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Partnership between the European Commission
and the Council of Europe in the field of Youth

INFORMATION SHEET

PARTICIPATION OF YOUNG PEOPLE

GREECE



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TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. Youth participation in Greece _____	2
2. Youth participation in representative democracy in Greece _____	5
2.1. Participation in elections _____	7
2.2. Young people elected into representative bodies _____	7
3. Youth participation in civil society _____	8
3.1 Membership in NGOs _____	8
3.2 Youth participation structures on local, regional or national level _____	8
4. Learning to participate _____	10
4.1 The formal education system _____	10
4.2 Non formal education _____	11
5. Youth information in Greece _____	13
5.1 The structure of youth information _____	13
5.2. The youth information services _____	13
5.3. Topics of youth information _____	15
5.4. Young people's involvement in youth information _____	15
6. Informal ways of young people's participation _____	17
7. Sources of information _____	18

1. Youth participation in Greece

Give an overview on participation of young people (13 – 30) in your country on the national and regional level (in federal states) answering the following questions:

- Are there official national/regional recommendations (policies) establishing the right of young people to participate in society?

Currently, there is no law establishing a minimum participation level of young people within state bodies.

In view of empowering young people's active participation at a local level the General Secretariat for Youth, in cooperation with the Ministry of Education, Life Long Learning and Religious Affairs and the Ministry of Interior, Decentralisation and E-government, have founded, under the law 3443/2006, the Local Youth Councils. Their founding and operation lies under the responsibility of its municipality and community. Their operation is currently under reformation as there is a new law into force, concerning the first degree of local authorities, under the name "Kallikratis", which introduces major changes in their operation and as a result there will be significant changes in the local youth councils coming into force late in autumn 2011.

For the first time, under "Kallikratis" law, young people participate by the age of 18, not only with the right to vote but also with the right to be voted in the elections for the municipal and region counsellors, because youth participation is now recognised as important, necessary and creative.

- If so: how is the concept of youth participation defined?

There is no exact definition regarding youth participation.

For the time being, concerning the institution of the Local Youth Councils, registers of members are kept in every Municipality that consist of young people, aged 15 to 28, providing them the opportunity to participate in collective actions and familiarize them with the principles of democracy. The aim is to give the chance to all young, especially to those belonging to the group of young people with fewer opportunities, to express their concerns and be active in their community.

Every two years, elections take place among the young who have registered to form the Council of the Local Youth Councils who is responsible for:

- detecting, highlighting and monitoring the youth needs and problems in local level,
- undertaking initiative and activities, in cooperation with the relative Local Administration Organisation, which aim at the free development of the personality of the young,

- taking care that measures are taken for the active and effective participation of the young in the local society and developing cooperation relations with other Local Youth Councils in national and European level.

Late in autumn 2011, there will be significant changes in the local youth councils.

- What are the measures envisaged to promote different forms of participation on local, regional and national level?

Funding of youth NGO's

The Youth Initiatives Support Program of the General Secretariat for Youth aims to support initiatives, activities and projects carried out and implemented in Greece by youth organizations targeting on the young people with activities focusing on volunteering and active social participation.

The General Secretariat for Youth programs:

a) Youth Legal Aid program, aiming at providing free legal assistance to socially vulnerable groups of young people (target-groups), covering both their extrajudicial and court representation while young lawyers up to 35 years will be undertaking the cases of the beneficiaries.

b) National Observatory for the rights of the Child, a supervised body by the General Secretariat for Youth, aiming at studying and recording the biological-sociopsychological problems of the child, recording and interconnecting the child related bodies and in-depth drawing of conclusions for the policies to be implemented by the state, in the framework designated by the UN Declaration on the Rights of the Child. It is the main policy tool of the General Secretariat for Youth which implements a broad range of actions aiming at informing and raising public awareness on the issue of child protection.

c) Project «IRIS», European Programme PROGRESS - For the fight against stereotypes and discrimination: Actions for the promotion of support, integration and diversity, with emphasis on promoting a change in mentality through seminars, workshops and consultative support in primary and secondary education schools on one hand and research, information and raising awareness supportive actions regarding the Roma population group in our country on the other. The General Secretariat for Youth will implement the program in cooperation with the Greek Ombudsman and the NGO's «Schedia» and «K.E.P.A.D.».

d) Environment Protection Development of Eco Conscience, an initiative to prepare an information and awareness campaign on the value and protection of biodiversity aimed at the young people as a target group, falling within the policy framework of: (a) the third pillar of set priorities

(Environment-Climatic change-Green development), (b) the implementation of intergenerational solidarity in environmental issues (among other issues) and (c) the pursuit of synergies between state and civil society.

e) European Year of Volunteering 2011, undertaking actions for informing and raising awareness on volunteering issues.

- Information by the Youth Information Centres on possible ways of participation.
- Municipal Youth Centres.
- The implementation of the Structured Dialogue, between the General Secretariat for Youth, other public authorities, young people and youth organizations.
- The “Youth in Action” program.

Do any of the above mentioned measures target specific groups? (please tick)

- females
- males
- migrants
- young people with fewer opportunities
- young people in specific regions
- minorities (which):
 - certain age groups within the age range 13-30(which): school children
 - other: programmes targeting on combating discrimination

2. Youth participation in representative democracy in [Country]

Please describe the rules of representative democracy related to young people answering the questions below:

- Is voting compulsory in your country? Yes
- What is the legal minimum age to vote in elections?

European ¹ :	18	National:	18	Regional:	18	local	18
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- What are the legal requirements for voting in local, regional, national and European elections?

In national elections all Greek citizens are entitled to vote.

In municipal elections all Greek, EU, expatriates and non EU citizens are entitled to vote.

In European elections all Greek and EU citizens are entitled to vote.

Conditions applied to all citizens independently of their origin in order to be entitled to vote:

- They are aged over 18.
- They are registered in an electoral roll of some municipality or community in Greece.
- They have not been deprived of their voting rights.
- They have not been fully deprived of their right to exercise their civil rights on their own, pursuant to the provisions of the Hellenic Civil Code.
- They are not deprived by virtue of an irrevocable criminal sentence for one of the crimes cited in the Penal and Military Penal Code for such time as that deprivation persists.

In particular, according to the Greek Constitution, Article 51, “the law cannot abridge the right to vote except in cases where a minimum age has not been attained or in cases of legal incapacity or as a result of irrevocable criminal conviction for certain felonies”.

In addition to the above:

- EU citizens must be registered in an electoral roll of some municipality in Greece, before the time of the elections.
- All expatriated and non EU citizens, belonging to certain group categories laid out by the Ministry of Interior, Decentralisation and E-government (www.ypes.gr) must:
 - o have 5 years of continuous and legal residence in Greece
 - o -hold a residence permit

¹ If applicable

- What are the legal requirements for being a candidate in elections ?

National Elections

According to Article 55 of the Greek Constitution, “to be elected as a Member of Parliament, one must be a Greek citizen, have the legal capacity to vote and have attained the age of 25 years on the day of the election”.

Regional Elections

Regional Commissioner

To be elected as a Regional Commissioner, one must be a Greek citizen, have the legal capacity to vote and have attained the age of 21 years on the day of the election.

Regional Counsellor

To be elected as a Regional Counsellor, one must be a Greek citizen, have the legal capacity to vote and have attained the age of 18 years on the day of the election.

Local Elections

Mayor

One must be a Greek citizen, have the legal capacity to vote and have attained the age of 21 years on the day of the election to be elected as a Mayor.

Municipal Counsellor

One must be a Greek, EU or expatriated and non EU citizens (belonging to certain group categories laid out by the Ministry of Interior, Decentralisation and E-government) and have attained the age of 18 years on the day of the election to be elected as a Municipal Counsellor.

The Greek candidates must have the legal capacity to vote.

The EU citizens mustn't have been deprived of the right to be elected in their country of origin. The expatriated and the non EU citizens must have the legal capacity to vote according the Greek laws, have sufficient knowledge of the Greek language and they mustn't have been deprived of the right to be elected in their country of origin.

European Elections

One must be Greek or EU citizens and have attained the age of 18 years on the day of the election to be elected as a Member of the European Parliament.

The Greek candidates must have the legal capacity to vote.

The EU citizens mustn't have been deprived of the right to be elected in their country of origin.

2.1. Participation in elections

Please give the percentage of young voters (young people who are allowed to vote below 30 years old) on European (for EU-countries only) and national level.. If detailed data on young people is not available please provide the general turnout of all voters and describe the young voter's participation

	Participation in European elections in % of people with the right to vote			Participation in national elections in % of people with the right to vote		
	Total	female	male	total	female	male
% of total population	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
13 – 30 year olds	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
16 – 19 year olds ²	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
20 – 24 year olds	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
25 – 30 year olds	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

2.2. Young people elected into representative bodies

Please provide the number (in total and by gender) of young people under the age of 30 who are members of the national parliament. Please provide the total number of parliamentarians on national level.³

	MP <= 30		All MP	
	0	%		
Women	0	%	52	17,33%
Men	0	%	248	82,67%
Total	0	%	300	100 %

² If applicable

³ Source: www.hellenicparliament.gr

3. Youth participation in civil society

3.1 Membership in NGOs

Please give the percentage of young people aged 13 to 30 (if possible in total and gender) who are members in non-governmental organisations (including political and youth NGOs) and if possible for youth NGOs. Please provide the same data for political parties as well. For comparison, please provide the same data for the whole population.

	NGOs, including political NGOs and youth NGOs			Youth NGOs			Political parties		
	Total	female	male	Total	female	male	total	female	male
% of total population									
13 – 30 year olds	N/A	N/A	N/A						
16 – 19 year olds									
20 – 24 year olds									
25 – 30 year olds									

3.2 Youth participation structures on local, regional or national level

Please give a picture of how young people can/do participate in formally recognized ways in civic society/policy in your country by answering to the following questions:

- which types of youth participation structures exist in your country and which group of young people these structure do represent

School Councils operating in all secondary schools. There is a central council of 15 members representing each school, as well as a five-member council representing each class.

A Youth Parliament (www.vouliefivon.gr), an educational programme initiated by the Greek Parliament and organised on annual basis in cooperation with the Ministries of Education of Greece and Cyprus and the Ministry of Employment and Social Protection.

Two major Student Unions: The Hellenic Federation of University Students (E.F.E.E) and the Hellenic Federation of Technological Institutions Students (E.S.E.E).

A National Youth Council (www.esyn.gr) (ESYN) was established in July 1998 as a 'platform' of NGOs and is an independent, non-governmental, non-profit federation of Greek youth organisations.

The Local Youth Councils

Political Party Youth Organisations: Most of the Greek Political Parties have their own youth organisations that are active throughout Greece and in a variety of social contexts.

Foundation of the Young Scientists Network, an initiative of the National Youth Council, with the support of the General Secretariat for Youth. The Young Scientists Network is a structure which promotes the organised participation of young people; its main objective is to highlight the role and importance of the research and scientific work of the young people and to cope with their problems. To this effect, the network:

- Organises international meetings-congresses addressed to young scientists and researchers.
- Supports the operation of an on-line community of young Greek scientists and researchers.
- Conducts research in relation to the needs of the young Greek scientists and researchers.
- Facilitates the contact and collaboration between young scientists and researchers from Greece and abroad.

- what is the degree of participation to decision making allowed by these structures (please fill in the table below):

type of youth participation structure	% of local structures			% of regional structures			% of national structures		
	Share of power	Consultation	Information	Share of power	consultation	Informati on	Share of power	consultation	Information
For all Structures	N/A	N/A	N/A	-	-	-	N/A	N/A	N/A

4. Learning to participate

4.1 The formal education system

Please describe existing mechanisms within the system of formal education aiming at developing and deepening learning to participate in your country.

Civic education modules are linked with cross-curricular activities and subject-specific themes at primary and upper secondary educational levels, with emphasis on democratic citizenship, introduction to law and political institutions, ancient Greek literature, history of the social sciences, European civilisation and its roots and sociology. More specifically, the Greek Ministry of Education, Life Long Learning and Religious Affairs in order to develop and deepen learning to participate has introduced civic education modules in elementary and secondary schools as part of national curriculum. Civic education modules are linked with cross-curricular activities and subject-specific themes, with emphasis on democratic citizenship, introduction to law and political institutions, ancient Greek literature, history of the social sciences, European civilisation and its roots, and sociology. To give some examples, the module 'European Civilisation and its Roots', taught at the first grade of secondary education (upper level), examines the history and evolution of Europe and its distinct social and political formations. Moreover, at the second grade of secondary education (upper level), there exists a module under the title 'Introduction to Law and Political Institutions', which brings together the disciplines of law and political science, focusing on the nature of politics and the role of political science, the theory and practice of active citizenship, elements of democratic government, the legal and political system of the European Union, the Greek political and judicial system, etc. In addition, at the third grade of lower level secondary education, students engage themselves in the study of forms of citizenship, the organisation of social institutions and social groups, the democratic process and the Constitution, etc. In the same respect, the Ministry of National Education organised a series of events in order to foster and support the active and continuous participation of schools and other educational institutions in initiatives linked with the development of democratic citizenship.

In 1996 the Ministry for Education, Life Long Learning and Religious Affairs (YPEPTH) laid the foundations of a system designed to meet the educational needs of social groups with a particular social, cultural or religious identity. The Ministry adopted cross-cultural education - a new form of education in Greece - as part of this policy. The aim of cross-curriculum education is to set up and run primary and secondary classes that provide education to young people with a specific educational, social or cultural identity. In cross-cultural schools, the standard curriculum is adapted to meet the specific educational, social or cultural needs of the students attending them. A total of 26 cross-cultural schools have been set up throughout Greece since 1996. These schools, which will continue to increase in number, guarantee equality of opportunity to every student in the

country, while these cutting-edge approaches to teaching and learning have a positive knock-on effect on the Greek educational system as a whole. Out of the 26 schools, 13 are primary schools, while there are 9 junior high schools and 4 senior high schools. A school can only be described as cross-cultural when repatriated Greek and/or foreign students account for at least 45% of the total student body. The educators in these schools receive special training, and are selected on the basis of their knowledge on the subject of cross-cultural education and teaching Greek as a second or foreign language.

Also, in 1996, the Greek government passed a law on intercultural education (Law 2413/1996).

Are there teacher trainings programmes at the national and/or regional level on this topic?

During the school year, various teacher training seminars are carried out for the enhancement of their teaching abilities and skills and updating them in educational issues.

4.2 Non formal education

Please describe five to ten existing examples of actions/programmes/activities at national or regional level, outside the formal education system, aiming at developing and deepening learning to participate in your country.

The Local Youth Councils which are responsible for:

- detecting, highlighting and monitoring the youth needs and problems in local level,
- undertaking initiative and activities, in cooperation with the relative Local Administration Organisation, which aim at the free development of the personality of the young,
- taking care that measures are taken for the active and effective participation of the young in the local society and developing cooperation relations with other Local Youth Councils in national and European level.

'Youth in Action' Programme. It is an EU Programme, targeting young people aged 15-28 and promoting mobility within and beyond the EU borders, non-formal learning, participation and intercultural dialogue.

The Municipal Youth Centres, which disseminate information on youth issues, organise seminars and excursions, sport events etc.

General Secretariat's for Youth Advisory Bodies.

The General Secretariat for Youth has already formed the following Advisory Bodies:

- Interministerial Advisory Committee for the European Year of Voluntary Activities, for coordinating the actions taken during the year 2011, European Year of Voluntary Activities, between the different Ministries.
- Advisory Committee for the European Year of Voluntary Activities, with the participation of non governmental organisations, aiming at coordinating the actions taken during the year 2011, European Year of Voluntary Activities, between Youth NGO's.
- National Working Group on the structured dialogue, in the framework of the Trio Presidency in order to promote structured dialogue in Greece, with the participation of governmental and non governmental bodies. Young people, organised or not, participate in one day seminars and fill in questionnaires having been sent by each Presidency.
- With the aim to raise awareness and creatively involve young people in the social life through innovative activities:
 - Social Participation Network
 - Cultural Network
 - Environmental Network

5. Youth information in Greece

5.1 The structure of youth information

Please describe how youth information is organised in your country answering the following questions.

- *Do youth information points / centres exist? Yes*
- *Does youth information coordinated at the national level exist? Yes*
- *Does youth information coordinated at the regional level exist? No. If yes, where?*
- *Is youth information in your country member of any European network (ERYICA, EYCA, Eurodesk)? If yes, name the network.*

ERYICA, EYCA, Eurodesk, EKCYP, SALTO.

5.2. The youth information services

Please provide the percentage of municipalities with a youth information point/centre. N/A

Is there an online national youth information system? Yes. If yes, please provide the links to the relevant webpage(s), state if the portal provides youth information only on a specific topic.

- The General Secretariat for Youth has the following link through which one can have access to more portals regarding youth, as well as to information on Youth Information Centres, EURODESK, ERYICA and on the European Programme “Youth in Action”, www.neagenia.gr
- The Institute for Youth, www.ify.gr
- The Youth Entrepreneurship Support Structures, www.thirides.gr/default.el.asp
- Information on the European Youth Card, www.europeanyouthcard.gr
- The National Youth Council, www.esyn.gr
- The Organisation of Youth and Sport of the municipality of Athens, www.ona.gr
- Other portals are:
 - www.yen.gr (Ministry of Mercantile Affairs, Islands and Fisheries)
 - www.ypepth.gr (Ministry of Education, Life Long Learning and Religious Affairs)
 - www.ypes.gr (Ministry of Interior, Decentralisation and E-government)
 - www.ypakp.gr (Ministry of Labour and Social Security)

- www.mod.gr (Ministry of National Defence)
- www.isotita.gr (General Secretariat for Gender Equality)
- http://ec.europa.eu/ellada/index_el.htm (European Commission – Representation in Greece)
- www.europarl.gr/view/el/index.html (European Parliament, Information Office in Greece)
- www.ekke.gr (National Centre for Social Research)
- www.demokritos.gr (National Centre for Scientific Research “DEMOKRITOS”)
- www.eie.gr (National Hellenic Research Foundation)
- www.primeminister.gr (Hellenic Republic – the Government on-line)
- www.infosoc.gr (Greek link for the Information Society Website)
- www.justjobs.gr (Job seeking website)
- www.kariera.gr (Job seeking website)
- www.skywalker.gr (Job seeking website)
- www.oaed.gr (National Manpower Employment Organisation)
- www.oEEK.gr/second_gr.htm (Organisation for Vocational education and training)
- www.sch.gr (Greek School Network)
- www.stratologia.gr (National Defense Recruiting Department)
- www.kethea.gr, the Treatment Centre for addicted people (KETHEA), its regional therapeutic programmes and its provisional sector run the following websites, which inform on the provided services and operate as information sources for the drug problem:
 - The Career Services’ Office (CSO) of Aristotle University of Thessaloniki has the following links:
 - www.cso.auth.gr (career services office of Aristotle University of Thessaloniki),
 - www.career.tuc.gr (Career Services Office of the Technical University of Crete)
 - www.eap.gr (Hellenic Open University)

- Are there any online regional youth information systems?

No

- Please describe existing national or regional (federal states) print publications for information of young people in your country (e.g. magazines, folders/brochures).

Some Youth NGO's print leaflets, brochures and magazines to inform on issues of concern.

Also, the General Secretariat for Youth sends every month a newsletter informing on youth activities, projects etc.

5.3. Topics of youth information

In relation to the structures of youth information you mentioned above, what are the main contents of information delivered to young people?

- √ career guidance
- √ studies and scholarships
- √ jobs and training
- √ general health matters
- √ relationships and sexuality
- √ social security benefits
- √ rights of young people
- √ consumer rights
- √ European opportunities for young people
- √ youth activities and exchanges

Other (please explain)

5.4. Young people's involvement in youth information

How do young people participate in the national/regional system of youth information?

- During the implementation of the Programs and projects of the General Secretariat for Youth, young volunteers participate actively in the dissemination of information.
- In order to disseminate information, Youth Information Centres use a multitude of mechanisms. Among the most popular are the following: regional media shows, poster creation in

youth areas, email and telephone communication, even organization of events in youth areas, leaflet creation, press releases, regional agents and school briefings, internet services (e-forum and e-chat), flyers, journal distribution, General Secretariat's for Youth leaflet distribution, co-operation with regional institutions and groups, various actions of participation, printed material creation, Youth Information Centre's briefing and co-operation, university group briefing and co-operation, visits in youth areas etc. In all these activities the participation of young people is actively sought.

- KETHEA often utilises the young people that already participate in its therapeutic programmes for producing and disseminating information on the drug issue (organisation of big events, slogan and reading material creation, participation in missions of PEGASUS Mobile Information Unit etc), while cooperates with various youth organisations.

- Young people have the possibility to participate in the provision and dissemination information through:

- o Writing of articles in the press or in the internet
- o Participating in forums and blogs
- o Organization of events
- o Participation in events

- Students and graduates ask questions on career issues (i.e. study options) and the Career Services' Office have to find and provide them with accurate information. In this case, the provision of information tries to be in accordance with young people's needs.

- Students and graduates can fill in evaluation forms and evaluate the quality, plethora, organization of information services as well as point out any problems and make suggestions for improvement of our services offered.

- Usually, young people who have taken career services promote the good work to fellow students -graduates i.e. advice them to come for group counselling, be "members of Career Services' Office" in order to receive daily e-mail with career information etc

- Some students have worked part-time in Career Services' Office, mainly having duties such as client service, secretarial support, research assistance etc

In previous years, there were students (mainly from school of psychology) who have worked voluntarily in Career Services' Office in order to gain experience in career counselling.

6. Informal ways of young people's participation

Please describe informal ways used by young people to make their voices heard in society in your country.

Participation in:

- youth NGO's
- student associations
- youth sectors of political parties
- demonstrations
- protests

Please describe alternative ways of youth participation connected to the use of online technologies answering the following questions:

Top down approach (e.g. online consultations): in which occasion?

- on the structured dialogue (in the framework of the Trio EU Presidency and online consultations between young people and the Prime Minister or the General Secretary for Youth on social issues that concern the former.)
- everytime there is an issue concerning the youth, the General Secretariat for Youth opens a call for proposals in order for the young people to propose what to do in different situations, i.e. while drafting the national plan for the European Year for Voluntary Activities, youth NGO's were asked to propose projects to be considered.

Bottom up approach (e.g. organised actions through social networks and the internet): in which occasion?

- Facebook and twitter (social networks) are used to raise awareness on different issues and promote youth participation on the General Secretariat's activities, seminars etc.

7. Sources of information

Web-pages:

General Secretariat for Youth	www.neagenia.gr
Ministry of Education, Life Long Learning and Religious Affairs	www.minedu.gov.gr
Ministry of Interior, Decentralisation and E-government	www.ypes.gr
Hellenic Parliament	www.hellenicparliament.gr
The Institute for Youth	www.ify.gr
National Youth Council	www.esyn.gr
Local Youth Councils	www.tosyn.gr
The Youth Entrepreneurship Support Structures	www.thirides.gr/default.el.asp
The Organisation of Youth and Sport of the municipality of Athens	www.ona.gr
The Treatment Centre for addicted people (KETHEA)	www.kentheia.gr