



European network of legal experts in gender equality and non-discrimination

FLASH REPORT

Country:	Greece
Title:	Transfer of the General Secretariat for Gender Equality to the Ministry of Labour
Date:	22 July 2019
Expert:	Panagiota Petroglou
Context	
Issue at stake:	The transfer of the General Secretariat for Gender Equality from the Ministry of Interior to the Ministry of Labour undermines the implementation of substantive gender equality legislation and policies
Grounds of discrimination:	Gender
Field of application:	Gender mainstreaming, Istanbul Convention
Source:	Policy development
Applicable law:	Article 4(2) presidential Decree 81/2019 (OJ A 119/8.7.2019.)

Content

Law development: By Article 4(2) of Presidential Decree (hereinafter PD) 81/2019 OJ A 119/8.7.2019 the General Secretariat for Gender Equality (hereinafter GSGE) and the Research Centre for Gender Equality (KETHI) were transferred from the Ministry of Interior to the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs.

Key points of analysis: The GSGE is the competent governmental body for the planning, implementation and evaluation of gender equality policies in all fields. Since its establishment in 1985¹ it has fallen initially under the Ministry of the Presidency of the Government and later under the Ministry of Interior, with the exception of a short-lived transfer to the Ministry of Justice, Transparency and Human Rights (5.11.2009²-28.9.2010³). The KETHI is a legal person governed by private law, established in 1989,⁴ with a dual aim: to conduct social research on gender equality issues and to use the results of this research for proposing and implementing specific policies, practices and actions to promote gender equality.

The GSGE is part of the National Mechanism for Gender Equality at central national level,⁵ with the following competences: (a) to draw and implement the National Action Plan for Gender Equality, after consulting with women's and feminist NGOs and other social entities of the public and private sector, and to monitor its implementation; (b) to

¹ Article 27 Act 1555/1985 OJ A 137/26.7.1985.

² PD 189/2009 OJ A 221/5.11.2009.

³ PD 96/2010 OJ A 170/28.9.2010.

⁴ Article 5 Act 1835/1989, OJ A 76/10.3.1989.

⁵ Together with (KETHI), the Gender Equality Units of all ministries and the Ombudsman (Equality Section), Article 4(1) Act 4604/2019, OJ A 50/26.3.2019.

draw and submit the national report to the UN CEDAW Committee; (c) to support and coordinate the actions for the promotion of gender equality by the central and regional administration, legal persons governed by public law and legal persons governed by private law belonging to the General Government; (d) to coordinate, implement, monitor and evaluate policies and measures for preventing and eliminating any form of violence covered by the Istanbul Convention.⁶ GSGE also plays a leading and supervisory role in the implementation of gender mainstreaming in public budgeting⁷ and in the social media;⁸ it collaborates with the competent entities for gender mainstreaming in public health,⁹ social solidarity and welfare;¹⁰ it awards equality marks to companies in the public and private sector which excel in the implementation of policies aimed at equal treatment of and equal opportunities for working women and men.¹¹

The transfer of the GSGE to the Ministry of Labour has been strongly criticised by the historic women's NGO Greek League for Women's Rights,¹² the NGO Research and Action Centre for Peace¹³ and the Trade Union of GSGE employees.¹⁴

Under the GSGE fall: (a) the Observatory for Gender Equality¹⁵ and (b) the 11-member National Council for Gender Equality.¹⁶ Moreover the General Secretariat for Gender Equality runs a Network of Structures for Gender Equality, including Advisory Centres for

⁶ The Istanbul Convention was ratified by Greece by Act 4531/2018, OJ A 62/5.4.2018.

⁷ According to Article 11 Act 4604/2019 every Ministry has to submit to the GSGE one month after the drawing and the approval of its budget and the budgets of the legal persons of public and private law, which fall under it, a report on their budgets with a gender perspective (gender budgeting) and their plans for next year.

⁸ According to Article 24 of Act 4604/2019 the social media (including electronic ones) and the advertisement should submit to, inter alia, the GSGE yearly reports on the adoption of measures aimed at promoting gender equality and eliminating sexism and stereotypes based on gender, gender identity and sexual orientation in their area of activity, in particular through codes of ethics, self-binding and self-governing rules.

⁹ Article 18 Act 4604/2019.

¹⁰ Article 20 Act 4604/2019.

¹¹ Article 21 of Act 4604/2019 introduced a new public policy for equality mark awards. Equality marks are awarded by the GSGE to companies in the public and private sector which excel in the implementation of policies aiming at equal treatment of and equal opportunities for working women and men (Article 2(12) and 21 of Act 4604/2019). Among the, non-exhaustively laid down, criteria to be taken into account are: equal pay for work of equal value, balanced participation of women and men in managerial posts or in professional and scientific committees within companies, equality in professional promotion, compliance with labour legislation on maternity protection, adoption of equality plans or other innovative measures aimed at promoting substantive gender equality, advertisement for the promotion of the products or the services of the company in a way which contributes to the prevention of gender based violence and discourages violence against women and sexism. The procedure, the conditions and the length of the validity of the equality mark are determined by decision of the Minister of Interior following a proposal of the GSGE. The companies to which the equality mark is awarded are obliged to submit an annual report on their actions taken to accomplish substantive gender equality. They are monitored and evaluated by the GSGE as to whether they continue to apply gender equality policies; if they fail, the equality mark is withdrawn. The GSGE uploads every year on its website the list of companies, which have been awarded the equality mark.

¹² See: <http://leagueforwomenrights.gr/>.

¹³ See: <https://www.reader.gr/news/politiki/299157/entones-antidraseis-gia-tin-metafora-tis-ggif-kai-toy-kethi-sto-ypovrgeio>.

¹⁴ See: http://sumvouleutikothivas.blogspot.com/2019/07/blog-post_46.html.

¹⁵ The Observatory for Gender Equality is an on-line portal of the GSGE designed to include, analyse, process and disseminate statistical data and indicators on gender equality policies. Its goal is to map gender differentiations in 12 basic policy areas and monitor any relevant trends and advances in Greece. Moreover, it includes 82 gender indicators based either on the Beijing Platform for Action or on specific national priorities and is followed by metadata. Every Ministry in its area of competence submits annually to this Observatory: (a) a progress report on the combat against gender discrimination, adopting relevant actions, measures and programmes (Article 10(1) Act 4604/2019 OJ A 50/26.3.2019) and (b) statistical data per gender on their areas of competence (Article 12 Act 4604/2019 OJ A 50/26.3.2019).

¹⁶ According to Article 9 Act 4604/2019 the National Council for Gender Equality is composed by the General Secretary for Gender Equality as President, a representative of the Ministry of Interior, a representative of the Ministry of Justice, two University members specialised in gender studies, one KETHI representative, a person of acknowledged prestige and experience in the field of gender equality and gender-based violence and two representatives of women's or feminist NGOs. It submits to the GSGE proposals for the adoption of policies and actions promoting gender equality and evaluates the existing equality policies.

Women¹⁷ and the help line SOS 15900 for the support of women victims of gender-based violence.¹⁸

Internet link source: PD 81/8.7.2019 available, in Greek, at:
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/15cTuar5NGqAMYmdfID4PwIL2xCZk7Duf/view>.

¹⁷ Article 25 Act 4604/2019 OJ A 50/26.3.2019.

¹⁸ Article 27 Act 4604/2019 OJ A 50/26.3.2019.