



ESPON INTERSTRAT

Engaging Greek Strategic Spatial Development
Planning with ESPON 2013

ESPON Greek Contact Point

[Working Version 1]



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1. Introduction

The ESPON 2013 Programme

ESPON is a network providing European observation and evidence on territorial development and cohesion. The activities are implemented as a programme under the Structural Funds 2007-2013 and the objective of European territorial cooperation. The mission is to enhance European knowledge, data and indicators on territorial structures, trends, perspectives and impacts of sector policies which can meet policy demand related to EU Cohesion Policy and be useful for policy makers and practitioners around Europe.

The ESPON 2013 Programme is the second generation of ESPON. The budget of this programme amounts to around 47 million Euros in total. All 27 EU Member States as well as Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland are partners in the programme, which is managed by the Ministry of Sustainable Development and Infrastructures, Department of Spatial Planning and Development of Luxembourg. The European Commission is playing an active advisory role during the programme implementation.

Applied research projects and targeted analyses, defined by stakeholders and based on ESPON results, will be carried through until the end of 2013 by contracting Transnational Project Groups composed of scientists and consultants. A scientific platform for European applied territorial research shall be further developed, including the ESPON Database and territorial indicators. The awareness and capitalisation of comparable information on European regions shall be boosted through publications and events at European and transnational level.

You can find more detailed information about the ESPON 2013 Programme and existing ESPON achievements and results on www.espon.eu.

The ESPON INTERSTRAT TNA Project

The overall aim of the ESPON INTERSTRAT project is to encourage and facilitate the use of ESPON 2013 findings in the creation and monitoring of integrated territorial development strategies and to support transnational learning about the actual and potential contribution of ESPON to integrated policy-making. Integrated territorial development is the process of shaping economic, social and environmental change through spatially sensitive policies and programmes.

However, as it is also the case in the UK, the term “territorial development” is less used in Greece and we have therefore decided to use, in parallel with the term “integrated territorial development strategies” the term “**strategic spatial development plans**” for the purposes of the work of ESPON INTERSTRAT in Greece.

The document will form the basis of work to identify, engage, inform and support stakeholder learning in Greece, **focusing at the regional scale** (2nd tier self government), which is mostly relevant due to the major administrative reform taking place in Greece nowadays and to share this experience with transnational partners.

2. Aims and objectives of the engagement strategy

As discussed among ESPON-INTERSTRAT partners in the Alcala de Henares kick-off meeting, the key objectives of the strategy are:

- To develop the capacity of the Greek ESPON Contact Point to engage with stakeholders in strategic spatial planning;

- To develop an understanding of what Greek development policymakers want from ESPON;
- To enable familiarisation of Greek spatial development policymakers with ESPON data, analysis and results;
- To develop improved dialogue and communication methodologies to transfer ESPON knowhow (i.e. territorial themes; use of applied research results; policy recommendations; etc.)
- To develop transfer of engagement practice with other national ECPs.

The next section describes the spatial planning system in Greece and the strategic dimension developed since the issue of law 2742/99 and the current strategic policies being developed by Greek stakeholders at national and regional level.

3. Current context of spatial planning system and strategic spatial development planning in Greece

3.1. Brief overview of Spatial Planning System in Greece

Introduction

According to the EU Compendium of Spatial Planning Systems and Policies (1997), Greece takes part of the so-called “urbanism” planning tradition, which “has a strong architectural flavor and concern with urban design, townscape and building control”. This tradition elucidates the main features of the Greek planning system: multiplicity of laws, predominance of a command-and-control type regulation, lack of efficient monitoring and control mechanisms and slow responses to changing circumstances.

Plans at the regulatory level are numerous, substantive and detailed. However, an important gap exists between established plans and the reality. Unauthorized development, known in Greece as illegal construction, is one of the major pathologies of the Greek spatial planning system.

Until recently, Greek planning legislation has been dominated by issues of physical planning. Its main concerns were the interface between private and public land ownership and the development rights of landowners. However, at the late 1990s, a shift was made towards strategic spatial planning through the establishment of a new law for national and regional spatial planning (L. 2742/1999). The provisions of the new Act give evidence of a direct influence of the European Union planning debate on the Greek national planning agenda.

Main Constitutional provisions

According to the Greek Constitution (voted in 1975 and revised in 1986 and 2001), spatial planning (that is both urban and national and regional spatial planning) is placed under the regulatory authority and the control of the State, in the aim of serving the functionality and the development of settlements and of securing the best possible living conditions (art. 24 par.1).

For the purpose of urbanization, the Constitution (art. 24 par. 3) provides that properties inserted in the town plans must participate, without compensation, in the disposal of land necessary for the creation of public spaces and public utility areas and contribute toward the expenses for the execution of the basic public urban works, as specified by law.

Planning legislation

Town planning legislation has a history of over a century in Greece. The first universal town planning legislation came into force in 1923 (Law Decree of 17 July 1923) and was applied for over 50 years. On the contrary, national and regional planning legislation is more recent. In fact, it is within the Greek

Constitution of 1975 and the L.360/1976 that the first legal provisions for the supra-urban spatial planning were introduced.

Today, apart from the constitutional provisions, the main body of general planning law consists of three major legislative acts: L. 2742/1999, which concerns the territorial spatial planning in the national and regional levels, L. 2508/1997 concerned with sustainable urban planning and, finally, the building law (L. 1577/1985, amended and supplemented by L. 1772/1988 and 2831/2000) which comprises the general rules for the erection of buildings and other structures on plots and parcels of land.

In parallel, a special body of statutes provides for planning and building in particular categories of areas and settlements (second home areas, rural settlements, and settlements below 2.000 inhabitants, areas of building cooperatives and industrial and tourist estates as well).

A major distinction established within Greek planning legislation is between the within-the-plan areas, on one side, and the out-of-plan areas, on the other. Within-the-plan areas are covered by statutory detailed town plans that grant development rights to the landowners. These plans determine street alignments, building lines and land-use designations and are accompanied by a statement of building provisions, including minimum plot size and plot dimensions, maximum plots ratios and the floor-area ratio. Out-of-plan areas, on the contrary, are not covered and regulated by town plans. However, according to existing legislation, these areas are not devoid of development rights and are not necessarily wild, natural or agricultural land. Most of these areas outside plans traditionally (since 1928) permit a limited (but significant) amount of development so long as landowners possess plots of a minimal size of 4.000 sq. m and road access.

Levels of government and planning competencies

In Greece, urban and regional planning was for a long time the sole responsibility of the central state. However, in the 1980s and mainly in the 1990s, regional administrations and local authorities were given more power and planning responsibilities through a process of decentralization.

At the national level, the main institution responsible for urban and regional planning is the Ministry for the Environment, Energy and Climate change (YPEKA). It is responsible for the elaboration, approval and implementation of urban master plans, statutory town plans, housing plans and environmental protection programs. It is also responsible for the elaboration, monitoring, evaluation and revision of national and regional strategic spatial plans. Other ministries, responsible for sectors as industry, tourism, agriculture, transport and energy, intervene also in the formulation and implementation of spatial planning policy especially in the field of sectoral spatial plans.

The 13 Regions¹ in which the country is actually divided are entrusted with several planning responsibilities concerned mainly with the elaboration, the approval, the amendment, the revision and the monitoring and control of different types of urban plans, the approval of zones for the transfer of floor-area ratio and the approval of departures from general building rules in the case of non-residential buildings (buildings used for health care, education and welfare services, as well as industrial plants and public sports facilities). Apart from regional administrations, a great number of second-tier (Prefectural self-government) and first-tier (Municipalities and Communes) local authorities² intervene in the planning process. In the production and approval of statutory plans the role of local authorities is mostly advisory, while the hard core of their responsibilities is concerned with the delivery of building permits and other licenses and the implementation of town plans.

¹ The Regions are consolidated decentralized units of state administration that ensure that state policies can be administered at a more local level. They constitute actually the sole level of state decentralization.

² Actually, the country is divided in 54 Prefectures, 900 Municipalities and 133 Communes.

Types of plans

Greek planning law comprises a wide range of instruments which extent from strategic and framework plans at the national and regional levels to regulatory town plans and zones at the local level. Existing legislation establishes a hierarchical structure between different types of plans with the higher tier being binding on the tiers below it. The organization of the levels of planning largely reflects the spatial scale at which plans operate (national, regional, local), without, however, having a strict correspondence with the existing levels of government.

Types of Plans	Area covered	Responsible authority for the approval
Strategic: General Framework for Spatial Planning and Sustainable Development	The whole country	National Parliament
Special Frameworks for Spatial Planning and Sustainable Development	Special areas of the country (e.g. coastal areas and islands, mountainous and lagging zones), sectors of activities (e.g. industry) of national importance or networks and technical social and administrative services of national interest	Co-ordinating Committee of Governmental Policy for Spatial Planning and Sustainable Development (inter-governmental organ)
Regional Frameworks	The area of a Region	Minister for the

for Spatial Planning and Sustainable Development		Environment, Energy and climate change
Framework: Master Plans for Athens and Thessaloniki	The Greater Area of Athens and Thessaloniki	Approved by Parliament Act (L.1515/85 and 1561/1985)
Master Plans for other major cities	The Greater Area of the selected cities	President of the Republic (Presidential Decree)
General Urban Plans (GPSs) and Plans of Spatial and Settlement Organization for Open Cities (SHOOAPs)	The whole of one municipality of more than 2.000 habitants or the whole of one or more municipalities and communes of rural areas with a population of less of 2.000 habitants each	General Secretary of the Region
<u>Regulatory:</u> Different types of town-plans (Poleodomiki Meleti, Schedio Poleos)	Neighborhood level of one Municipality or Commune	Presidential Decree (with the exception of “minor modifications” of the above plans that may be approved by the relevant local authorities)
Implementation and land contribution plans (Praxeis efarmogis)	Neighborhood level of one Municipality or Commune	Prefect or Mayor
Zoning instruments	Functional planning urban or/ and rural areas	Minister for the Environment, Energy and Climate change

Planning control

Planning control in Greece is realized through the building permit. This permit is required for any work of construction in or out of a settlement. It is a combined system of planning and building control, which regulates building construction and demolition, as well as land-use change.

Besides building permit, other consents depending on the use of the building or its location are needed. Among them, we should mention the consent required if development is to take place on or around monuments and historic buildings (article 10 of L. 3028/2002) and the approval of environmental conditions required in the case of public or private projects that may have significant impact on the environment (articles 3-5 of L. 1650/1986 as amended by L. 3010/2002). Both permits are prerequisites for the granting of the building permit.

3.2 The Ongoing Administrative Reform (“Kallikrates” Plan) and how it will influence strategic spatial development in Greece

The current situation and the problems that should be addressed

As shown above, there are currently two administrative levels of local government with no hierarchical link between them. The first level includes 900 municipalities and 134 communities. As much as 53 percent of these municipalities and communities has a population of less than 5,000 inhabitants, while only 1% of LA has a population greater than 100,000 inhabitants. The secondary local government includes 51 prefectures, 3 enlarged prefectures and 19 Provinces. The findings which fuelled the need for administrative reform were the weaknesses of local structures and in particular: i) the lack of democracy, ii) the dependence on the state, iii) the significant debt, iv) the unsatisfactory services, v) the extended misrule - corruption - wastage, vi) the inability to participate in development projects and strategic spatial development in particular.

What is changing? Amalgamation of Municipalities - Abolition of Prefectures, Strengthening of Regions (change of status to 2nd tier self governments) Kallikrates Plan includes the merger of municipalities and communities. The aim is the creation of 333-334 powerful municipalities and the introduction of powerful new regions with elected district commissioners. The Prefectures and Provinces are eliminated. The boundaries of the new regions (2nd tier self governments) will be identical to the existing regions (deconcentrated units). Many important responsibilities are being transferred from Central Government to the new structures of 1st and 2nd tier self government. Finally Kallikrates Plan is introducing the metropolitan governance for the areas of Attica and Thessaloniki.

The First Tier Local Government - Municipalities

Every Municipality is administered by the municipal council (whose members vary depending on the population of the municipality), the Economic Committee, the "Quality of Life Committee" and the Mayor. There is also an institution of the local community. The mayor and town councillors, the councillors of the municipal and the representatives of the local community are elected every 5 years (with a minimum of 50% plus one vote). In municipalities with more than 10,000 inhabitants, the Consultation Committee, composed by local society stakeholders is created. In municipalities with a population of more than 20000 people a prestigious and experience person is selected, as a supporter of the citizen and business. A board for the integration of immigrants is introduced in each municipality. A great number of public bodies belonging to the municipalities are merged and/or reformed, in order to save money and human resources. The powers delegated to municipalities include: i) Planning functions, ii) The roads and transport areas of responsibility, iii) permits the establishment and operation of certain businesses and activities, iv) Certification of Social Welfare, v) construction and operation issues Schools, vi) sports and culture, vii) Environmental issues, trade and development. These responsibilities will be accompanied with the necessary budget.

The Second Tier Local Government - Regions

The region's task is to design and implement policies at the regional level, in accordance with the principles of sustainable development and social cohesion imposed by the State. The institutions of the region are the Region Commissioner, the Region Sub-Commissioners, the Finance Committee and the Executive Committee. The Region Commissioner, the Region Sub-Commissioners are members of the Regional Council and they are elected every five years concurrently with municipal elections.

The powers of the regions include nine areas: i) Planning and Development, ii) Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries, iii) Natural Resources, Energy and Industry, iv) Employment, Trade and Tourism, v) Transport and Communications, vi) Public Works, Planning and Environment, vii) Health, viii) Education, Sports and Culture ix) Civil Protection and Administrative Care. Occasionally, additional responsibilities associated with these responsibilities may be delegated to the regions. Moreover, the existing Regional Fund is currently subject to the Region in order to provide finance, administrative and scientific support. The Regional Fund revenues come from fees, royalties and contributions, participation in EU programs, loans, services, projects undertaken, surveys, studies and programs, grants, donations, bequests, legacies of the fund assets and any another source.

Metropolitan Governance

There are complex spatial problems in two major cities of Greece (Athens and Thessaloniki) due to the lack of coordination and overlapping responsibilities. The objectives of the Metropolitan Reform are:

- i) strengthening the international competitiveness of the metropolitan area, ii) sustainable development of the metropolitan area based on a coherent and long-term strategy, ii) improving the quality of life and the environment
- iii) providing more efficient services to all citizens and iv) ensuring social cohesion. Four sectors of metropolitan functions are identified: i) Environment and Quality of Life, ii) Spatial Planning and Urban Reformation, iii) transport

and communications, iv) Protection and Security Policy. They are going to replace the 700 disparate organizations involved with metropolitan issues

4. Building of ESPON-INTERSTRAT engagement strategy in Greece

4.1 The Greek ECP, acting as partner of the ESPON-INTERSTRAT Programme is systematically developing an engagement strategy with central regional and local stakeholders, taking into account the existing spatial planning system as well as the above described ongoing administrative reform in the country and the fact that these new administrative structures and especially new regions, acting as **strategic planning units** will certainly need to be informed about ESPON related ITDS.

The ECP has started with the engagement strategy with a series of actions :

The building of a network of «representatives» within decision-making and planning authorities. To this end we have proceeded to the following contacts :

Addressing of a circular to all Secretary Generals both of State and Regional authorities (Central Ministries with planning competencies, several sectoral ministries and Regions) explaining the ESPON Programme content and action, the ESPON-INTERSTRAT content and goals and the need for the engagement strategy. In the same circular we asked the compulsory assignment of one or two representatives from each General Secretariat, so as to form a network of decision-makers in continuous contact and exchange with the ECP.

Addressing a similar circular to the Directorates General and the Planning Directorates) explaining the ESPON Programme content and action, the ESPON-INTERSTRAT content and goals and the need for the engagement strategy. In the same circular we asked the compulsory assignment of one or

two representatives from each Directorate General, so as to form a network of planning agents in continuous contact and exchange with the ECP.

Addressing of a similar circular to all Higher education bodies with planning and strategic spatial planning curricula.

Addressing of a circular to NGOs, Social enterprises and professional bodies. Creation of a 3 corresponding lists with contacts (decisions-makers, planning public servants and university professors or researchers, NGO's and other social and professional bodies representatives) The lists comprise post addresses, telephonic contacts and e-mail addresses. We posted these lists on the ECP Website.

B. LISTS :

Ministry of Environment, Energy and Climate Change

- Minister's Cabinet
- Deputy Minister's Cabinet (Environment)
- Cabinet of the Secretary of State (Energy)
- Cabinet of the Secretary General YPEKA
- Cabinet of the Secretary General (Energy and Climate Change)
- Cabinet EG Planning and Urban Regeneration
- Cabinet EG Environment and Energy
- DG Environment
- General Planning
- Organisation of Planning and Environmental Protection of Athens
- Organisation of Planning and Environmental Protection of Thessaloniki
- National Center for Environment and Sustainable Development
- Regional Directorate of YPEKA Eastern Macedonia and Thrace
- Regional Directorate of YPEKA Central Macedonia
- Regional Directorate of YPEKA Western Macedonia
- Regional Directorate YPEKA Continent

- Regional DirectorateYPEKA Thessaly
- Regional DirectorateYPEKA Ionian Islands
- Regional DirectorateYPEKA Western Greece
- Regional DirectorateYPEKA Central Greece
- Regional DirectorateYPEKA Attica
- Regional DirectorateYPEKA Peloponnese
- Regional DirectorateYPEKA North Aegean
- Regional DirectorateYPEKA South Aegean
- Regional DirectorateYPEKA Dodecanese (Rhodes)
- Regional DirectorateYPEKA Crete

Ministry of Rural Development and Food

- General Secretary
- Directoratethe for the protection of forests and natural environment
- Directorate of Planning and Environmental Protection

Ministry of Culture and Tourism

- General Secretary of the Ministry of Culture
- General Secretary of Tourism
- Department of Planning and Development
- Directoratethe European Union

Greek National Tourism Organisation (EOT)

- Cabinet of the President ESO
- Department of Tourism Development Planning
- Department of Planning and Environment

All Regions (13 NUTS 2 level regions)

Regional Commissioners'Cabinets

Regional Planning Services

All Interim Regional Management Authorities

Interim Regional Management Authority of Eastern Macedonia - Thrace
 Interim Regional Management Authority of Central Macedonia
 Interim Management Authority Region of Western Macedonia
 Interim Regional Management Authority Region of Thessaly
 Interim Regional Management Authority Region Central Greece
 Interim Regional Management Authority of Western Greece
 Interim Regional Management Authority of Peloponnese
 Interim Regional Management Authority of Ionian Islands
 Interim Regional Management Authority Attica
 Interim Regional Management Authority of Crete
 Interim Regional Management Authority of Northern Aegean
 Interim Regional Management Authority of Southern Aegean
 Interim Regional Management Authority of Epirus

Aristotle University of Thessaloniki

- Department of Architecture
- Department of Surveying Engineering
- Department of Planning and Development
- Department of Forestry and Natural Environment

National Technical University

- School of Architecture
- School of Surveying Engineering

University of Athens

- Department of Economics

Athens University of Economics

- Department of Economics
- Department of International and European Economic Studies

University of Piraeus

- Department of Economics

University of Central Greece

- Department of Regional Economic Development

University of Macedonia Economic and Social Studies

- Department of Economics

University of Patras

- Department of Architecture
- Department of Economics

University Peloponnisos

- Department of Economics

Democritus University of Thrace

- Department of Architecture (Xanthi)
- Department of International Economic Relations and Development (Komotini)

- Department of Rural Development (Komotini)

- Environmental Management Department of Forestry and Natural Resources

- Department of Environmental Engineering (Xanthi)

University Peloponnisos

- Department of Economics

University of Ioannina

- Department of Environmental and Natural Resources

University of Crete

- Department of Economics

TUC

- Department of Architecture

Aegean University

- Department of Geography

University of Thessaly

- Department of Architecture
- Department of Planning and Regional Development
- Department of Economics

Harokopion University

- Department of Geography
- Department of Ecology

The information- invitation to networking has started in early September (that is after Greek summer holidays period) and we have until today, a substantial volume of responses and a meaningful network of representatives.

5. Further interactive actions with stakeholders

During November many contacts are ongoing following the above described information and engagement circular.

Nevertheless the fact that Regional and Municipal elections have taken place of 7 and 14 November there is a certain delay and the need to repeat this informative and engagement circulars towards the new REGIONS and related stakeholders. We judge that it is mostly important to make focus on the new regional decision-making authorities and ask the assignment of REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVES (that will be able to inform and guide the new recently elected Regional Councils)

We created a first «Greek ESPON-INTERSTRAT FORUM based» on the existing ECP Website in order to establish an easier and efficient exchange between the ECP and the assigned representatives.

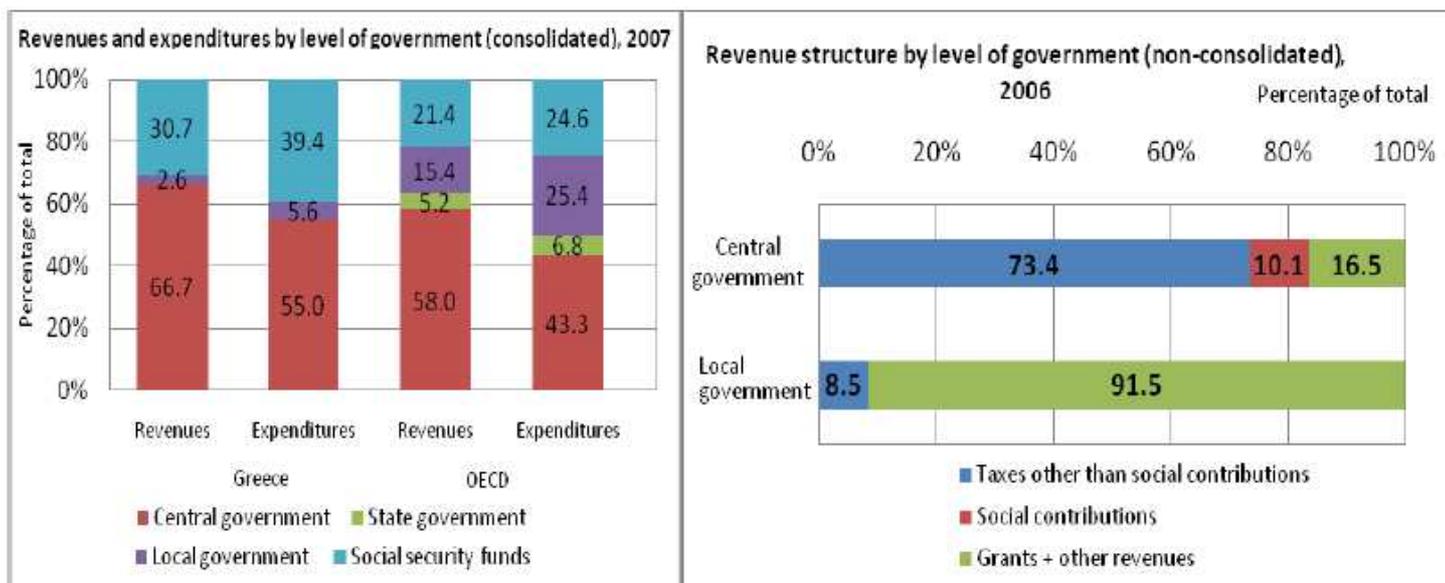
In the above circulars we have pre-announced a KICK-OFF Workshop that will take place at Panteion University during the second week of February 2011. WE have also decided that this WORKSHOP will be part of a general ESPON-INTERSTAT campaign entitled **ESPON-INTERSTRAT OPEN DAYS**. WE are now designing the action plan of the ESPON INTERSTRAT Open DAYS week.

ANNEX

Profile paper for Greece

I. Government Structure

Greece is a Presidential republic with a population of 11 million. The President is elected by a single chamber Parliament. Legislative power rests with Parliament but some rules are by Presidential or Ministerial decree. The country is divided into 13 “Peripheries” (administrative regions), 54 Prefectures which carry the administrative burden for the government. There are also 19 Provinces, 900 municipalities and 134 communities Enforcement is the responsibility of various Directorates operating through each of the Prefectures although in the less densely populated areas they may only be a sub-section. Ministries have an enforcement and legislative function with a central department coordinating and directing officers in each Prefecture. The country covers a land area of 132,000 sq km. According to the Greek Constitution (Article 101), the administration of the State shall be organized according to the principle of decentralization. The administrative division of the Country shall be based on geoeconomic, social and transportation conditions. Regional State officers shall have general decisive authority on matters of their district, while the central services shall have, in addition to special powers, the general guidance, coordination and supervision of the regional officers, as specified by law.



Source: OECD National Accounts and Economic Outlook

Compared to other OECD countries, the Greek government spends a much smaller portion of resources on education (5.5% vs. 12.9%) and a larger share of resources on social protection and general public services. In contrast to other OECD countries, local governments in Greece do not spend a large proportion of resources on health or social protection. These activities are predominately funded by social security funds. Instead, almost half of local government expenditures go toward general public services, with local governments also predominately responsible for environmental protection; housing and community amenities; and recreation, culture and religion. The central government is responsible for defence and public order and safety, with the largest share of resources going to economic affairs and general public services.

III. Demography

Population

The population of Greece was estimated to be 10,737,428 people (July 2009), 61% of which is urban population. As for the age structure, the majority

belongs to the group of the working age population (15-56 years). The median age is estimated to be 41.8 years, the population growth rate is 0.127%, the birth rate is 9.45 births/1,000 population and the death rate is 10.51 deaths/1,000 population. The net migration rate is 2.33 migrants/1,000 population. The life expectancy at birth is 79.66 years (77.11 years for men and 82.37 years for women). The total fertility rate is estimated to 0.2%.

Educational Attainment of the Population

The Greek Educational System comprises of three consecutive levels:

Primary - This educational level in Greece is again sub-divided into Pre-school Education and Compulsory Primary Education. The Pre-school Education is offered by kindergarten classes and the Compulsory Primary Education is given by Primary schools.

Secondary - The first stage is the Compulsory Lower Level Secondary Education provided in Gymnasiums and the second stage is the Post-compulsory or Upper Secondary Education which is proffered by the Technical Vocational Educational Institutes and Unified Lyceums.

Tertiary - In this level too there are two cycles. University education offered by Universities and non-university education is bestowed by Higher Technological Educational Institutes and also the Higher Education Institutes. Postgraduate courses are also encouraged in this level.

Overall responsibility for education rests with the Ministry of National Education and Religious Affairs.

The illiterates account for 1.95% of the population. 13.2% of the population are primary school graduates and 13.63% had secondary school level, 6.81% have completed technical training, 33.44% had secondary education, 7.24% are graduates of post-secondary non-tertiary education, 7.07% are graduates of technical education and 14.92% are university graduates. Finally, 1.74% of the population holds masters or doctorate (source GSEE. Census 2001)

IV. Economic Status

Greece has a predominately service economy, which (including tourism) accounts for over 73% of GDP. Almost 9% of the world's merchant fleet is Greek-owned, making the Greek fleet the largest in the world. Other important sectors include food processing, tobacco, textiles, chemicals (including refineries), pharmaceuticals, cement, glass, telecommunication and transport equipment. Agricultural output has steadily decreased in importance over the last decade, accounting now for only 5% of total GDP. The EU is Greece's major trading partner, with more than half of all Greek two-way trade being intra-EU. Greece runs a perennial merchandise trade deficit, and 2009 imports totaled \$64 billion against exports of \$21 billion. Tourism and shipping receipts together with EU transfers make up for much of this deficit.

Unemployment Rate and Labor Force

In 2008, according to data of Labor Force Survey, the unemployment rate stood at 7.2% of workforce and the unemployed stood at 357,000. The labor force amounts to 4.94 million people (68.2% of the population of working age). The number of the employees was about 4.59 million people representing 63.4% of the working-age population (15-64 years).

VII. Recent efforts for elaborating a new policy towards a low carbon urban environment in Greece

On the basis of the commitments described in the international convention on climate change and in accordance with the European Commission policy documents (Green Paper 22/6/05) and EU Directives 2002/91/EC and 2006/32/EC, which repealed the former SAVE 93/76/EU Directive, Greece undertook two main actions: firstly, to draw up a National Plan (Ministry of Environment, 2002) for reducing greenhouse gas emissions, 2000-2010 and, secondly, to adopt Law 3661/2008 on measures to reduce energy consumption in buildings (Greek Government Gazette, 89A 2008). This

represents the integration of Directive 2002/91 into national legislation with a five-year delay (European Parliament and Council 2002 and 2006).

Apart from the aforementioned directive being relatively weak and failing to set strict limits on energy consumption, the relevant Greek law is merely a simple and poor translation of the Directive which lacks any deep or substantial integration study—indeed, important aspects of the Directive are omitted or distorted (TCG 2008a). The Law, which is shoddily drafted and fails to focus on the key objective: energy saving, was passed simply to avoid Greece's condemnation by the EU authorities. Furthermore, both the Directive and the Greek Law exclude—for no specific reason—buildings designed for religious worship and public gatherings, despite their consuming considerable amounts of energy. The same is true of second homes in the country, which are in use for less than four months a year, despite four months being ample time for significant energy consumption. Finally, the Law does not even reflect the timid provisions of the Directive, and is thus of minimum benefit. According to this Law and the Directive 2006/32/EC, which has not yet been integrated into Greek legislation, a Joint Ministerial Decision was issued on “Measures to improve energy efficiency and energy saving in the public and wider public sector” (Greek Government Gazette 1122B 2008). These measures replace oil with natural gas, impose the regular maintenance of air-conditioning installations, and set standards for lighting, ventilation and internal temperatures. It is worth mentioning that, according to the National Plan for reducing greenhouse gas emissions (2000-2010), public buildings are considered among the most wasteful in terms of energy use.

On the basis of this Law, a Joint Ministerial Decision was issued in June 2009 which introduced a Special Development Program for photovoltaic systems on terraces and roofs (Greek Government Gazette 1079B (2009)). The Decision provides for grants for projects and interventions in buildings aimed at saving energy in the critical residential zone where 2/5 of the nation's total energy is consumed. There are several objections to this regulation which relate to its

scope and implementation process. However, since the regulation has not yet been tested in practice, we can not draw credible conclusions.

Finally, a further bill is currently in preparation that would introduce the EU's most recent directive 2006/32 on "measures for improving end-use energy efficiency and energy sector services" into Greek law. Along with changes on the institutional level, there have been several initiatives from the ministries of the Environment and Development, the private sector, NGOs and other scientific institutions. For example, in the context of renovating and restoring old buildings, as well as constructing new ones, a dialogue has already begun on smart solutions with regard to the greening of roofs and terraces on multi-storey buildings in Athens. One such initiative from the Ministry of Environment promotes the creation of green roofs with ensuing economic, aesthetic and energy-saving benefits (TCG 2008b).

It is obvious that—in countries like Greece, in particular—the implementation of new regulations in the fields of energy saving and generation from renewable sources will require a major effort supported by new organizational structures and mechanisms designed to reduce bureaucracy, and depend on the requisite interdisciplinary collaboration and cooperation between public services, scientific centres and research institutions. It is also clear that a key component of any policy for low carbon cities must be the quest for innovation, especially in the privileged fields of architecture and construction. For these reasons, we must adopt a new national strategy which incorporates the latest technological developments and achievements and promotes new ways of land management in urban areas by means of necessary institutional arrangements and new social practices and attitudes.

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