

## COUNTRY PROFILES

### Greece

The research into literature on Greece's approach to international cultural policy suggests a positive attitude towards cooperation with other European countries vis-à-vis the rest of the world, most aptly demonstrated through its Plan for Economic Reform on the Balkans and its role in the Mediterranean process of the EU.

#### H e l l e n i c   M i n i s t r y   o f   F o r e i g n a f f a i r s

The Hellenic Ministry of Foreign Affairs is responsible for the country's foreign policies that include international relations and international cooperation. It administers this policy through the Department of Educational and Cultural Affairs. This department is responsible for cooperating with other Ministries, Services and Organisations with a view to the "cultural promotion and advancement of Greece abroad, as well as the dissemination of the Greek spirit and culture on an international level".

"More particularly, the E1 Department of Educational and Cultural Affairs is responsible for:

- negotiating and signing Cultural Agreements with foreign countries;
- negotiating and signing Cultural Programs;
- monitoring the implementation of Cultural Programs and exchanges sponsored by them;
- materialising cultural exchanges and events;
- granting scholarships to students of Greek and foreign origin;
- monitoring the activities of cultural and scientific institutions abroad and the of University Chairs of Greek interest;
- the relations of Greece with UNESCO."

#### M i n i s t r y   o f   C u l t u r e

The Ministry of Culture is the governmental body responsible for cultural heritage and the Arts in Greece. The Ministry does not offer on its website any indication that they have any particular interest in international cooperation, other than to highlight some projects supported by EU funding. However, Greece has over eighty-one bilateral cultural agreements and programmes, involving the Ministries of Culture, Education and Foreign Affairs, and these have provided a framework for international cultural relations. One can also find some examples of good practice at the Ministry of Development (cultural tourism projects) and the General Secretariat for Youth but it is clear that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs dominates cultural cooperation agreements quite decisively.

#### P o l i c y   f o c u s

The main principle of Greek cultural policy is safeguarding tangible and intangible cultural heritage. It is in the sphere of heritage where Greece feels it has much to offer Europe. According to the Hellenic Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Greece favours a federal model for Europe and is open to developing policy models in cooperation with others. According to a study by the "Euro-Barometer", 67% of Greeks are in favour of EU Enlargement.

Furthermore, Greece believes "that lasting peace and stability in the Balkans can be achieved only through economic development, strengthening of democratic institutions in all countries of the area, respect for existing borders, and respect for human rights and the rights of minorities. This is the basis of the Stabilisation and Association Process that constitutes the cornerstone of the EU policy for the region known as Western Balkans (Albania, Bosnia &

Herzegovina, Croatia, former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Serbia & Montenegro). Its ultimate goal is the future integration of the countries concerned into the European structures.”

#### G e o g r a p h i c a l f o c u s

Though Greek cultural foreign policy is pointed towards the European Union, for example Greece's three cultural institutes are based within the EU: Austria (Vienna), Belgium (Brussels) and France (Paris), Greece sees its role above all as an interlocutor within Europe – building bridges with neighbouring non-EU countries.

For example, Hellenic interest in Balkan cooperation is expressed in a brochure that was released to explain Greece's role and ambitions for the chairmanship of the BSEC group. The brochure indicates the chairman's desire to see closer relationships at all levels of policy between the EU and BSEC. He claimed that Greece would be willing to play an active role in dialogue between the two inter-governmental organisations. Currently, the BSEC cooperates in only economic areas but these touch upon culture in many areas such as cultural tourism, technology and education. With the chairman's desire to see cooperation in other fields, as well as, inter-parliamentary cooperation, there is probably room for a more conventional cultural policy in the future.

Support for the Balkan area is also evident through the “Plan for the Economic Reconstruction of the Balkans” (HiPERB) which is a five-year plan that undertakes the financing of projects, investments and activities in six Balkan countries, namely Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro), the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM), and Romania. These are not principally cultural projects but are based upon a common Balkan heritage.

Greece is also very active in EU policy for the Mediterranean area and is a member of the Mediterranean Forum. Again, Greece sees its role as a bridge to relations between the informal meeting of Ministers consisting of eleven Mediterranean countries that make up the Mediterranean Forum and the official EU policy and programme for the Euro-Mediterranean area, resulting from the Barcelona Process. Greece also has one cultural institute in Egypt (Alexandria), a country included in the Barcelona Process.

More surprising perhaps is Greece's special relations with Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC countries). Despite geographical distances separating these regions, Greece claims the special relations are forged through the fact that:

- “Greece has no colonial past and there are no conflicting issues with our Latin American friends;
- Greek classic education has been incorporated to the educational system of certain Latin American countries, while a significant volume of modern Greek literature has been translated into Spanish, forming thus an integral part of the cultural life of several LAC countries;
- The cooperation between Cyprus and Latin American countries, within the framework of the Non-Aligned Movement, especially during the cold war era, has had a positive impact on Greece's relations with LAC countries;
- The presence of prosperous Greek communities in many LAC countries serves as a link of mutual cultural awareness and cooperation;
- Greece and the LAC countries have a close cooperation in the framework of the International Organisations, whereas the shared devotion to the Principles and the Rules of International Law, as well as the compliance to the decisions of the International Organisations further facilitate and promote the furtherance of cooperation between them.”

## H i g h l y   r e c o m m e n d e d   r e a d i n g

Barbier Frinault et Associates and Ernst & Young France Consultancy, Study of the External Cooperation of the European Union and its Member States in culture and audiovisual sectors. Summary,

E-Doc Link: [http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/avpolicy/stat/2002/5770\\_barbier/58-02-summary\\_en.pdf](http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/avpolicy/stat/2002/5770_barbier/58-02-summary_en.pdf)

This study presents and analyses external cooperation in the culture and audiovisual sectors of a number of states (including Greece) and the European institutions with third countries. New Member States and candidate countries for European Union membership are excluded from the category of "third" countries.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, (2005) The International Development Cooperation policy of Greece and the case of the Hellenic Plan for the Economic Reconstruction of the Balkans (HiPERB),

E-Doc Link: [http://www.mfa.gr/english/foreign\\_policy/](http://www.mfa.gr/english/foreign_policy/)

In conformity with its obligations as a member state of the European Union and as a member of the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the OECD, Greece has committed itself to allocate annually 0.20% of its Gross Domestic Product (GDP) to international development aid. In this context, Greece has drawn up the Second Five-Year Program of Hellenic Development Aid for the period 2002-2006; an important part of this program, is the Hellenic Plan for the Economic Reconstruction of the Balkans (HiPERB)

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, (2004) Hellenic chairmanship of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation,

E-Doc Link: [http://www.mfa.gr/english/foreign\\_policy/chairmanship/bsec\\_en.pdf](http://www.mfa.gr/english/foreign_policy/chairmanship/bsec_en.pdf)

Greece released a brochure explaining its role and ambitions for the chairmanship of the BSEC group. The brochure indicates the chairman's desire to see a closer relationship at all levels of policy between the EU and BSEC. He claimed that Greece would be willing to play an active role in dialogue between the two inter-governmental organisations. Currently the BSEC cooperates in only economic areas but these touch upon culture in many areas such as cultural tourism, technology and education. With the chairman's desire to see cooperation in other fields, as well as, inter-parliamentary cooperation there is probably room for culture. Ministry of Foreign Affairs, (2005) Greece and the enlargement process of the European Union,

E-Doc Link:

[http://www.mfa.gr/english/foreign\\_policy/eu/eu\\_relations/enlargement\\_general.html](http://www.mfa.gr/english/foreign_policy/eu/eu_relations/enlargement_general.html)

The Enlargement of the European Union is an enterprise of historical proportions affecting not only the foreign policy of the Union, but also its internal operation. Its main objective, from the outset, was to transfer peace, stability and prosperity - all three already achieved within the framework of the European Union of the fifteen - to Central and Eastern Europe. This is an endeavour without precedent, given that no previous enlargement (1973, 1981, 1986, 1995) had either the extent or the expectations of the current one. Greece has always been one of the staunchest supporters of Enlargement. This policy is widely supported by the Greek people: according to a study by the "Euro-Barometer", 67% of Greeks are in favour of Enlargement. This is the second highest percentage among European Union member states.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, (2005) Greece on Turkey's application to the EU,

E-Doc Link:

[http://www.mfa.gr/english/foreign\\_policy/eu/eu\\_relations/enlargement\\_turkey.html](http://www.mfa.gr/english/foreign_policy/eu/eu_relations/enlargement_turkey.html)

According to paragraph 12 of the Helsinki Conclusions, Turkey's pre-accession strategy includes an enhanced political dialogue with emphasis on the progress towards meeting the political criteria for accession, particularly with regard to human rights, as well as to the issues referred to in paragraphs 4 and 9a (peaceful settlement of disputes and strengthening the efforts for the settlement of the Cyprus issue). The political dialogue has also a pre-accession character, according to the Helsinki European Council Conclusions. Its objective is to monitor Turkey's course towards fulfilling the political criteria, Turkey being the only country among the candidates that has not met them so far. The proposals of the European Commission to the European Council on the Strategy Paper include, among other things, the strengthening of this channel of communication with Turkey. Political dialogue meetings are usually held twice during each EU Presidency at Political Directors' level. During the Greek Presidency, there will be an additional meeting at ministerial level. The Association Council has a political dialogue component as well. "The Greek Presidency will energetically strive to further strengthen the accession strategy for Turkey. The Turkish government will be

encouraged and supported in its declared policy of reform and democratisation. The reform process in Turkey will be facilitated by the allocation of significant additional resources. Progress towards full compliance with the political criteria for membership will continue to be closely monitored. The Association Council to be held in April 2003 will assess progress by Turkey and will mark the new enhanced state of EU-Turkey relations. The enhanced political dialogue between the EU and Turkey will also be pursued intensively. The Presidency will also see to the adoption of a revised Accession Partnership. Priority will also be given to the intensification of the process of legislative scrutiny, the further deepening of the Customs Union and the reinforcement of cooperation in the field of Justice and Home Affairs.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, (2005) Stabilization and association process of Western Balkans, E-Doc Link:

[http://www.mfa.gr/english/foreign\\_policy/eu/eu\\_relations/balkans\\_western\\_stabilization.html](http://www.mfa.gr/english/foreign_policy/eu/eu_relations/balkans_western_stabilization.html)  
Greece firmly believes that lasting peace and stability in the Balkans can be achieved only through economic development, strengthening of democratic institutions in all countries of the area, respect for existing borders, and respect for human rights and the rights of minorities. This is the basis of the Stabilization and Association Process that constitutes the cornerstone of the EU policy for the region known as Western Balkans (Albania, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Croatia, former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Serbia & Montenegro). Its ultimate goal is the future integration of the countries concerned into the European structures.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, (2005) Greece and the Mediterranean Forum, E-Doc Link:

[http://www.mfa.gr/english/foreign\\_policy/eu/eu\\_relations/euromed\\_cooperation.html](http://www.mfa.gr/english/foreign_policy/eu/eu_relations/euromed_cooperation.html)  
As a flexible forum of clearly Mediterranean interests, the Mediterranean Forum offers Greece opportunities for putting forward proposals for cooperation (such as in the fields of culture and civilization, environment, tourism). At the Ministerial Meeting of the Forum in Tangier, on 10-11 May 2001, Greece took over the Presidency of the Mediterranean Forum for a twelve month period. At this Meeting, the proposals of the Greek Foreign Minister concerning the religious and cultural dialogue were registered as basic elements for easing off tensions of cultural character within the Mediterranean framework, in the Mediterranean Forum or in the Barcelona Process, since these proposals were mentioned in the conclusions of the Brussels Euro-Mediterranean Conference on 5-6 November 2001. At the 9th meeting of the Foreign Ministers of the Mediterranean Forum, held in Delos on 20-21 May 2002, the dialogue between cultures and civilizations was launched with the participation of intellectuals from the countries of the Forum and concrete initiatives were taken on important issues of all three chapters.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, (2005) Greece and Asia-Oceania,

E-Doc Link: [http://www.mfa.gr/english/foreign\\_policy/asia\\_oceania/](http://www.mfa.gr/english/foreign_policy/asia_oceania/)

For geographical and historical reasons, the relations of Greece with various parts of Asia and Oceania are not developed; however, the existence of ancient civilisations (e.g., India, China, Japan and South East Asia) provides an excellent background favouring the continual development of cooperation in the cultural field. In this context, several initiatives are being undertaken to further enhance cooperation. The good prospects in this field are helped by the convergence of interests as well as the mutual understanding between the peoples of Greece and Asia. It is only with the Indian Subcontinent that Greece has had traditional relations since ancient times. With the Far East and South Asia, bilateral relations have started to develop. Relations with Australia and New Zealand are closer to due to historical ties.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, (2003) Cultural and Educational Cooperation,

E-Doc Link: [http://www.mfa.gr/english/foreign\\_policy/educational/](http://www.mfa.gr/english/foreign_policy/educational/)

The E1 Department of Educational and Cultural Affairs of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is responsible for cooperating with other Ministries, Services and Organisations with a view to the cultural promotion and advancement of Greece abroad, as well as the dissemination of the Greek spirit and culture on an international level. More particularly, the E1 Department of Educational and Cultural Affairs is responsible for: - negotiating and signing Cultural Agreements with foreign countries - negotiating and signing Cultural Programs - monitoring the implementation of Cultural Programs and exchanges sponsored by them - materializing cultural exchanges and events - granting scholarships to students of Greek and foreign origin

- monitoring the activities of cultural and scientific institutions abroad and the of University Chairs of Greek interest – and the relations of Greece with UNESCO.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, (2005) Greece and the Barcelona process and to implement the Valencia Action Plan,

E-Doc Link:

[http://www.mfa.gr/english/foreign\\_policy/eu/eu\\_relations/euomed\\_cooperation.html](http://www.mfa.gr/english/foreign_policy/eu/eu_relations/euomed_cooperation.html)

Greece, a Mediterranean country with particular interest in the development of the EU Mediterranean policy, is working during its Presidency to upgrade the Barcelona process and to implement the Valencia Action Plan commitments. The Greek side considers that this Action Plan offers the appropriate framework to achieve the objectives of the Barcelona Declaration, allowing the Mediterranean partners to participate actively in the Process

Ikonomou, E., (2003) Auswaertige Kulturpolitik in Europa. Das Beispiel Griechenland,

E-Doc Link: [http://www.ifa.de/europa-akp/konferenz/download/eu\\_ikonomou.pdf](http://www.ifa.de/europa-akp/konferenz/download/eu_ikonomou.pdf)

Greek contribution to the conference “Europe-a Union of Culture?” of the German Institut fuer Auslandsbeziehungen, Berlin, October 2003. Includes abstract.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, (2005) Relations Between Greece and Latin American and the Caribbean Countries,

E-Doc Link: [http://www.mfa.gr/english/foreign\\_policy/america\\_latina/](http://www.mfa.gr/english/foreign_policy/america_latina/)

Greece maintains traditionally good and friendly relations with the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC countries), despite the geographical distance separating the two regions. This is mainly due to the fact that: Greece has no colonial past and there are no conflicting issues with our Latin American friends - Greek classic education has been incorporated to the educational system of certain Latin American countries, while a significant volume of modern Greek literature has been translated into Spanish, forming thus an integral part of the cultural life of several LAC countries - the cooperation between Cyprus and Latin American countries, within the framework of the Non-Aligned Movement, especially during the cold war era, has had a positive impact on Greece’s relations with LAC countries - the presence of prosperous Greek communities in many LAC countries serves as a link of mutual cultural awareness and cooperation - Greece and the LAC countries have a close cooperation in the framework of the International Organisations, whereas the shared devotion to the Principles and the Rules of International Law, as well as the compliance to the decisions of the International Organisations further facilitate and promote the furtherance of cooperation between them. As a result of our common cultural values and our respective cultural heritage over the years, cooperation in the field of culture has been enhanced. Initiatives have been taken to further increase cooperation as a result of both mutual interest and also the common understanding shared by our peoples.

## G e n e r a l / b a c k g r o u n d r e a d i n g

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, (2005) The course of Greece in the European Union,

E-Doc Link: [http://www.mfa.gr/english/foreign\\_policy/eu/greece/history.html](http://www.mfa.gr/english/foreign_policy/eu/greece/history.html)

The third period of Greece’s participation in the Community / Union, which is the one we are currently experiencing, commenced in 1996 and has been characterised by even further support for the idea and process of European integration and intensifying integration in every department, in line with the federal model. It is also characterized by an effort towards greater economic and social convergence with the fulfilment of the “convergence criteria” set by the Maastricht Treaty and Greece’s participation as a full member in the single currency (euro) and the Economic and Monetary Union (EMU) since January 1, 2002.

Dallas, Costis, (2005) Chapter 2.4, International Cultural Cooperation, Greece: Compendium of Cultural Policies,

E-Doc Link: [www.culturalpolicies.net](http://www.culturalpolicies.net)

Introduction to the main actors and principle institutions working in the field of international cultural cooperation in Greece.

EFAH, Interarts (2003) Study on cultural cooperation in Europe: Annex 1 - National reports - Greece,

E-Doc Link: [http://europa.eu.int/comm/culture/eac/sources\\_info/pdf-word/annex1\\_national\\_reports1.pdf](http://europa.eu.int/comm/culture/eac/sources_info/pdf-word/annex1_national_reports1.pdf)

Background to structures, competencies and institutes in the field of cultural cooperation.

Hellenic Ministry of Culture, (2005) Official website of the Ministry of Culture,  
E-Doc Link: <http://www.culture.gr/>

The Ministry of Culture is the governmental body responsible for cultural heritage and the Arts in Greece. Its de-centralized departments (Museums, Ephorates of Prehistoric and Classical Antiquities, Ephorates of Byzantine Antiquities and Ephorates of Recent Monuments) are spread throughout Greece while its administrative departments are situated in Athens.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, (2005) Greece on Cyprus as a member of the European Union,  
E-Doc Link:

[http://www.mfa.gr/english/foreign\\_policy/eu/eu\\_relations/enlargement\\_cyprus.html](http://www.mfa.gr/english/foreign_policy/eu/eu_relations/enlargement_cyprus.html)  
"the European Commission recognised that the internationally recognised Government of the Republic Cyprus submitted the application on behalf of the whole island. Moreover, the EU is not a supra state, so a future membership of Cyprus is by no means a breach of the obligation by Cyprus not to enter into a political or economic Union with any other state."

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, (2005) Greek Presidency's priorities in the field of Enlargement,  
E-Doc Link:

[http://www.mfa.gr/english/foreign\\_policy/eu/eu\\_relations/enlargement\\_priorities.html](http://www.mfa.gr/english/foreign_policy/eu/eu_relations/enlargement_priorities.html)  
Enlargement is one of the most important priorities of the Greek Presidency. The Copenhagen European Council marked a historic milestone by concluding the negotiations with ten candidate countries, by setting the objective of welcoming Bulgaria and Romania as members of the EU in 2007 and by deciding a number of measures to further strengthen the accession strategy for Turkey.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, (2005) Greece and South - Eastern Europe,

E-Doc Link: [http://www.mfa.gr/english/foreign\\_policy/europe\\_southeastern/](http://www.mfa.gr/english/foreign_policy/europe_southeastern/)  
Greece is promoting the establishment of a framework of principles and rules that would be applicable, in a consistent way, in the entirety of the wider South Eastern Europe. The European Union, the Euro-Atlantic community and the international community at large must develop a consistent, coherent, and unified approach for S.E. Europe. Competing spheres of influence and double standards should not apply. Instead, principles and regulations must be applied uniformly. The international community's approach should be based on fostering democracy, security and development. Development should, in turn, focus on programmes that are beneficial to the entire region and promote regional cooperation.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, (2005) Greece and Western and Central Europe,

E-Doc Link: [http://www.mfa.gr/english/foreign\\_policy/europe\\_west\\_central/](http://www.mfa.gr/english/foreign_policy/europe_west_central/)  
The countries of western and central Europe occupy, without any doubt, a prominent place in Greece's international relations. The historical bonds uniting Greece with western and central Europe are long-standing and multi-faceted. Nowadays, Greece's bilateral cooperation with these countries is constantly developing, in scope and in depth, to cover practically every field of activity. This is something that would reasonably be expected, not only for obvious historical and geographical reasons, but also owing to the fact that all these countries, together with Greece, are active participants in that enterprise of historic dimensions which has become known as the "European integration process". This holds true with respect to the current fifteen EU Member States and the ten acceding countries, as well as with respect to those countries in western Europe which, without being members of the EU (e.g., Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, Switzerland) are, nevertheless, very closely associated with it within a special institutional framework ("European Economic Area-EEA", "European Free Trade Association-EFTA").

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, (2005) Greece and Eastern Europe and Central Asia,

E-Doc Link: [http://www.mfa.gr/english/foreign\\_policy/nak/](http://www.mfa.gr/english/foreign_policy/nak/)  
Greece attaches special importance to post-cold war developments in the regions of Eastern Europe, Central Asia and the Caucasus. The introduction of democratic institutions as well as economic liberalisation and stabilisation is very significant and creates new opportunities for cooperation. Integration of the countries of Europe and Caucasus into Euro-Atlantic institutions is fully encouraged by Greece, for it will contribute to the promotion of political stability and economic prosperity in Europe.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, (2005) Greece and the Middle East, Gulf and North Africa,

E-Doc Link: [http://www.mfa.gr/english/foreign\\_policy/amii/](http://www.mfa.gr/english/foreign_policy/amii/)

Greece traditionally maintains good and friendly relations with Arab and Middle East countries, Iran and Iraq, due to its geographical proximity, economic cooperation and strong historical and cultural bonds, dating back to ancient times. Greece is called upon to play an important role in promoting peace and stability in the region, by undertaking conflict prevention initiatives as well as actively participating in the elaboration and planning of the common foreign policy of the European Union.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, (2005) Greece and the USA and Canada,

E-Doc Link: [http://www.mfa.gr/english/foreign\\_policy/usa\\_canada/](http://www.mfa.gr/english/foreign_policy/usa_canada/)

Greece maintains friendly and close relations and cooperation in all fields with both North American countries. Historical reasons, the large and prosperous Greek community in both the US and Canada, NATO membership, common values and common political and social structures are some of the factors which explain and support the excellent relations between Greece and the two North American countries.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, (2005) Greece and sub-Saharan African Countries Bilateral Relations,

E-Doc Link: [http://www.mfa.gr/english/foreign\\_policy/sub\\_saharan/](http://www.mfa.gr/english/foreign_policy/sub_saharan/)

Greece maintains especially friendly relations with the forty-eight sub-Saharan countries and has signed several Agreements in the fields of Economic and Technical Cooperation, Tourism, Agricultural Cooperation, etc. By power of these Agreements, many African students are attending courses in Greek Universities, Colleges and Technical Institutes as holders of scholarships offered by the Greek Government, which also offers scholarships for military training, thus enabling many Africans determined to follow military careers to study in the Military Academies of Greece. There are eight Greek Embassies in the sub-Saharan area, namely in Addis Ababa, Harare, Khartoum, Kinshasa, Lagos, Nairobi, Pretoria and Yaounde. These Embassies have parallel jurisdiction to neighbouring countries and thus Greece is represented in all African sub-Saharan states. Furthermore, Honorary Consulates have been established in almost all of the remaining countries.