

Greek Ombudsman – Greece

Brief profile

Contact details

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Overview

The mission of the Greek Ombudsman is to mediate between the public administration and private individuals, in order to protect the latter's rights, to ensure the former's compliance with the rule of law, and to combat maladministration. After the enactment of Law 3304/2005 with reference to "the application of the principle of equal treatment regardless of ethnic origin, religious or other convictions, disability, age or sexual orientation", the Ombudsman's role was extended to cover the promotion of equal treatment by public administration services. Additionally, after the enactment of Laws 3488/2006 and 3769/2009, the Ombudsman is responsible for monitoring the implementation of the principle of equal treatment between men and women.

Type of equality body

The *Greek Ombudsman* is a predominantly quasi-judicial body¹.

Grounds and fields of discrimination covered

Grounds	Fields	
	Employment	Beyond employment (education, goods & services, housing, etc.)
Gender	◆	◆
Race and ethnic origin	◆	◆
Age	◆	
Disability	◆	
Sexual orientation	◆	
Religion and belief	◆	

¹ According to a [European Commission study on Equality Bodies](#), predominantly quasi-judicial bodies are "impartial institutions which spend the bulk of their time and resources hearing, investigating and deciding on individual instances of discrimination brought before them" (page 43).

Detailed profile

Brief history

The Greek Ombudsman (GO) is a constitutionally established independent authority. It started operations on 1 October 1998 and provides its services to all citizens free of charge. Its organization, staffing, and operation are defined in Law 3094/2003 and by the Operating Regulations (Presidential Decree 273/1999), in the context laid out by the provisions of the Constitution following its revision in 2001. In 2005 the GO was designated as Specialized Equality Body for the implementation of the principle of equal treatment in the public sector. More specifically, the GO has a specific mandate:

- For the implementation and promotion of the principle of equal treatment irrespective of race or national origin, religion or other beliefs, disability, age or sexual orientation in the public sector: law 3304/2005, in compliance with Council Directives 2000/43/EC and 2000/78/EC;
- For the monitoring and promotion of the implementation of the principle of equal treatment between men and women as regards access to goods and services in the public sector: law 3769/2009, in compliance with Council Directive 2004/113/EC;
- For the monitoring of the implementation of the principle of equal treatment between men and women in both the private and public sectors: law 3488/2006 in compliance with Council directive 2002/73/EC, which has amended Council directive 76/207/EC.

Mandate

- **Powers:** the *Greek Ombudsman* is a predominantly quasi-judicial body;
- **Litigation powers:**
 - Formally deciding on complaints (decision or recommendation) – *not legally binding*.

Grounds and fields of discrimination covered

Grounds	Fields				
	Employment	Education	Housing	Social protection	Goods and Services
Gender	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆
Race and ethnic origin	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆
Age	◆				
Disability	◆				
Sexual orientation	◆				
Religion and belief	◆				

Activities

- Promotional activities aimed at duty bearers (by way of trainings, guidance material, etc.);
- Promotional activities aimed at potential victims (trainings, awareness raising, etc.);
- Communication activities;
- Number of inquiries / complaints lodged and cases handled per year: **250**.

Structure

1. Management structure

- Type: single headed equality body (led by director or ombudsman/commissioner);
- Details:
 - The Greek Ombudsman is supported by 6 Deputy Ombudsmen who head the following departments:
 - a) Department of Human Rights;
 - b) Department of Health and Social Welfare;
 - c) Department of the Quality of Life (environment, urban planning, land use, public works, etc.);
 - d) Department of State-Citizen Relations (quality of services provided, maladministration),
 - e) Department of Children's Rights;
 - f) Department for Gender Equality.
 - The Deputy Ombudsman for Human Rights is acting Ombudsman in the Ombudsman's absence and he is acting as inter-departmental Coordinator for the fulfillment of the specific mandate on discrimination.

2. Institutional structure

- Type: the equality body consists of offices of ombudsmen;

3. Nomination of senior staff and board:

The Ombudsman is nominated by Parliament. Since its amendment of 2001, the Greek Constitution provides that heads of independent authorities (e.g. Greek Ombudsman) enjoying constitutional status are selected by the Conference of Parliament Chairmen (Presidium), with unanimity, if possible, or with an increased majority of four-fifths of its members.

The Deputy Ombudsmen are appointed by decision of the Minister of Interior, Public Administration and Decentralization on the recommendation of the Ombudsman. Staff members (senior and junior investigators) are selected through public competition by a committee presided by the Ombudsman and have indefinite contracts.

4. Number of staff: 15

Operating budget (for the parts of the organization dealing with equality issues)

The Ombudsman proposes its budget to the Ministry of Finance for subsequent inclusion in the annual state budget and approval by Parliament at will. The budget of the Greek Ombudsman for the year 2011 was approximately 8.3 million euro. However, this is the general budget of the institution and there is no specific provision within this budget allocated to the promotion of equality.

Accountability (reporting to)

An Annual Report is submitted to the Parliament of Greece. The relevant parliamentary committee may summon the Ombudsman for a public hearing.

Contact details (address, key contact person, website)

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