2. SDGs as part of the action plan of the organization

The Green Tank is an independent, non-profit think tank developing policy solutions for a sustainable future. Our work relates to the three pillars of sustainable development: environment – economy – society, with emphasis on:

- [Biodiversity conservation and the sustainable management of natural resources and ecosystems;](#)



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- [Climate change](#) mitigation and adaptation, decarbonization with a simultaneous shift to renewable energy sources, energy efficiency and energy savings;
- [Transition towards a sustainable economy](#);
- Social well-being, social cohesion and the improvement of people's quality of life.

Although our work is not devoted to SDGs *per se*, our actions support their attainment, in particular by providing policy solutions for their effective implementation.

Examples of aspects of our work matching SDGs and their targets:

- Transition from fossil fuels to clean energy systems and [Just Transition of lignite regions](#) to sustainable economic activities (SDG 7, 8, 13, 17);
- Climate neutrality by 2050 (SDG 13);
- Citizens' participation in the energy transformation- Energy democracy (SDG 7, 13)
- [Sustainable and green financing](#) (SDG 8);
- Biodiversity conservation, nature restoration and protected areas policies (SDG 14, 15);
- Participation in committees, [public consultations](#), legislative procedures at national and European level, public speaking, reports on governance scheme of environment, energy and climate enforcing participatory and representative decision-making procedures (SDG 16- target 6, 7);
- Knowledge sharing- educational and capacity building actions (SDG 4- target 7);
- Participation in environmental, energy and climate networks promoting sustainability, cooperating with various stakeholders (SDG 17).

You can find more on our work and our opinions [here](#), and also our [reports](#) on the topics mentioned above.

3. Synergies promoting SDGs

The Green Tank collaborates with key stakeholders at local, regional, national and European level on all pillars of its work, decision-makers at all levels (municipal, regional, national, European), civil society organizations and citizens initiatives, academic and scientific institutions and think tanks, professional chambers and other institutions. Through these collaborations the objectives of the SDGs are promoted and their implementation is enforced.

Examples of synergies matching SDGs:

- Participation in committees of the government regarding energy and climate policy, and also environment, biodiversity and protected areas policies (SDG 7,13,14,15,16,17);
- Synergies with municipalities and citizens for deploying Renewable Energy Sources (RES), participating in the Just Transition procedure at the EU, Western Balkans, national, and local levels and promoting energy democracy through energy communities (SDG 7,13, 16);
- Common projects with various stakeholders on sustainable local development etc;



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- Joint actions with civil society organizations, cross-country networks and other think tanks.

4. Barriers and challenges for the implementation of SDGs

The main challenge for the implementation of the SDGs is the size of transformation they require in all sectors. The magnitude of the challenge requires immediate response and structural changes that are not easy to accept and implement, neither for the policy makers nor for the economic sector and the society itself. Although the SDGs are mentioned in the majority of policy initiatives, legislative documents, strategies and plans, they are not yet mainstreamed, let alone fully implemented. There is no concrete institutional initiative for the SDGs to highlight them and bring all stakeholders together in action. SDGs cannot be effectively implemented unless a truly participatory process is ensured with the engagement of all actors: the public and private sector, scientific institutions, professionals, activists, politicians, civil society, citizens and youth. At the moment initiatives for the SDGs exist either only at a high level, among few government services and specific stakeholders, or are ad hoc by various stakeholders without coordination. Hence, SDGs have not been introduced in an open and organized manner across the whole society.

5. Proposals for effectively approaching SDGs

A holistic governance scheme to oversee the implementation of the SDGs is required. Such a scheme should include all levels, from the highest political level to the administrative and institutional set up to public participation. Primarily there is a need for government coordination in order to integrate the SDGs across all policies and sectors and monitor progress made. Furthermore, the Parliament could also play an important role in the understanding and establishment of SDGs as well as in the monitoring of the SDGs implementation. Moreover, there is a need for a multilateral dialogue among stakeholders, with dedicated avenues for public participation. Such dialogues could include not only awareness raising, but also open and organized engagement with all stakeholders, public consultations, policy initiatives, exchange of information and best practices but also support towards citizens' initiatives etc. In this context, local governments can have a significant role in effectively approaching SDGs as they are closer to local communities and implement many projects and policies related to SDGs. Perhaps local SDG Ambassadors could help promoting this action.

National and European funding expenditure should be guided by and evaluated from the perspective of implementing SDGs in a measurable and specific way.

Educational programs should be orientated to SDGs.



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To:

Mr. Thanassis Kontogeorgis
Secretary General of Coordination
Government of the Hellenic Republic

Athens, 21st March 2022

Subject: **Boroume and SDGs**

Dear Secretary General,

Thank you very much for reaching out to **Boroume** regarding the description of the ways our non-profit organization works daily towards the achievement of the SDGs in Greece. We will attempt below to reply to your questions to the best of our knowledge as well as describe a few good practices of Boroume.

Given our statutory goals of reducing food waste and increasing food insecurity in Greece, the SDG's are very important to us, especially: a) **12.3 Reduction of Food Waste** and b) **2 Zero Hunger**. Truthfully, we did not have them in mind when we started our actions 10 years ago in 2011-2012 but in the last years, given the increasing prominence of the SDG's in the NGO-sector, we have incorporated them in our planning and communication. We have collaborated in every chance we had regarding their promotion and will continue to do so also in the future.

The **major challenges / suggestions** to the fulfillment of these goals in Greece are:

- a) **Late realization of the state regarding the importance of food waste** as a major environmental, social and economic problem. We have been collaborating closely with the Ministry of Environment in the past 2-3 years regarding the incorporation of EU Directive 2018/851 into national law as well as in other areas but this has come only after years of attempts from our side without any significant reaction.
- b) In the process of the creation of the above mentioned incorporation into the Greek law 4819/2021, despite the fact that in the consultation phase **many helpful suggestions** were made by Boroume in order to ensure a higher probability of a successful law, some of them **did not become provisions of this law**. One such example of very high importance for the daily implementation of food donations is the creation of a charity registry, which would ensure donating companies that they are eligible for tax exemptions for saving & donating food.



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- We do hope that the Greek state will be in the future more forthcoming in listening and accepting suggestions from people who deal on a daily basis with such issues.
- c) There are **no food saving provisions in public procurement contracts**. Such provisions have been very successful towards reducing food waste and increasing charitable food donations when implemented in other parts of Europe, e.g. the city of Rome.
 - d) There are **no provisions** by the Greek state to take measures into increasing the **awareness/education** of kids and the general public regarding the importance of food waste. In other European countries such measures have had a significant impact in reducing food waste and its negative environmental impact while increasing food donations at the same time.
 - e) Despite our numerous attempts/suggestions to the Ministry of Agriculture and Ministry of Environment (these are the ones usually responsible in other EU countries) to create the national voluntary agreement for the reduction of waste in Greece, the Greek state showed no interest in creating one of the most important tools for reducing food waste. Finally, Boroume created the **National Alliance for the Reduction of Food Waste** with funding by a private company (something we wanted to avoid regarding the national scope of this issue), which has been very successful in creating synergies and collaborations between Members as well as collaborating with the Ministry of Environment in advocacy issues mentioned above.

Below you can find some of the **best practices** implemented by Boroume for the achievement of SDG's 12.3 and 2:

- a) **Boroume's Saving & Donating Food model:** an innovative model of direct linkage of all kinds of food donors to nearby charities anywhere in the country which was never done before anywhere. By creating the easiest and most efficient way of saving food we managed to revolutionize food saving & donating and save & donate more than 57 million portions of food since the beginning of our actions. Just in 2021, Boroume managed to save & donate 11,57 million portions of food from 670 different donations points to over 350 charities in 80 different places in Greece while achieving a cost to saved food ration of 1€ of operational cost = 65 portions of food.
- b) **Boroume at the Farmers' Market:** through this program we help farmers and vendors to save & donate any produce they will not sell, thus reducing produce from ending up in landfills but rather support nearby charities. In 2021, we saved & donated 170t of produce from 32 farmers markets in Athens and Thessaloniki to over 35 charities.
- c) **Boroume at School:** this is by far the most comprehensive and large educational program regarding food waste / volunteering in Greece (over 24.000 students have participated in 6 years).



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- d) **National Alliance for the Reduction of Food Waste:** as mentioned above it was really to kick-off this very important tool, however since its beginning and despite the challenges posed by the pandemic, the membership has been rising and today includes major stakeholders from the food industry, academia and NGO sector, while operating under the auspices of the Ministry of Environment
- e) **“No Food Waste” Certification:** this is the first certification regarding the reduction of food waste in Greece (and one of the few abroad as well) and was created in 2021 in strategic partnership with TUV Austria Hellas. It will certify any company or organization that will meet the set criteria, this providing an important incentive for companies and organizations to implement measures for the actual reduction of food waste.

All of the above have been promoted by Boroume at the most important European forum regarding food waste, i.e. the **EU Platform for Food Waste and Loss**, where we have had the honor of being a member since 2016.

Best regards,

Alexander Theodoridis
Co-Founder, CEO



Extract from the Greek Poverty Watch 2021¹ Hellenic Antipoverty Network

Consequences of the pandemic and governmental policy for people experiencing poverty

2020 saw Covid-19 treated “successfully” in Greece. This narrative has spread widely and multiplied accordingly by the government only to be retracted during the second phase during 2021 when Greece has, and still is, witnessing dire increases to the numbers of deaths, hospitalised individuals as well as the overall cases of Covid-19.²

The impact of the pandemic during 2020 has been manifold. Greece's tourism industry has been negatively impacted by the crisis, and a 9.7% economic contraction has been predicted for the fiscal year 2020 directly or indirectly **having an impact on the large number of the population who finds employment in this sector throughout the country**. Also, the demand for home purchases from residents of other European countries has increased as many properties have become available as a result of Greece's economic difficulties. The closure of businesses and educational institutions has kept people indoors while driving the workforce to unemployment or lack of potential future employment. Human rights have suffered an impact on vulnerable groups of migrant and asylum seekers; unaccompanied minors; women; disabled people and on specific sectors of life particularly attacks on civil society and law enforcement abuse³. Health access and availability of medical care and support were as everywhere around the world the two main concerns.

According to the recent data by the ELSTAT, the Hellenic Statistical Authority:

- 17.7% of the population is at risk of poverty; 17.6% experience material deprivation of basic goods; and 12.8% of the population aged 0-59 years old live in households with very low work intensity.
- The proportional composition of the three indicators gives the percentage of 28.9% of the total population and the estimated number of 3.043.869 inhabitants of the country facing risk of poverty or exclusion.
- The risk of poverty or exclusion of people aged 18-64 years is higher for foreigners (54.0%) than Greeks (30.2%). 51,2% of these foreigners were born in another country while 30.0% were born and live in Greece.
- The at-risk-of-poverty rate for children aged 0-17 years (child poverty) amounted to 21.4%, recording an increase of 0.3 percentage points compared to 2019, while for the population 18-64 years old and 65 years old and over this is 18.5% and 13.2%, respectively.
- The percentage of households that do not have adequate heating is 16.7% (12% general population and 38.8% poor households).
- 44.6% of the total households state that they are significantly burdened by the repayment of debts from hire purchases or loan payments other than loans connected with the house.

¹ Access Poverty Watch 2021:

https://www.eapn.eu/wpcontent/uploads/2021/10/eapn-POVERTY-WATCH-2021_EAPN-Greece-5277.pdf

² <https://graphics.reuters.com/world-coronavirus-tracker-and-maps/countries-and-territories/greece/>

³ <https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2021/country-chapters/greece/>

- 71% of the poor households report having great difficulty in making ends meet (coping with usual needs) on their total monthly income.
- 49% of the poor households report that they are confronted with payment arrears regarding the utility bills for electricity, water, natural gas, etc.
- 96.6% of the poor households and 49.5% of the non-poor households report difficulties in meeting unexpected financial expenses of approximately 395 euros on a monthly basis.
- 45.5% of poor households are deprived of proper nutrition (chicken, meat, fish or vegetables of equal nutritional value every other day).
- 3% of the total households do not have a personal computer, although they need one, due to lack of financial resources.
- 4% of the population cannot afford internet connection for personal use at home. The corresponding shares are 12.4% for the poor population and 2.3% for the non-poor population (that had specific consequences on following the school curriculum online during the pandemic).
- 37% of the population cannot spend a small amount of money each week on themselves without having to consult anyone. The corresponding shares for the poor population and the non-poor population are 65.1% and 31.2%.
- Material deprivation for children aged up to 17 years of age, in 2020, amounts to 19.7%, while the respective percentage for 2009 was 11.9%.

More specifically on health:

- 37.3% of the population aged 16 and over stated that there was a case, during the last 12 months, they really needed a medical examination or treatment for their particular health problem and did not undergo it due to COVID-19. The percentages of poor and non-poor populations are 10.1% and 49.6%, respectively.
- 6.8% of the population aged 16 and over has bad or very bad health; 14.7% moderate, while 78.5% have very good or good health.
- 9.8% of the population aged 16 and over for a period of six months or more had limited, due to their own health problems, some activities common to the general population or had too much difficulty with them, while 13.6% had limited, but not too much.
- 25.4% of the population aged 16 and over, stated that there was a case, during the last 12 months, they really needed a medical examination or treatment for their own health problem and did not undergo it. The percentages of poor and non-poor population are 50.8% and 20.7%, respectively.
- 30.4% of the population aged 16 and over, stated that there was a case, during the last 12 months, they really needed a dental examination or treatment for their own health problem and did not undergo it. The percentages of poor and non-poor population are 55.3 and 26.3%, respectively. 22.4% of the respective population did not undergo it due to COVID-19.
- Vaccination in Greece started on December 28, 2020 and goes well into 2021.

Overview of the response measures taken by the government:

Updates on the virus spread, advice on how to behave and react as well as governmental measures put in place officially started on **16 March, 2020 by the Hellenic Ministry of Health on a daily basis until 27 May** when the televised briefings by both scientists and representatives of the government stopped only to be reintroduced later and at a different scale.

During March, school trips came to an end; sports games were to be played with no fans and all educational institutions started an array of closure-reopening that lasts until today. Also during March **local quarantines started before the general one**. Coronavirus restrictions involving migrant camps were set at the same time with medical teams being sent to the camps to set up **virus isolation areas** and ensure temperature checking while a ban on public gatherings of 10 or more people and the imposition of a **€1,000 fine** on violators was announced. **Shipping of goods** and traveling within Greece and abroad were regulated or banned altogether with heavy curfews and transportation to and from work only being designated as legal times for circulation. Random yet strict checks of personal IDs, relevant documents or proof of sms required to have been sent were also set in place together with restrictions in transport services. A second **national lockdown was imposed from 7 November to 14 December** along with a traffic ban during the night.

Restrictions especially on travelers were gradually lifted or were subject to certain rules and criteria met.

Governmental package of measures.

During the first month of the official outbreak of the virus a package of measures to support the economy, businesses and employees was announced. The **measures** included the 4-month suspension of tax and social security obligations of businesses ordered to close with the condition to not dismiss workers. The measure affected about 220,000 businesses and 600,000 employees. The measure included an €800 stipend on workers forced into suspension as well as freelancers in sectors affected by the pandemic. The reduction of VAT tax from 24% to 6% on pharmaceutical products deemed necessary for handling the pandemic namely gloves, masks and antiseptic liquids was also announced along with the inclusion of Greece in an emergency assets purchases' programme of €750 billion launched by the European Central Bank. The State Budget was revised to allocate more than €10 billion in support of the economy. The suspension of tax and social security obligations of corporations and the number of beneficiaries of the €800 stipend was extended to include all businesses harmed by the pandemic, all freelancers and self-employed workers and the majority of private sector workers. The state would also cover the cost of beneficiaries' insurance, pension, and health payments. Special provisions were made for health workers.

According to the IMF, as of June 2020 the package of measures in support of the economy, financed from national and EU resources, totals about 14% of Greece's GDP (€24 billion) including loan guarantees.⁴ There followed suspensions of entertainment venues, restauration, sports and gym locales in multiple areas of the country as well as a closure of hotels and other tourist accommodations excluding supermarkets, pharmacies and food outlets that offer take-away and delivery only. Reopening has been subject to restrictions ever since.

On 27 February migrants and refugees were deemed a threat to public health in Greece and "illegal" entry from Turkey was announced "no longer being tolerated". The personnel of the existing camps, doctors, NGOs and refugees considered that measures against the spread of the coronavirus are problematic since people are obliged to live in overcrowded spaces with little to no access to proper health services. On 24 March, 21 international human rights organizations active in Greece including Amnesty International, the Human Rights Watch and ActionAid published an open call to the Greek government to take immediate measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in the Reception and Identification Centres. Cases of Covid-19 have been announced among people who reside in camps. The ending of accommodation schemes coincided with the time and refugee families were found homeless.

Most noticeable governmental and municipal support measures during the pandemic 2020

- A 534-euro benefit was established for all those employees whose employment was suspended during the pandemic in all business sectors.
- The return of the prepaid tax for 2020 who have suspended their business.
- The opening of the Municipal Homeless Center in Athens.

Principal difficulties for special groups who suffered the most

Covid-19 has been particularly heavy on people who belong in vulnerable groups namely the elderly, the mentally ill, those incarcerated, the Roma community, the homeless, refugees, asylum seekers and migrants, the LGBTQI community, women and the unemployed. The Hellenic Statistical Authority has not published data on vulnerable groups but mainly uses categorisations according to age groups.

Children

It is important to note that material deprivation is faced by children aged up to 17 years. In 2020 compared to 2019, the increase in severe material deprivation is higher for children (2.1%) in comparison with the other age groups. Material deprivation for children aged up to 17 years, in 2020, amounts to 19.7%, while the respective percentage for 2009 was 11.9%. Mental health issues, which have ensued for large

⁴ <https://www.imf.org/en/Topics/imf-and-covid19/Policy-Responses-to-COVID-19>

numbers of people, have been particularly diagnosed in children who have been subject to social distancing restrictions which have kept them indoors (closure of educational activities, sports venues, parks and playgrounds).

- Violence against children

Such violence has risen by 10% during 2020 in comparison to 2019, while juvenile delinquency has seen a rise of 30% for the same period.

Women

Women suffered great employment losses during the pandemic particularly in the Mediterranean area where inequalities have either way been prevalent.

- Domestic Violence

As was the case at a global and European scale, there has been a consistent outbreak of domestic violence traced also to the repercussions of the pandemic. According to the first Greek Police Report on the matter of domestic violence there has been an increase of 4% in domestic violence cases for 2020 while 82% of the perpetrators were men.

Vaccination and hotspots

June 3, 2021 was the first day for vaccination in a number of hotspots in the Aegean Sea area.

Economic consequences

Only **75%** of the businesses that suspended their operation during the lockdowns have managed to reopen while **81%** of all businesses is under threat of closure and the protection of the main residence is uncertain for reasons that relate to the new bankruptcy law introduced during 2020 and the pandemic

Recommendations

EAPN Greece has identified the ensuing repercussions of the pandemic of Covid 19 as both severe and long lasting. Therefore, it is only through **cooperation** and bold decision making and implementation that normality will be re-established; a normality that needs to include **improved living conditions** for those most vulnerable, citizens facing the risk of poverty and social exclusion to be prepared for similar events and phenomena.

For that to happen the following are needed:

Short term:

1. Particular measures for all the vulnerable groups mentioned above (the elderly, the mentally ill, those incarcerated, the Roma community, the homeless, refugees, asylum seekers and migrants, the LGBTQI community, women and the unemployed).
2. Simplification of procedures for access to all social transfers and online social services.
3. Free and easy access to Public Health Services.
4. Improvement, extension and expansion of Public Social Services.

Long term:

1. Strengthening of public health units with a particular focus on the countryside.
2. Fostering the cooperation of all stakeholders - government, social partners, institutions, the civil society, academia - on the basis of streamlining measures that concern emergency situations with a focus on the most vulnerable.
3. Human Rights should be on the core of any measures undertaken and solidarity fostered and exercised.



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In times that Europe is going through challenging times, where a pandemic radically transformed economies, way of living, human wellbeing and changes societies, following a war in the borderlines of Europe that causes massive changes in how young people think about their lives, we should face the urgently need of finding solutions and the way to empower and to inspire young people not only to carry on, but to dream, to create, to change!

Sustainable Development Goals are indeed supporting young people to have a clearer vision of what they would like to change, to transform, to improve, but how well known are those in the general public of youth is a question that we should dig deeper to answer. The Hellenic Youth Workers Association through their channels are promoting the SDGs and though European cooperation's, designs and implement activities that are in line with SDGs

As mentioned above the main challenge for implementing SDGs activities is that not many young people they know or/and can understand the SDGs.

Proposals: Further dissemination and promotion should take place with extra allocated budget to organize activities for promotion

Design educational activities in schools (such as workshops, non formal learning sessions and methodology etc). Those educational activities they should focus on how young people they could identify social needs that affect their lives and try to categorise them into SDGs

On behalf of the Hellenic Youth Workers Association

Olga Kyriakidou

President of the Board



Erasmus Student Network Greece: Sustainable Development Goals

The Erasmus Student Network Greece/ESN Greece is a non-profit volunteering student association and one of the 40 member countries of ESN. The main aspects of our actions are based on the ESN's Causes, which are six and cover topics like Culture, Education and Youth, Environmental Sustainability, Health & Well-being, Skills and Employability and Social Inclusion. This factor addresses the strict connection between our Causes and the Sustainable Development Goals, for instance, goals such as Social Inclusion (STG No5 and No16), Education (STG No4), Employability (STG No8) and Environmental Sustainability (STG No13).

Moreover, as mentioned above, we are trying to organise every event based on these goals in order to provide an opportunity for the participants to learn more about these topics. Also, not only do ESN's local sections cooperate, but also ESN as a NO collaborates with other NOs to accomplish them. Examples of events that clarify our work on that are the "Human storyboard", "The Interview Project" and the "Secret Santa Project 2021".

To conclude, it is evident that trying to advocate the STGs will face difficulties, such as finding the right way to approach minority groups and cover the topics with respect and impartiality. Our advice concerning these challenges is to see if any specific STG could be applied to our team/milieu and why it is so essential to be addressed to that social group. Lastly, the focus group determines the appropriate ways by which the communication strategy would be completed.



HELLENIC REPUBLIC
Government

