

## 1. Introduction

The **VNR process** was led by a designated Working Group set up in 2021 within the Presidency of the Government, in close cooperation and consultation with all ministries, the Hellenic Statistical Authority and key stakeholders, including the Hellenic Parliament, regional/local authorities, social partners, civil society, guided by a whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach. Over the last years, **stakeholders** from a wide range of sectors have increasingly mainstreamed the sustainability principle and the SDGs into their strategic priorities, objectives and actions.

Greece's second VNR reflects **challenges and strategies** related to three crises: the aftermath of a ten-year national depression, with persisting economic and social issues, the consecutive COVID-19 pandemic which put a significant strain on the national health system and the economy and, before this is over, the repercussions of a war outbreak within the European continent causing deep global concern.

In spite of the adversities, Greece remains fully committed to the Agenda 2030. The 17 Goals are embedded in all its major binding political plans. Compact strategies are launched, policies are elaborated and institutional reforms are designed to accelerate the full implementation of the SDGs and to build back better from the COVID-19 pandemic. Greece is also reported as one of only two countries in the European Union (EU) that managed to not move away from any of the 17 Goals (2021).

SDG implementation in Greece was affected by the pandemic, albeit not invariably: plans to improve the accessibility and effectiveness of health services were negatively influenced, policies for clean energy advanced mostly undeterred and digitalization of public services was largely accelerated.

Systemic **challenges** escalating for decades are not favored by the crises. Of particular concern are weak demographic rates, higher female and youth unemployment and a low record on gender equality. Moreover, the pandemic brought out long overdue reforms in the health sector; the justice and waste management systems have exceeded their operations limit causing complications to the society, economy and environment.

Several long-standing challenges are showing significant **progress**; inter alia, poverty, unemployment, poor housing, sanitation, income disparities, early school-leaving, female participation in senior management, share of RES in energy consumption, greenhouse gas emissions, road accident fatalities and homicides.

In 2020, the EU member states agreed on an ambitious comprehensive plan to **build back better** from the pandemic and to make European societies and economies more sustainable, inclusive and resilient. This overarching plan is supported by a temporary recovery instrument, the EU Recovery and Resilience Facility.

The Greek Recovery and Resilience Plan coherently introduces forward-looking reforms and investments aimed at accelerating transition towards a sustainable growth model and fostering its economic, social and institutional resilience. It is financially supported by a budget of EUR 31.164 billion up to 2026 and structured around four key pillars inextricably linked to the core priorities of the SDGs, including: (i) green transition, (ii) digital transition, (iii) employment, skills and social cohesion, and (iv) private investment and economic and institutional transformation. All SDGs are considerably served by the national Plan, though emphasis is reasonably placed on healthcare sustainability and economic productivity, which increasingly emerged during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Greece has also integrated the sustainability principle and the SDGs into the better regulation agenda, the national budgetary process and the overall financing framework for sustainable development.

Attributing particular importance to the protection and support of the disadvantaged, the Government over the last two years has endorsed a number of National Action Plans (NAPs) and Strategies that mainstream the principle of **leaving no one behind** in public policies and reform measures. For the first time, NAPs for youth, children's rights, child protection from sexual abuse, the rights of people with disability and those of the LGBTQI+ were launched, along with updated strategies for gender equality and Roma.

At **international and regional levels**, the country continues to play an instrumental role in promoting initiatives supporting the effective implementation of the 2030 Agenda, through the establishment of partnership schemes, the adoption of comprehensive legal and policy tools and the launch of cooperative initiatives, in the fields of trade and investments, development, environmental protection, sustainable use of natural resources, cultural and natural heritage, peace, security, human rights and the rule of law.

## 2. Methodology and Process for Preparation of the Review - Lessons Learned

The VNR report is the outcome of a collaborative process, in which inputs and data have been gathered and consultations have taken place, involving multiple actors. The preparation and coordination of the whole process was carried out by the Presidency of the Government in close cooperation and consultation with all Ministries and key stakeholders, guided by a whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach.

A special working group was formed within the Presidency of the Government, composed of members of two of its core entities, the General Secretariat of Coordination (GSCO) and the General Secretariat for Legal and Parliamentary Affairs (GSLPA), tasked with planning the entire preparation process, drafting the VNR and designing and conducting the public consultation and dialogue with key stakeholders. During the consultation with the Ministries, the working group collaborated closely with General Secretaries, ministerial consultants, the Inter-ministerial Coordination Network made-up of the ministries' SDG focal points as well as representatives from other governmental bodies belonging to the centre of government and the Hellenic Statistical Authority (ELSTAT). The ministries provided the input on public policies undertaken aiming to achieve the social, economic and environmental goals of sustainable development, as set out by the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs. Data measuring progress towards the implementation of the SDGs was provided by ELSTAT. Consultations with the social partners and other stakeholders on the challenges and national priorities for sustainable development were conducted centrally, by the General Secretariat of Coordination. The Secretary General participated in SDG-related public events, promoting the 17 Goals and inviting stakeholders to dialogue for achieving them. The social dialogue process included written communication, with letters sent to all major stakeholders asking them to report their perspective on SDG deepening, challenges and best practices. Their answers are incorporated in the VNR and adduced in Annex 2. Finally, in a third round of consultations the draft VNR was uploaded for public and stakeholder deliberation.

Ministries and stakeholders also provided concrete good practice examples that could be recommended as a model for innovative, efficient and effective policy interventions in achieving the SDGs and, together with the GSCO identified key challenges associated with the full implementation of the SDGs and the sustainable recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic.

The lessons learned from the consultations with civil society and the private sector, as well as from the cooperation of the centre of government with the ministries and other government entities, concern issues such as:

- ❖ increasing and expanding the participation of stakeholders in the process of the SDGs implementation, monitoring and evaluation through transparent, inclusive and representative procedures at all levels.
- ❖ establishing a permanent and structured framework of stakeholder dialogue and cooperation on the SDGs, in the form of a multi-stakeholder platform, in which the stakeholders can participate and contribute in a more systematic way, so as to facilitate the creation of synergies, to share experience and best practices and to address potential conflicts of interest.
- ❖ improving the necessary processes and mechanisms, within central government and public administration, ensuring policy coherence in SDGs implementation, across different sectors and governance levels.
- ❖ placing particular emphasis on addressing the most pressing social, economic and environmental challenges associated with the implementation of the SDGs, including

quality jobs, sustainable infrastructure, education for sustainable development and its links with the labour market, green and digital transition of the economy and society, sustainable production and consumption, poverty, inequalities and social inclusion, energy efficiency and security, climate neutrality, protection of the environment and preservation of natural and cultural heritage.

- ❖ ensuring a clear and stable regulatory framework which supports and facilitates the implementation of long-term reforms and investments on sustainable development.
- ❖ increasing the regional and local anchoring of the SDGs.
- ❖ improving the processes and tools for monitoring and measuring, in quantitative terms, the economic, environmental and social impacts of the SDGs-related public policies, based on robust, reliable and high-quality evidence and data.
- ❖ promoting public awareness actions and initiatives, including educational and learning programmes along with integrated communication strategies, which highlight the importance of achieving the SDGs across different sectors and governance levels, and identify the key challenges associated with their full implementation.

The exchange of information and knowledge between the government, the ministries and other public entities, stakeholders from civil society, the business sector, municipalities and regions, and the academic and research community has greatly contributed to the making of the VNR report. Moreover, the VNR-drafting process itself served as a model for exercising a whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach to sustainable development. The awareness, ownership and political commitment for the successful implementation of the SDGs was once again reaffirmed, as the second VNR report of Greece was prepared.

### 3. Policy and Enabling Environment

#### 3.1 Key changes

- The overall responsibility for monitoring and coordinating, at the highest political level, the national implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs lies with the **Presidency of the Government (PoG)** established by the “Executive State” law in August 2019 with the view to coordinate the planning and to monitor the implementation of the whole government work, ensuring the promotion of a whole-of-government approach and the generation of the imperative political ownership.
- In 2021, a specific **Working Group on the SDGs** was set up under the auspices of the General Secretariat of Coordination (GSCO) of the PoG tasked with steering the whole process regarding the preparation and drafting of the VNR, including the close cooperation, dialogue and consultation with all ministries and key stakeholders.
- Greece has established, within the Presidency of the Government, a **monitoring and review mechanism** responsible for measuring progress towards the implementation of government work and evaluating systematically strategic public policies and reform measures, including those which are closely related to the SDGs, on the basis of robust, high-quality and quantified evidence.
- The three dimensions of sustainable development - economic, social and environmental - lie at the heart of the Greek Government programme and policy-making process. They are reflected, in a coherent and balanced manner, in the strategic national priorities and the overall policy framework of Greece, including reform strategies, actions plans, legislative initiatives, funding programmes and instruments. An illustrative example is the **National Recovery and Resilience Plan (NRRP, «Greece 2.0»)** adopted on 27 April 2021 that includes a comprehensive package of forward-looking reform measures and investment actions aimed at accelerating the transition of the country towards a more sustainable and inclusive growth model and fostering its economic, social and institutional resilience. The NRRP is structured around four key pillars inextricably linked to the core priorities and objectives of the SDGs, including: (i) green transition, (ii) digital transition, (iii) employment, skills and social cohesion, and (iv) private investment and economic and institutional transformation.
- Over the last two years, the Greek Government has endorsed a number of **National Action Plans and Strategies** that mainstream, in an integrated manner, the three dimensions of sustainable development and the **principle of leaving no one behind** in public policies and reform measures, placing emphasis on targeted measures which support the most vulnerable groups and those who are furthest behind, including people with disabilities, minorities, women and children and promote human rights, gender equality and social inclusion.
- The **Hellenic Statistical Authority** (ELSTAT) reviewed and updated in 2020 and 2022 respectively a comprehensive set of **national indicators** on the SDGs developed, after consultation with ministries, with a view to monitoring the quantitative progress made towards the achievement of the 17 SDGs at national level.
- The **Hellenic Parliament** has played, over the last years, an instrumental role in elaborating and examining bills or law proposals, along with participating in important initiatives at international level, which fall, *inter alia*, within the overall scope and objectives of the 2030 Agenda. In the last years, the Special Permanent Parliamentary Committee on Environmental Protection (SPPCEP) has enhanced its role with regard to the promotion and implementation of a wide range of SDGs. It initiates and steers debates about the

SDGs, integrates the SDGs in its annual reports and monitors government initiatives on whether they are effectively and comprehensively promoting the 2030 Agenda and ensuring policy coherence for sustainable development.

- **Stakeholders** from a wide range of sectors of society, including local and regional authorities, social partners, civil society organisations and research institutions, have substantially mainstreamed the sustainability principle and the SDGs into their work programme, strategic priorities, key projects and actions, since 2018.
- A new **Civil Society Network for the promotion of the SDGs** has been created in 2022, aimed at mobilising both formal and informal groups in urban and in rural areas, creating cross-subject and cross-organizational synergies, promoting cooperation and partnerships and strengthening advocacy and consultation with public bodies on a wide range of issues related to the SDGs.

## 3.2 Ensuring ownership of the SDGs

### 3.2.1 Institutional mechanisms

#### 3.2.1.1 The Centre of Government

The overall responsibility for monitoring and coordinating, at the highest political level, the national implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs lies with the **Presidency of the Government (PoG)** established by the “Executive State” law in August 2019. The core mission of the PoG is to assist the Prime Minister in performing his duties, ensuring the effective coherence, coordination and monitoring of the whole government work. The PoG comprises executive units and processes that are crucial for the promotion and implementation of policies that pertain to sustainable development, including: the General Secretariat of Coordination (GSCO), the General Secretariat for Legal and Parliamentary Affairs (GSLPA) and the Special Secretariat for Strategic Foresight (SSSF).

The core mission of the **General Secretariat of Coordination (GSCO)** is to ensure the effective coherence and coordination of the whole Government work, including all public policies which are closely related to the SDGs. This is achieved through: (i) proposing and programming public policies, (ii) monitoring, coordinating and evaluating the implementation of public policies, (iii) resolving disputes, (iv) reviewing the compatibility of the proposed legislative and regulatory initiatives with the core governmental policy, (v) designing and proposing horizontal and cross-sectoral policies, (vi) contributing to the central political communication strategy, and (vii) producing the Annual Consolidated Governmental Policy Plan.

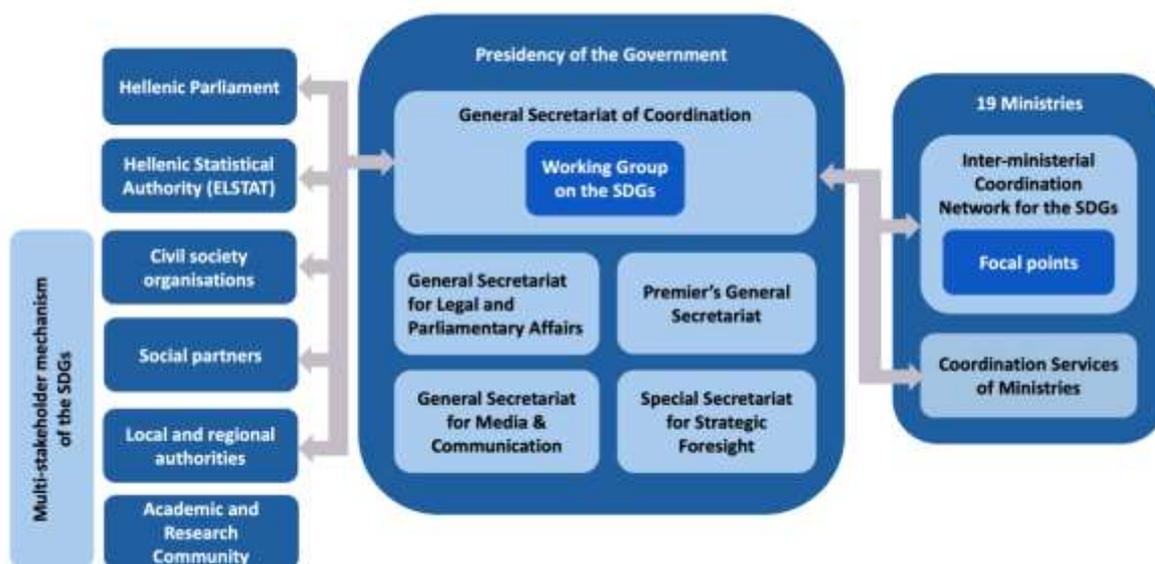
Within the framework of its competences, the GSCO is responsible for operating and managing a robust and comprehensive **monitoring and review mechanism**, which measures progress towards the effective implementation of government work and evaluates systematically strategic public policies, including those which are inextricably linked to the SDGs, on the basis of reliable and quantified evidence. The GSCO, which is in charge of coordinating the whole policy cycle, including the design, monitoring and evaluation of public policies, supports the ministries to formulate their annual action plans that contain actions, projects and measures aimed at implementing their public policies on a yearly basis. The whole monitoring process is performed by using a special Management Information System, called "MAZI", in which all the implementation details, including responsible parties, deadlines, deliverables and intermediate milestones, are stored. The evaluation of public policies involves, among others, setting target values for key performance indicators measuring the immediate output or long-term outcome of the policy goals that have been set by the Government program. GSCO monitors the achievement of these target values within the agreed time frame and cooperates closely with the ministries to examine and evaluate the

performance of their policies in view of their short-term and long-term objectives, both in the context of an ex-ante and an ex-post evaluation process.

In 2021, a specific **Working Group on the SDGs** was set up by the GSCO of the Presidency of the Government tasked with steering the whole process regarding the preparation and drafting of the VNR, including the close cooperation, dialogue and consultation with all ministries and key stakeholders.

The **General Secretariat for Legal and Parliamentary Affairs (GSLPA)** of the Presidency of the Government plays an instrumental role in ensuring the integration of the sustainability principle in the regulatory governance and the introduction of the three dimensions of sustainable development into the whole legislative process. According to its primary mission and tasks, the GSLPA is responsible, inter alia, for: ensuring the coherence and coordination of the law-making process, coordinating the effective application of the principles and tools of better regulation, providing legal support, within the framework of its competence, to the Prime Minister, the Presidency of the Government and the Government and coordinating the codification and recasting of law.

The **Special Secretariat for Strategic Foresight** is a newly established self-contained unit, within the Presidency of the Government, tasked with identifying and exploring potential future challenges, trends, risks and opportunities for the country. With a portfolio currently covering the environment, artificial intelligence and robotics, energy as well as international relations and geopolitics, the Special Secretariat for Strategic Foresight aims to significantly support and inform the long-term strategic planning and decision-making process of the Government through the provision of useful information and data on forward-looking issues closely related to sustainability and the economic, social and institutional resilience of the country.



### 3.2.1.2 The Inter-ministerial coordination network for the SDGs

The **Inter-ministerial Coordination Network for the SDGs** has been operating since 2016 and brings together representatives from all ministries, acting as focal points in charge of working on SDGs-related issues within their respective ministries and mainstreaming them in sectoral and horizontal public policies. It facilitates the coordinating role of the Presidency of the Government (PoG) and enhances the shared commitment and responsibility in implementing the SDGs. It contributes to the preparation and drafting of the voluntary national reviews on SDGs, in close cooperation with the coordination services of ministries. In doing so, it discusses, among others, ways for achieving the SDGs at national level and reflects on existing and new national policies, legislation, strategies, action plans and programmes which aim to integrate the three dimensions of sustainable development.

### **3.2.1.3 The Hellenic Parliament**

The Hellenic Parliament comprises a number of parliamentary committees, including standing, special standing, special and special permanent committees, established with a view to elaborating and examining bills or law proposals, which fall, *inter alia*, within the overall thematic scope of the 2030 Agenda. The work of the parliamentary committees is supported by special hearing of relevant stakeholders, including those actively engaged in issues associated with sustainable development. Of particular importance is the **Special Permanent Parliamentary Committee on Environmental Protection (SPPCEP)**, whose work contributes significantly to the promotion and implementation of a wide range of SDGs (SDGs 6, 7, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 17).

The mandate and task of the SPPCEP are inextricably linked to the scope and primary objectives of the 2030 Agenda. As defined by the Standing Orders of the Hellenic Parliament, the SPPCEP is responsible for the monitoring and the assessment of the status of the environment nationally as well as the evaluation of the environmental impact of various human activities. The Committee's mandate is extensive, provides oversight on government environmental actions and leads policy discussion on environmental challenges and solutions.

Unlike Standing Committees, the Special Permanent Committees don't have a formal legislative role, which allows them to operate more flexibly than Standing Committees, without the obligation to meet, at specific intervals, to address legislative proposals. Therefore, the SPPCEP has the flexibility to set its own agenda, which is centred around SDG-related issues. It initiates and steers debates about the SDGs, integrates the SDGs in its annual reports and monitors government initiatives on whether they are effectively and comprehensively promoting the 2030 Agenda and ensuring policy coherence for sustainable development. It also discusses, as a matter of priority, a wide range of issues addressed in the context of important international decision-making processes directly related to the SDGs, including the UN SDGs Summit and the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF).

Within the SPPCEP, a Subcommittee on Water Resources is established. The task of the Subcommittee on Water Resources is to continually monitor, evaluate and record the state of water resources in the country, to investigate and assess issues related to their sufficient quantity and to submit proposals for their effective management. The work of the Subcommittee plays a pivotal role in supporting the implementation of SDG6 regarding the integrated water resources management and SDG14 on the protection of the marine environment.

Due to the holistic and horizontal nature of the SDGs, the SPPCEP undertook the initiative to propose in its 2020 Annual Report the establishment of a **Special Parliamentary Coordinating**

**Committee** with the mandate: to monitor the implementation of the SDGs, to review the associated government work and their progress, to provide guidance to fine-tune line actions and to ensure the mainstreaming of the SDGs in all legislative and policy frameworks. The proposed Coordinating Committee should consist of the Presidencies of the thematically relevant Parliamentary Committees, such as the Standing Committee on Cultural and Educational Affairs, the Standing Committee on Economic Affairs, the Standing Committee on Social Affairs, the Special Permanent Committee on Equality, Youth and Human Rights and, of course, the Special Permanent Committee on Environmental Protection.

**At international level**, the Hellenic Parliament has undertaken, over the last years, important initiatives aimed at fostering closer working relations with other national Parliaments, strengthening interparliamentary cooperation in the context of international organisations and keeping foreign Parliaments and international parliamentary organisations up to date as to Greek views and positions on crucial global and national issues, including those which are inextricably linked to the SDGs.

During the last four years (2018-2021), Members of the Hellenic Parliament (MPs) and the component Parliamentary Committees participated constructively and contributed substantially to the work and activities (Assembly meetings, reports, seminars) of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, (I.P.U.) and the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE). Indicative examples of those activities and initiatives that promote the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, include: (i) Parliamentary Meetings at the United Nations Climate Change Conferences (COPs), (ii) Fifth World Conference of Speakers of Parliament «Gender equality is a pillar of sustainable development, peace and democracy and a precondition for the achievement of all the SDGs» (September 2021), (iii) Annual Parliamentary Hearing at the UN – «Education as a key to peace and sustainable development: Toward the implementation of SDG 4» (February 2020), (iv) «Climate change and implementation of the Paris Agreement», (Resolution 2210 of PACE, 2018), (v) «Implementation of the SDGs: synergy needed on the part of all stakeholders, from parliaments to local authorities» (Report Doc. 14851 of PACE, 2019).

#### **3.2.1.4 The Hellenic Statistical Authority (ELSTAT)**

With the adoption of the UN General Assembly Resolution 70/1 “Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”, the Member States of the United Nations committed to follow-up and review the progress made towards implementing the SDGs and targets over 2030. The Resolution noted that the SDGs and targets will be followed up and reviewed using a set of global indicators, which will be complemented by indicators at the regional and national level.

The 2030 Agenda states that progress reports shall be based on the global indicator framework and data produced by the National Statistical Systems and information collected at regional level. The UN Statistical Commission has also decided that the compilation of global indicators will be based to the greatest extent possible on comparable and standardised national official statistics provided by countries to the international statistical systems and that when other sources and methodologies are used, these will be reviewed and agreed by national statistical authorities and presented in a transparent manner.

The 17 SDGs are specified in a group of 169 individual targets to be achieved by all countries by 2030. To evaluate the progress made towards achieving these targets, a number of quantitative indicators have been chosen. The number of Sustainable Development Indicators has reached the number of 231 while there has been a continuous discussion on the

usefulness, effectiveness and availability of statistical data or methodology for each one. Indicators should be disaggregated, where relevant, by income, sex, age, race, ethnicity, migratory status, disability and geographic location, or other characteristics, in accordance with the United Nations Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics.

At European (regional) level, in December 2016, Eurostat distributed an initial proposal of an EU SDG indicator set, structured along the 17 SDGs. Indicators considered for the EU SDG indicator set had to be produced and disseminated in line with the principles stipulated in the European Statistics Code of Practice (CoP). This requires that at least one data point is ready to use and published by its producer (the National Statistical Agencies), that regular data production is ensured, preferably with official mandate and adequate resources, that a sound methodology exists, that data are accessible online and metadata are publicly available and that compliance with international or EU standards is fulfilled where these exist. The EU SDG indicator set consists of 102 indicators (37 of which are multipurpose) and it is open to annual reviews to incorporate indicators from new data sources as well as to take into account new targets in line with the priorities of the European Commission, such as the European Green Deal and other initiatives.

The Hellenic Statistical Authority (ELSTAT) is responsible for the statistical coordination and monitoring of the members of the Hellenic Statistical System (ELSS). ELSS is the set of rules, tasks and bodies responsible for the execution of statistical operations, with the aim of developing, producing and disseminating the official statistics of Greece. Official statistics cover all sectors of public and private activity, support decision-making and are submitted to international organisations according to the national obligations.

As the statistical focal point, ELSTAT provides data to the Custodian Agencies and informs all the members of the ELSS about their role as part of the National Statistical System and their obligations. ELSTAT actively participates in the IAEG-SDGs and EU Working Group on Sustainable Development meetings and it is always in close cooperation with the Custodian Agencies to find and evaluate new sources of data (administrative, geospatial etc.), to add new variables in the existing official surveys (ex SILC, Health Survey etc.) and validate (or not) the data estimations from the Custodian Agencies regarding Greece. Furthermore, ELSTAT had a crucial role in the formation, in 2019, of the National Indicators Set for Greece. This was designed considering the national priorities and the availability of data.

Finally, ELSTAT's website contains a section dedicated to Sustainable Development Goals as the National Reporting Platform, where users can have direct access to data for each Goal and are able to find publications and visualization tools with regard to the SDGs: <http://www.statistics.gr/en/sdgs>.

The official data for Greece from the Hellenic Statistical Authority (ELSTAT) can be found in the Annex.

### **3.2.1.5 The national multi-stakeholder consultation and engagement mechanism**

Assigning the responsibility for monitoring progress towards the implementation of the SDGs to the Presidency of the Government, and in particular to the General Secretariat of Coordination, tasked with coordinating and monitoring all public policies, lays the foundation and generates new opportunities for the establishment of a specific permanent mechanism aimed at effectively monitoring and assessing the country's progress as regards the Agenda 2030, through policies serving specifically the SDGs, along with ensuring the public

consultation and cooperation with organised civil society. Such a mechanism could be agreed on and become operational in 2022 in order to enable the effective and timely implementation of the whole project (i.e. monitoring the SDGs progress) and the setting up of a permanent point of contact and reference concerning the public consultation on the SDGs-related policies and the assessment of progress.

### 3.2.2 Local and regional authorities

The 13 regions and 325 municipalities of Greece develop and implement a large number of actions directly related to the three dimensions of the 2030 Agenda and the implementation of the SDGs at regional and local level. Some of the regions and municipalities are more SDG-aware than others. For instance, pursuant to paragraph 89 of the 2030 Agenda, the **municipality of Skiathos** has submitted in 2020 a **Voluntary Local Review (VLR)** report on the implementation of the SDGs at the island of Skiathos of the Sporades group in the Aegean Sea. In this VLR, the Skiathos 2030 Vision is laid out, consisting of six strategic goals aligned with the 17 SDGs and transformed into concrete municipal administrative actions. Other regions and municipalities, either on their own or within the relevant European and international networks in which they participate, as well as in cooperation with the Ministry of the Interior and other ministries, have also included the SDGs in their work, and are contributing significantly to the realisation of the 2030 Agenda.

An emblematic, well-coordinated, broad (5.000 projects) and well-funded (3 billion euros) national initiative, is the **Antonis Tritsis programme**, discussed in chapter 6, which provides the foundation for a local and regional sustainable development. It includes actions for social protection and cohesion, schemes to improve water and wastewater, waste management, road safety and climate resilience, smart city schemes, flood protection, earthquake protection in schools and improving public health measures against Covid-19. In addition, the Antonis Tritsis Programme includes, among others, plans to invest in exploitation of geothermal fields, renewable energy sources, smart distribution, storage, and energy consumption systems. The new sustainable urban investment initiative will scale up priority investment including urban regeneration and increase renewable energy use to improve the quality of life of local residents and attractiveness for business and tourism.

Other social programmes implemented locally include the **“Help at Home”** and **“Prevention at Home”**, which are also discussed in chapter 6. The first one has been running successfully since 1998. It is implemented by the municipalities of the country and the primary objective is to provide assistance to the elderly, the persons with disabilities, and those living alone or having a low income, through the provision of a wide range of services, from at home medical and nursing treatment to the supply of food and other basic necessities. The latter is a new preventive healthcare programme aimed at supporting the inhabitants of mountainous and remote/inaccessible regions, by making possible, on the one hand, medical examinations at home for the inhabitants of the above regions who belong to vulnerable groups of population and, on the other hand, the automated dispatch of the results to contracted practitioners through the use of information and communication technologies.

The **Association of Greek Regions (ENPE)** notes that efforts are being made by the Greek Regions for: (i) the **protection of ecosystems and biodiversity** by utilising modern grazing management plans that do not harm the environment and the water resources, and contribute instead to the enrichment of aboveground and underground water tanks; and (ii) the **protection of the environment** through many actions aiming at saving energy, reducing water waste, reducing mileage, and raising public awareness about environmental issues.

A recent good practice example is the public agricultural livestock centre of Kozani, in Western Macedonia. It consists of (i) a modern Agricultural and Veterinary Laboratory that will operate in collaboration with the Hellenic Agricultural Organisation Dimitra (ELGO DIMITRA) as a Center of Excellence in the agricultural and veterinary sector; (ii) the Agri-Food Partnership of Western Macedonia; and (iii) the Municipal Veterinarian. Supporting livestock as a natural environmental manager, utilising innovative RES and energy storage systems, and promoting triple-propeller partnerships, will result in enhanced cooperation on research, education and innovation.

Another good practice example is the Region of Attica's initiative "Social Network Attiki". It monitors, evaluates and implements social policy actions, related to social inclusion, employment, preventive healthcare, education and culture, and social and solidarity economy.

At the local level, the **Central Union of Greek Municipalities (KEDE)** participates in the national effort to formulate a realistic plan for an efficient use of the resources coming from the Recovery Fund, which will have a positive impact on the implementation of the SDGs. KEDE proposes projects and interventions that enhance extroversion, promote innovation and take advantage of the opportunities offered by the integration of new technologies in the daily operation of the Greek multi-level governance system. It supports horizontal actions aimed at both the alleviation of intra-regional inequalities and decentralisation.

**KEDE's priorities** as regards the implementation of the SDGs emphasise the promotion of policies such as:

- Operating the digital municipalities and smart cities, through the widespread promotion of digital convergence and digital interconnection of all government services.
- Enhancing extroversion, by highlighting the local comparative advantages, which can be turned into power multipliers of the national economy.
- Promoting local development.
- Making local authorities protagonists in the adoption of "green policies" and the use of environmentally friendly types of energy, calling also for the exclusive use of electric vehicles by all the municipalities.
- Promoting modern models of waste management, prioritising recycling and energy utilisation of residues. Creating a modern infrastructure, with priority on the islands, but also organising awareness actions.
- Enhancing the security of citizens, through the implementation of projects that make the infrastructure of the cities safer for their lives.
- Adopting a new model of civil protection, with inter-municipal operation centres, modern equipment and infrastructure, which will protect citizen's lives and properties from the effects of climate change.
- Providing incentives for the re-industrialization and the strengthening of the productive capacities of the country, coupled with the new infrastructure that is being created (new roadways, ports and railway networks).
- Expanding and modernising the networks of gas, water supply and fibre optics throughout the country, in each municipality.
- Exploring for more resources, through strategic partnerships with the private sector.
- Enhancing the participation of women in decision-making centres.

**KEDE** has submitted in the public dialogue **twelve proposals** that can contribute to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda and are supported by the European Recovery Fund:

**1. Green transformation of cities and municipalities to face environmental and climate challenges.** An integrated program to promote the transition to green cities and climate neutrality is proposed, which will include, inter alia, the production of electricity using RES, the energy upgrade of municipal infrastructure, the strengthening of electrification and the creation of local municipal networks, the implementation of awareness programmes, and the targeting and operation of monitoring systems for the energy footprint of cities. In addition, there is planning for smart energy management through the municipalities' action plans, the respective interventions and projects, as well as the expansion of the natural gas network in all municipalities.

**2. Waste Management: reducing waste and strengthening prevention and modern management.** The most important action concerns the central waste management by region or through inter-municipal collaborations with special attention to, among others, the minimization and management of solid waste. Actions include the production of alternative fuels from the residues of MEA and KDAW, the management of solid and liquid waste in the island municipalities, and the implementation of smart collection and recycling management systems aiming at gradually increasing the recycling rate at source, with a corresponding reduction in the percentage of mixed waste.

**3. Digital Decalogue for smart and sustainable cities.** The aim of the action is the digital transformation of municipalities through concrete steps (request recording platforms, "smart" management systems of a series of functions such as parking, municipal fleets, public markets, citizen consultation platforms, education and training of employees, recruitment and training of employees schools, upgrading of digital school infrastructures, smart transport systems, promotion of municipal infrastructures through applications for the service of the citizens and the visitors etc.).

**4. Digital Local Government - The next step.** It concerns the utilisation of digital technologies as the next administrative and operational reform of the public administration, aiming at the internal reorganisation of the local authorities, their systematic cooperation with the other levels of the public administration and the improvement of the services to the citizens.

**5. Development of 5th Generation networks by the Municipalities - 5GPlug n 'Play Cities.** It concerns the utilisation of municipal infrastructure (electricity network, traffic lights, municipal infrastructure) through PPPs, for the development of new 5th generation mobile telephony networks, aiming at leasing them to mobile telephony companies but also serving national, municipal and other purposes such as education and trade.

**6. Upgrading Social Structures with a view to the future.** It concerns, among others, the creation of a panhellenic network of primary health care, the upgrading of primary social care and welfare, strengthening entrepreneurship and access to employment for vulnerable social groups.

**7. Towns of Greece- Utilising the national advantages, in order to attract quality investments.** Development of ports and marinas, support for spa tourism, utilisation of municipal property, development of theme parks and strengthening thematic tourism.

**8. Better Infrastructure - Accessible Towns.** The goal concerns projects that improve the living standards of local communities by strengthening the existing municipal infrastructure and creating new one, implementing the Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans,

elaborating the Local Spatial Plans, upgrading the roads of the islands, enhancing the accessibility for the disabled as well as reconstructing town roads.

**9. Resilient Towns, with Strong Civil Protection.** It concerns the financing of projects improving the resilience of towns and the more effective protection of human lives and property from natural phenomena and disasters (strengthening of rainwater networks, stabilisation and landslide control projects, coastal erosion control projects, creation of inter-municipal protection centres, and protection of water balances using digital metres).

**10. New Entrepreneurial clusters.** Greece utilises the new road and railway axes (design and creation of new craft and industrial areas, establishment of special incentives and financing of expropriations).

**11. Reform of the Social Policy system at local level - Creation of an Inter-Municipal Social Network.** The aim of the action is the homogenization of social policy at the local level, which is of critical importance for an integrated, interoperable and effective social safety net that can provide integrated support to the vulnerable groups.

**12. Social integration of refugees-immigrants in local communities, including their integration into the labour market.** The purpose of the proposed project is the integration of asylum seekers, refugees and immigrants in Greek society and workplace. Proposed actions include Greek language learning, familiarity with public services and support for beneficiaries through intermediaries, family counselling, and providing and/or certifying beneficiaries with skills.

### **3.2.3 Social partners**

Balancing the often-conflicting economic, social and environmental objectives is what sustainability is about. Hence, a successful implementation of the SDGs requires a genuine and effective social dialogue between the representatives of employees and employers, taking into account the environmental dimension, and being in close cooperation with the government and other stakeholders. For the promotion of the 2030 Agenda the Greek government is engaged in a dialogue with the social partners. This is taking place either on a bilateral basis (government discusses with representatives of employers and/or employees), as well as through the **Economic and Social Council of Greece (ESC)**, which is the constitutionally established institution responsible for conducting the social dialogue.

The **ESC** is actively involved in the public consultation with the national social partners and European institutions. It has highlighted the need to monitor sustainable development policies, through the creation of consultation channels and the collection of opinions by the social partners in this regard. In 2017, the ESC issued, upon request of the government, its opinion no 317, UN 2030 Agenda – Priority Objectives for Greece, which included an extensive list of recommendations for the effective implementation of key economic, social and environmental aspects of the SDGs. In 2018, the president of ESC participated and spoke at the presentation of Greece’s first VNR at the UN HLPF of July. In 2022, the ESC delivered its contribution to the government for the drafting of the country’s second VNR review, calling for action on various targets of [SDGs 3, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 13, 15, 16, 17](#).

In the process of the VNR drafting, the GSCO received input from major representatives of the business sector, including the **Hellenic Federation of Enterprises (SEV)** and the **Business Council for Sustainable Development of SEV (SEVBCSD)**, the Greek Tourism Confederation (SETE), the Global Compact Network Hellas, and the Hellenic Network for Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR Hellas). Some of these contributions can be found in Annex 2.

Focusing here on the state of play of the Greek business community as regards the SDGs, it could be noted that according to the most recent (2021) “Business Pulse” survey, conducted by SEV Business Environment Observatory: (i) corruption/low level of transparency and low capacity of institutions are classified in the top 3 obstacles to business operation; (ii) almost one out of four companies acknowledge as priorities, initiatives directly linked with the promotion of [SDGs 1, 4, 8, 9](#), namely generating quality jobs, enhancing innovation and infrastructures and strengthening the links between the education system and the labour market; (iii) green transition is assessed as an important issue for almost 81% of the companies, with over 40% of small, medium and large companies acknowledging it as very important or important; (iv) the need for raising awareness of the challenges and prospects of green growth is acknowledged, as only 28.7% of small companies consider it very important compared to 50% in large companies; (v) almost 70% of the companies interviewed are planning to proceed in the short-term with investments enabling their green transition; (vi) the majority of companies, regardless of size, consider the provision of salary increases and training/development opportunities to employees as the main pathways for strengthening society’s trust in entrepreneurship.

**SEV**, which is the largest business network in the country, focuses on scaling-up industry’s contribution to 15% of national GDP by 2030, and its action plan is built and developed across 6 priority areas that are strongly linked with the sustainable development agenda, i.e., innovation, skills for everyone, green growth, digital transformation, industry scale-up and strengthening links with society. SEV and SEV BCSD seek to leverage the SDG platform to catalyse collaborative action at scale through dialogue and partnership across sectors, supply chains and necessary stakeholders. In this regard, they see of great value the formation of a small group of experts that could assist national authorities in preparing their plans on the SDG agenda across four key design pillars: (i) risks of inaction, (ii) arising opportunities, (iii) governance and transparency, and (iv) need for collaboration. The structured involvement of the business sector in this process is of particular importance for sharing best practices, diverse ways of engagement and firsthand experience on achievements, expectations and barriers to overcome.

**CSR HELLAS** has also conducted research, finding that 62% of the Network’s members have included the SDGs as a reporting framework in their annual reports. These are mainly large corporations, and it is noted that there is no consistent way of using the SDGs as a reporting framework. Moreover, when it comes to small and medium enterprises (SMEs), which in Greece account for more than 90% of the private sector, these lack both the capacity and the incentives when it comes to aligning their strategy and actions to the SDGs. Moreover, according to another recent study by CSR HELLAS in partnership with the University of the Aegean most companies listed in ATHEX (Athens Stock Exchange) have adopted adjuvant international reporting standards (apart from national ones) to report to stakeholders, one of which is the SDGs framework. In such a context a limited percentage of the corporate sector is taking notice of the importance of aligning business strategies to the SDGs. On the other hand, CSR HELLAS comments on the lack of an overarching long term strategy for the coordination of all stakeholders’ initiatives towards their contribution to the 2030 Agenda at national level. As SDGs are a voluntary reporting framework the private sector faces a number of challenges for incorporating them in the business model as well as assessing the progress of implementation. These include the lack of connectivity of individual business strategies to a concrete national long term strategy for achieving the SDGs as well as a lack of harmonious partnerships and cooperation among stakeholders, the scarcity of regulatory tools that incentivize the SDGs’ adoption, the lack of monitoring and evaluating methods, and the low awareness on the part of businesses and of society as a whole.

In the context of the 2030 Agenda, the private sector has a key part to perform in accelerating the achievement of the SDGs through effective public–private and civil society partnerships via [SDG 17](#). Nevertheless, for gaining real and tangible results, all SDGs, targets and indicators should be in line with the national strategies and plans, and they should be agreed based on a multi-stakeholder consultation framework. As such a framework has not yet been set up, the exchange and sharing of good practices cannot be achieved, creating twofold obstacles for achieving the 2030 Agenda – firstly best practices are not incorporated into concrete policies, and secondly there are no guidelines for businesses for aligning their initiatives with the national action plan on the SDGs.

The **Global Compact Hellas (UNGC Network Hellas)**, which is the local cluster of the United Nations Global Compact initiative, supports the power of the private sector to engage responsibility and promote the SDGs in Greece. For this purpose, it has identified seven strategic priorities and focus areas, in which the business community can have an important impact: human rights, labour and decent work, climate change, anti-corruption, gender equality, SDG integration. Hence, the orientation is on how businesses can integrate the SDGs across their strategies and operations and how to be innovative and transform their governance.

The business-members of UNGC Network Hellas, as part of their commitment, are already taking actions to advance the SDGs and are disclosing this information through their annual Communication on Progress (CoP) report submitted to the UNGC. The CoP, in its new digitised format, includes a tool to monitor and gather information on corporate actions for the SDGs. Based on the content of their CoP, the three SDGs that are mostly reported are [Goal 8](#)-Decent Work and Economic Growth, [Goal 5](#)-Gender Equality and [Goal 13](#)-Climate Action. The industries, which are reporting policies on these SDGs, are construction & materials, financial & support services and oil & gas producers. Among the actions that businesses are undertaking are the alignment of core corporate strategy with the SDGs; the development of products and/or services that contribute to achieve the SDGs; the voluntary (financial or in-kind) contributions to NGOs; the organisation or participation in key summits or major events related to the SDGs; the public communication of their best practices; and their impact on the engagement of the public-private partnerships projects.

On the part of the workers, the **General Confederation of Greek Workers (GSEE)** via its **research institute (INE GSEE)** is monitoring the [SDG 8](#). In its contribution to the preparation of Greece's second VNR report, it stresses that although labour income and employment have mildly recovered over the past few years, several factors that determine working conditions and job quality remain problematic, injecting uncertainty, macro-financial fragility and socio-economic problems. Despite the recent increases in the minimum wage, the average real compensation per employee remains lower than that in 2009 and, moreover, the households' disposable income is currently being eroded by inflation. Meanwhile, households' living conditions and well-being have been aggravated by high levels of work intensity. Job quality has also been undermined by the deterioration of the terms of employment. Equally worrying are the increasing episodes of atypical employment (involuntary part-time work). Precarious work has proliferated in parallel with poor employment prospects, provided that Greece's unemployment rate, albeit in constant decline since 2014, is still well above its pre-crisis level and long-term unemployment stands today at high rates. Last but not least, the country also scores poorly in terms of social dialogue and collective interest representation. These developments severely impact the prospects of sustainable and inclusive growth, increasing inequalities and undermining human capital.

In view of the above, **INE GSEE** underscores the need for immediate and effective measures to improve job quality in Greece, as this could act as an effective means of increasing people's well-being and delivering a more prosperous and inclusive society. For this to happen, several measures are proposed, such as: (i) the abolition of all labour market deregulation measures taken over the last decade as part of the internal devaluation strategy, coupled with the full restoration of free collective bargaining; (ii) a further increase in the minimum wage, along with the institutionalisation of a new approach to wage-setting that would ensure wage levels compatible with decent living standards; (iii) mobilisation of sufficient NGEU (Next Generation EU fund) resources for training and education to improve employees' skills, as well as the financing of a permanent Job Guarantee scheme to bolster employment and labour income, support labour market reforms, combat inequalities, while facilitating green transition; (iv) strengthening the labour inspectorate body to ensure adherence to employment protection law.

### **3.2.4 Civil society**

The active participation of civil society is pivotal to the transition to a sustainable society. Hundreds of civil society, voluntary and non-governmental organisations perform activities that relate to a wide variety of sectors, including human rights, migration, environmental protection, social cohesion and welfare, culture, health and education. Many of these organisations are explicitly working on specific SDGs or on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda as a whole, and some of them have raised important issues and criticisms, bringing into the social dialogue new knowledge and innovative approaches to sustainability.

The government and all the ministries are in constant dialogue with the stakeholders from civil society, as this can lead to the adoption of more informed and balanced public policies. In the process of drafting Greece's second VNR report, the GSCO asked numerous civil society organisations to assess the progress in the implementation of the SDGs, and to inform the PoG about (i) the extent to which the SDGs form part of their activities or plans, (ii) their participation in partnerships for the SDGs, (iii) the main difficulties and challenges for the implementation of the SDGs, (iv) any proposals that they have for that matter, and (v) any good practice cases, in which they are involved in or are aware of.

The responses from some of these civil society organisations are included in Annex II. Two critical points that have been raised in this dialogue could be mentioned here. The first concerns the remark on the perceived lack of a concrete institutional initiative that could bring all stakeholders together in a concerted action. Although the SDGs are mentioned in the vast majority of the government's policy and legislative initiatives, what is missing is a truly participatory process that will ensure the involvement of all stakeholders. A second point calls for the establishment of a more holistic governance scheme to oversee the implementation of the SDGs. On a vertical axis, that will include all levels, from the highest political level to the administrative and institutional set up to public participation. Added to that, is the role of the parliament, while on the horizontal axis, a more systematic multi-stakeholder dialogue must take place that will be broad enough to cover issues from awareness raising to open and organised engagement with all stakeholders, public consultations, policy initiatives, exchange of information and best practices, as well as support towards citizens' initiatives.

### **3.2.5 Academic and research community**

#### **Network of Higher Education Institutions for Sustainability**

The "Network of Higher Education Institutions for Sustainability", which was launched in 2021, consists of members of all Greek Universities. Its primary objective is to promote and

mainstream the sustainability principle and the SDGs into the main programmes and action plans of Greek Universities. To this end, the Network proceeded in 2022 to the establishment of two specific working groups. The first working group aims to prepare the revision of the Universities' Charter for Sustainability (adopted in 2011), so that it becomes aligned with the main priorities and objectives of the 2030 Agenda. The second working group intends to prepare a set of guidelines that will facilitate the integration of the sustainability principle and the SDGs in the strategic planning of Greek Universities. The Network will contribute to the UNESCO World Higher Education Conference to be held in May 2022, with the view to reforming traditional models of higher education, in line with the core objectives and priorities of the 2030 Agenda.

### **General Secretariat for Research and Innovation (GSRI)**

The General Secretariat for Research and Innovation (GSRI) of the Ministry of Development and Investments is the main body responsible for setting research policy priorities and is major direct funder of R&D. For the GSRI, investment in science, research, technology and innovation is a key strategic priority for a development model that is socially, financially and environmentally sustainable and is based upon highly skilled workforce and novel, innovative ideas.

Through its programmes, it supports the research activities of both the country's scientific research institutes and those of its productive industry, focusing on areas that are important for the national economy and for the improvement of the quality of life. Additionally, it designs and promotes a comprehensive, inclusive strategy for research, technology and innovation, maximizes the impact of the highly qualified human potential in the area of research through the creation of new employment opportunities for the highly skilled and reverses brain-drain, promotes the transfer and dissemination of innovative technologies to the country's productive sectors for targeted use of the research results, supervises and funds the country's Research and Technological Institutions, enhances public awareness on Science, Research and Technology issues and assesses the outcome and impact of research and innovation policies and programmes. At international level, the GSRI represents Greece to the relevant institutions of the European Union and other international organizations, thus bringing the country's research and technology activities into line with the requirements of the international community, and promotes initiatives and programmes for international research & technological cooperation with other countries.

Furthermore, the GSRI provides support for 14 of the country's best-known research and technological centres. The Research and Technological Institutions supervised by the GSRI cover a wide spectrum of research fields in the areas of Biosciences & Health, Natural Sciences and Engineering, Information and Communication Technologies, Humanities & Social Sciences. Its tasks also include the detailed design, planning, implementation and monitoring of policy and interventions (measures, programmes, etc). The GSRI sets thematic priorities for funding based on the needs and structure of the Greek economy, the needs of society and global S&T perspectives.

### **Academic and Research Centres and Institutes**

Academic and research centres and institutes are important stakeholders playing a crucial role in promoting and achieving the full implementation of the SDGs. They work on sustainability issues, across different scientific fields, both on their own and in close cooperation with international scientific institutions, bodies and networks. They develop innovative, multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary research projects, addressing all dimensions of

sustainable development. Their research is focused on a wide spectrum of scientific fields falling within the scope of the SDGs, including prominently humanities and social sciences, biosciences and health, natural sciences, engineering and technology sciences, environment and energy and information and communication technologies. The academic and research community is instrumental in raising social awareness on sustainability challenges and opportunities, informing evidence-based decision-making, providing solutions to complex and multi-dimensional problems, elucidating SDGs interlinkages and developing synergies and partnerships that share knowledge and best practices in order to support the achievement of the SDGs. (See Annex 2 for a glimpse of the work they do)

### **3.3 Integration of the SDGs in national frameworks**

#### **National Recovery and Resilience Plan (NRRP)**

In 2020, the European Union and its Member States agreed on an ambitious comprehensive plan to build back better from the adverse effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and to make European societies and economies more sustainable, inclusive and resilient. This overarching plan is substantially supported by a temporary recovery instrument, the EU Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF), which assists Member States in promoting and implementing a wide spectrum of strategic reforms and investments set out in national recovery and resilience plans strictly monitored in terms of quality, achieving milestones and targets and timelines. The RRF focuses on six thematic policy pillars closely related to the key priority areas of the 2030 Agenda, including: (i) green transition, (ii) digital transformation, (iii) smart, sustainable and inclusive growth, (iv) social and territorial cohesion, (v) health and economic, social and institutional resilience, and (vi) policies for the next generation.

The **Greek Recovery and Resilience Plan, RRP** («Greece 2.0»), which was one of the first to be submitted to the European Commission on 27 April 2021, introduces a comprehensive and coherent package of forward-looking reform measures and investment actions aimed at accelerating the transition of the country towards a more sustainable and inclusive growth model and fostering its economic, social and institutional resilience<sup>1</sup>. This package of reform and investment measures is financially supported by a budget of EUR 31.164 billion up to 2026. In particular, the Greek plan comprises 106 investment measures and 68 reforms to be supported by €17.77 billion in grants and €12.73 billion in loans. The Greek RRP is structured around four key pillars inextricably linked to the core priorities and objectives of the SDGs, including: (i) green transition, (ii) digital transition, (iii) employment, skills and social cohesion, and (iv) private investment and economic and institutional transformation. It is worth pointing out that 37.5% of the national RRP will support climate-related objectives, whereas 23.3% of the plan will advance digital transformation. The consistency and compatibility of Greece's RRP with the specific objectives and targets set out in the 2030 Agenda is also confirmed, *inter alia*, by an analysis performed by the EU Joint Research Centre in 2020. According to this analysis, all SDGs are considerably served by the national RRP, though emphasis is reasonably placed on crucial systemic issues, including sustainability of the healthcare system and economic productivity that increasingly emerged during the COVID-19 pandemic.

#### **Annual Ministerial Action Plans and Consolidated Governmental Policy Plan**

By recent law, all ministries by the end of a year must submit for approval to the Ministerial Council their comprehensive plan for the year to come. The plan imprints their policies, staff, financial resources, institutional tools, implementation timelines and milestones as well as

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<sup>1</sup>[https://greece20.gov.gr/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/NRRP\\_Greece\\_2\\_0\\_English.pdf](https://greece20.gov.gr/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/NRRP_Greece_2_0_English.pdf)

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). The ministries are closely supported in this 6-month process by the General Secretariat of Coordination (GSCO), which ensures the cohesion and general applicability of the proposed policies. During this collaboration possible implementation obstacles, gaps, conflicts and overlaps are traced and resolved in time. In addition, the GSCO makes sure that the overall plan is aligned with the country's national needs and international obligations, a set of which being the Agenda 2030 and the SDGs, and it produces the cohesive Comprehensive Governmental Policy Plan<sup>2</sup> (CGPP) for the year to come. Complying with the founding values and SDG targets of transparency and accountability the CGPP is publicised for the citizens to assess and follow.

### **National Reform Plan (NRP)**

The 2030 Agenda and the SDGs lie at the core of one of the most overarching, dynamic and inclusive national strategic document, the **National Reform Plan (NRP)**<sup>3</sup>. The NRP, which is drafted and reviewed by the General Secretariat of Coordination of the Presidency of the Government responsible for monitoring the implementation of the SDG at national level, sets out a number of crucial reform measures and interventions carried out by the whole government and its ministries in the form of revised, enhanced, yearly updated, targeted public policies which integrate, in a coherent and balanced manner, the main objectives and priorities of the SDGs.

The primary objective of the NRP is twofold: on one hand, to foster the transition to a more sustainable and inclusive growth model, while ensuring that no one is left behind, and on the other hand, to enhance the economic, social and institutional resilience of the country.

It is noteworthy that even in the dire circumstance of the pandemic the NRP was not abandoned nor changed by the Greek government. On the contrary, several reforms were even accelerated to build better response to the arising needs.

### **3.4 Incorporation of the three dimensions of sustainable development**

In 2019, the European Commission (EC) presented the "Green Deal", a roadmap with reference to the profound transformation of the European Union's economy, aiming at sustainable growth. The EC introduced, subsequently, a new financial Just Transition Mechanism (JTM), to make the transition to climate neutrality in a fair way ("Sustainable Europe" plan). Greece, with a history of lignite dependence, originally committed to withdrawing all lignite power plants by 2023, except for one that will be operational by 2028. This initial plan underwent revision after the dramatic fluctuations in European energy stability caused by the war in Ukraine, extending withdrawal by 2 years.

The commitment is not abandoned: the protection of the environment, the economic diversification and the social coherence of extended lignite mining areas remain major priorities. The lignite-producing areas suffer consequences stemming from constant, persisting and unilateral focus on lignite activity, to the detriment of other economic activities, but also from the lack of a new, balanced and sustainable development model. In addition to the lignite issue, the local economies lack diversity and inclusion and score high levels of unemployment which were until now capped under the high incomes of those included in lignite production, supporting an unrealistic picture of local prosperity.

With a view to a sustainable and socially fair transition of these areas, the Government has prepared a comprehensive **Just Transition Development Plan (JTDP)**, in order to create new values and socio-economic inclusion opportunities in sectors and branches other than the

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<sup>2</sup> [https://government.gov.gr/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/eskyp\\_2022-\\_fin2.pdf](https://government.gov.gr/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/eskyp_2022-_fin2.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> [https://government.gov.gr/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/ethniko\\_sxedio\\_metarithmiseon.pdf](https://government.gov.gr/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/ethniko_sxedio_metarithmiseon.pdf)

lignite-related ones, building on technical advantages such as the electricity grid infrastructure and the presence of a significant number of professionals with technical skills. The Plan is composed by five policy pillars (clean energy, industry and trade, smart agriculture, sustainable tourism, technology and education), which are in line with the EU's policy objectives (a smarter, greener, more connected, more social and closer to its citizens Europe) and at the same time integrate the three dimensions (social, environmental, economic) of sustainable development. On the other hand, the Plan outlines a number of actions that are already being carried out towards addressing immediate social needs, such as ensuring sufficient capacity for district heating and an Observatory to provide reliable information on the type and extent of changes in the social fabric of the territories affected.

The **National Energy and Climate Plan (NECP)** is the Greek government's overall strategic plan for climate and energy issues, setting out a detailed roadmap regarding the attainment of specific energy and climate objectives by 2030. The NECP sets out and describes priorities and policy measures in respect of a wide range of development and economic activities intended to benefit the Greek society and therefore it is a reference text for the forthcoming decade. It has been approved by EC at December 2019 and at its introductory note it is explicitly stated that "NECP stresses Greece's priorities and development potential in terms of energy and addressing climate change and aims to serve as the key tool for drawing up the national energy and climate policy in the next decade, taking into account the Commission's recommendations and the UN Sustainable Development Goals". The necessity to develop sustainable policies incorporating all three dimensions of sustainable development (social, environmental, economic), with common benefits and synergies in addressing climate change, protecting nature and biodiversity, air quality, water resources is reflected to strategies related to shift to new production and consumption standards, the need for sustainable cities, the elimination of poverty, the establishment of flexible infrastructure, the promotion of sustainable industrialisation, circular economy and the promotion of innovation.

The **National Rural Development Program (RDP) 2014-2020**, with its extension for the period 2021-2022, contributes significantly to the three dimensions of sustainable development and the achievement of a wide range of SDGs. Primarily, it plays an instrumental role in enhancing economic and social sustainability of the agrifood sector and the rural areas of Greece, thus contributing to the SDGs 8, 9, 1 and 2. It is worth mentioning that the Greek RDP supports investment in agricultural holdings and in marketing and processing of agricultural products, installation of young farmers and small rural business startups, contributing to the value added, innovation, growth of the agrifood sector and rural areas but also the creation of jobs, food security and the alleviation of social inequality especially in rural areas. Its overall interventions include the upgrade of rural public infrastructure, naming land reclamation works (e.g., dams, reservoirs), roads and other works for the access of rural population to basic services and quality of life, e.g. broadband infrastructure. Regarding its environmental and climate dimension, the Greek RDP has a strong focus on it, contributing more than 57% of its budget (incl. EAFRD and EURI), thus contributing to the SDGs 2, 6 and 15. In addition, the RDP promotes the implementation of agriculture, environment and climate commitments in relation to the reduction of pesticides and fertilizers and the related water and soil pollution (e.g. nitrates reduction commitments, alternative weed and insect protection for rice and trees cultivations), the protection of wild birds and the support for organic farming. Investments for water savings are also supported both through community public works and at farm level. Finally, the RDP includes measures and actions contributing to the afforestation and the prevention or rehabilitation of forest damages.

For Greece, the investment in science, research, technology and innovation is a key national strategic priority for a sustainable development model that is socially, financially and

environmentally sustainable, and is based upon highly skilled workforce and novel, innovative ideas. Based on the key objectives and thematic priorities of the National Research and Innovation Strategy for Smart Specialisation adopted in 2015, a number of innovative interventions and programmes covering all the economic, social and environmental aspects of sustainable development have been financed during the programming period 2014-2020, under the coordination of the General Secretariat for Research and Innovation of the Ministry of Development and Investments. Currently, the Government is in the process of planning the new **National Strategy for Research and Innovation (2021-2027)**, which places particular emphasis on the following priority areas: Agri-food Chain - Life Sciences, Health, Medicines - Digital Technologies - Sustainable Energy - Environment and Circular Economy - Transport & Supply Chain - Materials, Constructions & Industry - Tourism, Culture and Creative Industries. The NSRI 2021-2027 will pay attention to ecological, social and economic effects in its selection process. Projects with a clearly positive effect should have a higher chance of receiving funding.

### **3.5 Leaving no one behind**

Greece attributes particular importance to the protection of the most vulnerable and disadvantaged groups of society and the effective integration of the principle of leaving no one behind at all levels and across all public policies and reform measures.

The main challenge is to design and implement comprehensive, coherent and forward-looking policies which significantly contribute to reducing the inequalities and vulnerabilities that leave people behind and undermine their potential. In significant numbers, people, as part of social groups, face different exclusions and are deprived of opportunities for independent living, participation, acceptance and well-being. Greece is focusing on defining priorities and fast-tracking actions for the poorest and the most marginalised people, vulnerable to discrimination based on their area of residence, their socio-economic status, their gender, their age, their abilities, ethnic or religious identity and sexual orientation. These most vulnerable groups, whose discrimination risk factors often add up, are facing high rates of unemployment, difficulties in accessing free health services, education, childcare, housing and adequate food and are more exposed to gender and domestic violence, institutionalization, delays in service delivery, bureaucracy, multiple systems existence and stereotypes.

In order to face these challenges and build a fair and inclusive society, a coherent framework that enables the acceleration of national progress towards achieving the SDGs and promoting the principle of leaving no one behind is needed. It is within this context that over the last two years, the Greek Government has endorsed a number of national strategies, action plans and legislative initiatives that mainstream, in an integrated manner, the principle of leaving no one behind in public policies and reform measures, placing emphasis on targeted measures which support the most vulnerable groups and those who are furthest behind, including people with disabilities, minorities, women and children and promote human rights, gender equality and social inclusion.

Therefore, specific policies have been adopted in the form of national strategies, plans or comprehensive laws to tackle the main challenges and to The updated **National Action Plan for Gender Equality (2021)**, which is fully aligned with the strategy's analysis as identified by the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, aspires to respond effectively to a persisting systemic issue in Greece, overturning obstacles for women and girls that prevent them from equally accessing basic rights and opportunities. The Plan reflects the priority axes for preventing and combating gender and domestic violence, equal participation of women in decision-making/leadership roles and equal participation of women in the labour market. The

pandemic rendered the new plan indispensable as women's rights appeared to be further suppressed, starting with incidents of domestic violence which increased during lockdown. It is a cross-sectoral commitment on 4 pillars: (i) prevention and elimination of gender-based and domestic violence, (ii) equal female participation in the labor market, (iii) equal female participation in decision making and leadership roles and (iv) gender mainstreaming in sectoral policy making.

The first-time **National Youth Plan** (2022) is a binding youth strategy and is based on the strategic pillars of Employment, Education, Housing, Social Cohesion and Well-being, which are directly relevant to most of the Sustainable Development Goals (Goals 3, 4, 5, 8, 10). As a result, it regards multiple policy areas and it seeks to address all the serious issues affecting young people's lives and the challenges of modern times. Youth in Greece paid a heavy toll in past and recent economic crises, which undermined their opportunities to shape their lives constructively as early as they wished. The Plan aspires to support young people to achieve social independence earlier and make the most of their potential through education, work, housing, accessing good services, connecting to the world or raising a new family. It is a comprehensive investment both in people and in the country's resilience and prospects.

Aiming at reducing inequalities, which is in line with SDG 10, the first-time **National Strategy for LGBTQ+ Equality** (2021), is based on the principle of equality, on the prohibition of sexual orientation and gender identity discrimination and on enhancement of social inclusion. LGBTQ+ people face significant problems daily in almost every aspect of the public sphere, among others when visiting the health services, contacting the police and all public administration, adapting to working environments and going to school. Most of their reported difficulties are based on either stereotypical discrimination or lack of institutional provisions. Consulting closely with their representatives, the Government deemed it important to treat the systemic malfunctions that demote them to second-class citizens and ensure protection of their rights while building LGBTQ+ inclusive societies.

The first-time **National Action Plan for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities** (2020) is a "road map" that provides a clear, coherent and systematic framework for action regarding the rights of persons with disabilities. The Plan had been a long-time pursuit of the local disability movement. The main goals of the Plan is to fully integrate the protective framework of E.U. and recommendations of the UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, to codify the scattered legislative provisions and create a National Accessibility Authority which will ensure the participation of the persons with disabilities in the economic, political and social life.

The new **National Strategy and Action Plan for the Social Inclusion of Roma** (2021) reflects the strategic choices of the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs in order to address the identified and persistent issues of social exclusion of Roma in Greece. It imprints, defines and substantiates measures to tackle the different contexts of deprivation facing the Roma in Greece. The Plan aspires to address this with national, regional and local policies in 4 Pillars: (i) poverty prevention and alleviation, (ii) access to basic services and goods, (iii) prevention and fight against stereotypes and discrimination and (iv) active participation in economic, social and political life.

The **Law regarding the prevention and treatment of child abuse and neglect and strengthening of Social Protection** (2021) aims to adopt measures of preventing incidents of child abuse and neglect and facing them timely and effectively, upgrade the quality of services provided to infants through a comprehensive curriculum for preschool education, promote the adoptions and fostering framework and regulate the launching of the "Personal Assistant"

action for People with Disabilities in order to ensure their independent living and avoid deinstitutionalization as well as ensure the protection of children inside institutions.

The **Strategy for social inclusion and the fight against poverty and the first-time National Plan for the protection of Children's Rights** (2021) are commitments to reduce child poverty, to guarantee that every child has access to free health services, education, childcare, housing and adequate food, to apply guardianship to unaccompanied minors refugees, to simplify adoption procedures, to ensure independent living and avoid deinstitutionalization for people with disabilities, to provide a safety net against deep poverty by the constitutionally guaranteed social solidarity income, to provide decent housing for vulnerable groups and for persons aged 67 years and over with low or no income.

The first-time **National Plan against Child Sexual Abuse** (2022) aims to safeguard the health and dignity of children-victims of an underreported crime. It identifies critical systemic failures and presents measures to prevent, locate, report, treat and take to justice incidents of sexual abuse and exploitation of children. Special care is foreseen for the victims through a child-friendly justice approach, institutional obstacles are set to prevent predators from working with children in all possible sectors and essential protocol revision is put forward in order to ensure timely response that does not cause further victimization and risks. The overall twofold aim of the Plan is to a) minimize the incidents and b) maximize reporting, working towards the protection of children from all forms of violence.

### 3.6 Systemic issues

Despite significant progress having been made towards a more sustainable living during the past decades, Greece still faces some persisting challenges which were further enhanced by consecutive economic and social crises that started a decade before the Covid-19 pandemic, whose impact is still present. Recognition of the problems and policies to address them have always been present in the political agenda - followed by occasionally significant investment- and progress has been made, yet their outcomes did not suffice to bring forth reforming change.

The literally vital, oldest and most persisting challenge is the **demographic** one, directly affecting the prospects of the country's prosperity, resilience and survival. The indicators are low and since the 1980's are off-balance, scoring well below 2,1 children per woman, nearly "extremely low" in the last 20 years (1,37 in 2020). Since 2011 the overall population of Greece has started to shrink, a phenomenon affected by the fewer births and emigration of young people and their prospective families and not significantly alleviated by incoming immigrants and their families since the 1990's.

One of the most persisting issues regarding the Greek economy, both in its years of prosperity and of crunch, is the **high levels of female and youth unemployment**, two indicators that are detrimental when they converge in young women, today in a context of the high unemployment caused by the economic crises. Female unemployment is, continuously, nearly double than male<sup>4</sup> and female employment and ranks among the 3 lowest in the EU (58,3% in 2020). As for youth unemployment, nearly 4 out of 10 young people are unemployed, a rate double than the EU average. The unemployment of people of 15-29 years is more than double than the unemployment of seniors 54+. Systemic dysfunctions are definitely the cause for these two issues which exceed supply and demand explanations and directly relate to factors

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<sup>4</sup> A typical example, in January 2022 female unemployment was 16,6% when male unemployment rated 9,6%.

such as the quality and relevance of education, family roles culture, nursery care availability and job market regulations. Closely linked to these is Greece's **low performance in gender equality**. Despite the fact that the country has institutionally safeguarded gender equality since the early 1980's and the aim has never left the political agenda, the findings show that it has not yet been dealt with dedication. Greece ranks steadily last in gender equality among EU countries according to the Gender Equality Index, although in recent years a slight improvement in score has been noted. Between the 6 clusters of indicators, women in Greece seem to do best in Health-related ones and worst in those connected with Power.

An enduring challenge that surfaced clearly during the pandemic was the **limited ability of the Public Health system to respond to new emergencies**, mainly due to two reasons: that it had to a great extent reached the limits of its practice even before the pandemic and because its policy content needs updating and rationalization was long overdue. Both reasons were results of the 10-year economic crisis that preceded. In spite of the fact that secondary health care and its shortcomings came under the spotlight during the pandemic, the two most important deficiencies are the lack of a comprehensive primary care network that is accessible to all and a complete framework for prevention of diseases and accidents. These two elements would act as gatekeepers to secondary care and promote better health for all. As a third - albeit less- persisting challenge is the rationalization of secondary health care management both on financial and care outcome levels.

An institutional point of congestion that has been building for decades seriously affecting the economic and social life is the **inability of the Justice system to cope with its workload** using its traditional ways and resources. Dramatic delays of trials of all categories lead economic disputes practically at an impasse discouraging investments as well as to postponement of closure for cases of minor or severe human and social rights violations. These have also contributed to public perceptions of impunity, pointlessness and lack of trust to essential institutions which, if not overturned, can undermine the country's democratic status and economic prospects.

Last but certainly not least, the **waste management challenge**. At the municipal level, lagging behind European targets, the country produces more waste than the EU average, partly because of tourism, but landfills nearly 78% of it. Waste recycling is progressing slowly, amounting to 21%, with very low composting or waste-to-energy activity. Overall, 5.4% of material resources come from recycled waste materials (vs. 12.8% in the EU). Concerning circularity of the economy, the circular material use rate remains also below the EU average. Overall, the country is required to accelerate its pace and carry out immediately significant investments and reforms in order to meet its post-2020 targets that are in effect. Finally, a somewhat neglected aspect of waste management in Greece, with strong cultural and education influences, is prevention of waste generation - becoming more demanding in the Tourism context - which is necessary to ensure sustainability even in the most successful management systems.

### **3.7 The COVID-19 pandemic**

In the last two years Greece, along with the rest of the world, has been trying to implement its commitments while encountering the COVID-19 pandemic. Mitigating the pandemic's impact has been a challenging task made more difficult by the high percentage of elderly in the population and the imprint of a decade of recession and austerity, an effort expectedly overshadowed by loss of life and public uncertainty. Nevertheless, due to the prompt uptake of measures in order to contain the virus, enhancement of the public health system, effective interventions for the support of the economy and the rolling organization of the vaccination programme, Greece is considered to have managed the pandemic successfully.

A pandemic management system was established immediately, with a centralised approach. At the highest level, an Intervention Mechanism headed by the Prime Minister holds the power to make decisions on COVID-19 mitigation measures. Decisions are evidence-based, taking into account the report submitted to the Intervention Mechanism by a dedicated COVID-19 Observatory, which gathers data from all relevant governmental bodies (e.g. for Public Health, Civil Protection, Finance and Labour). A Committee of 21 renowned public health experts is set up at the Ministry of Health as a scientific advisory body. Also, the Governmental Committee for Coordination and Monitoring of Governmental Policy for the response to the pandemic of the coronavirus COVID-19 was established, covering the Government, the local authorities, the Armed Forces, the security forces in terms of planning and programming of all necessary operational actions at national, regional and local level to deal with the consequences of the disease.

Among others, the committee's decisions have included the epidemiological surveillance of the country and the adoption of restrictive measures aimed at protecting public health, the reopening of public sector services and the resumption of operation of private sector industries. The government also faced the pandemic as an opportunity to support the struggling healthcare system and increase healthcare capacity. Hence, a series of measures have been taken to enhance efficiency of the public health care system. Crucial reforms which had not been advanced due to the economic crisis were accelerated, such as e-prescription of medicines, digital services of the National Health System (NHS), recruitment of medical staff and a significant increase in ICU beds in public hospitals. Between March 2020 and February 2021, the Greek Healthcare System has been strengthened with more than 7,500 new recruitments (short-term contracts) of medical, nursing, paramedical and other staff, far exceeding the initial plan for 2,000 recruitments. Reference hospitals were initially designated for the treatment of confirmed COVID-19 cases while access to oncology and emergency services has been ensured. Moreover, a significant amount of monetary and in-kind donations (mostly medical consumables or personal protective equipment) has been directed to the health system through the Ministry of Health and later a specialised centrally managed donation system.

As soon as the first vaccines were approved and available (2020), "Operation Freedom" was initiated. The national anti-COVID-19 vaccination programme prioritised all eligible populations according to medical vulnerability and included a roadmap for administering vaccines to anyone who opted for it, based on criteria such as occupation, concurring health issues and age. Appointments can be made via phone, physical points (e.g. pharmacies, Citizen Service Centres) or a digital platform and accessible notifications are sent through the e-prescription system. Vaccines are being administered through many different structures of the National Health System, including public and military hospitals and dedicated centres, primary care facilities, mobile health units - especially for remote areas-, doctors' offices, while there is a provision for vaccination at home for the frail. In order to address scepticism against vaccines, incentives were introduced, tailored for different target groups resulting in a total of 73.46% of the population being fully vaccinated by May 5, 2022. A digital certificate is issued once the vaccination is complete, necessary for participating in many social and economic activities.

At the same time, the government had to deal with the consequences of the imposed restrictions on the economy as well as education. To this end, a number of compensatory measures have been taken, in order to alleviate those affected by the restrictive measures and the pandemic in general.

The Greek Government has financed a multitude of interventions to protect the economy and its citizens from the adverse effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. The total amount of measures that have been taken during the period 2020-2022 surpasses EUR 43 billion. These measures provided a wide “safety net” for households and businesses, so that the effects of the health crisis are as small as possible in order for them to be reversible. This effectively prevented the risk of the coronavirus pandemic leading to a surge in unemployment and closures of businesses. The measures consisted mainly of interventions: (i) facilitating natural and legal persons in servicing their debts, (ii) supporting horizontally affected workers, businesses and employment in general, (iii) in seriously affected sectors (i.e. tourism etc.) and for vulnerable population groups, and (iv) increasing the resilience and effectiveness of the state in the coronavirus response.

In particular, faced with the COVID-19 pandemic, Greece has taken a series of economic support measures in 2020 and 2021 in order to protect employment as well as disposable income. These measures, include, *inter alia*: (i) the reduction of VAT for a number of products and services (i.e. restaurant services, non-alcoholic beverages, nonalcoholic drinks, all passenger transports, sanitary products, dialysis equipment), along with other specific relief measures associated with tax deferrals, enhanced tax refunds and income taxation (*fiscal measures*), (ii) the provision of refundable prepayment grants, advance payment programmes and State guarantee measures (*monetary measures*), and (iii) 40% reduction in commercial and primary residence rent, extension of deadlines for expiry and payment of bank cheques issued by affected enterprises and tourism industry, the suspension of performing loan repayments (for the principal amount) for affected enterprises (Banks’ decision), the extension of procedures that are completed entirely by electronic means, and the disposal of confiscated ethyl alcohol to produce antiseptics and to the Ministry of Health (*financial measures*).

The extraordinary conditions of the pandemic also led to a paradigm shift in teaching and learning, which was massively embraced by teachers, students and their parents. Similar to other policy areas, the Greek government acted promptly in order to ensure that contact with the educational process is maintained. E-learning platforms were utilised, while courses for classes at pre-primary and primary levels were broadcasted through national TV (interpretation in Greek sign language was also available). Facilitating the pupils’ right to education and following a request made by the competent Ministries, cell phone carriers agreed to offer access to the various educational platforms at no cost. Moreover, digital infrastructure at schools has been reinforced, while accessibility to e-learning was supported with a €200 voucher awarded to over 500.000 children and youngsters (4-24 years old) for the supply of tablets/ laptops/ desktop PCs. A voucher for the purchase of technological equipment is scheduled to be granted to teachers soon. Additionally, Greek teachers were actively supported through a fast-track training program, the largest ever implemented in the country. Continuity in education was also ensured for Public Vocational Training Institutes as well as for public Universities (96,35% of undergraduate courses were provided through synchronous distance learning). During lockdown textbooks for tertiary education students were delivered free of charge to their place of residence, while Universities were given the chance to upgrade their digital infrastructure and services.

**Overall a significant effort has been made to turn the obstacles created by the pandemic into stepping stones for further progress.** The National Health System has been strengthened with many new Intensive Care Units, thousands of new staff recruited and an innovative tracking system that will shield the country in the face of future challenges. The financial support to employment had significant results not only in retaining jobs but in creating new ones: before the pandemic was over the country scored its lowest unemployment in 10 years.

In addition, the pandemic was used as an opportunity to provide a range of digital services to citizens, which are already reshaping the Greek state against the bureaucratic inertia of the past. Very significantly, the relaxation of some fiscal rules at the pan-European level in order to deal with the pandemic, allows for spending and investments that will improve the country's standard of living and reduce the gap with its richer partners.

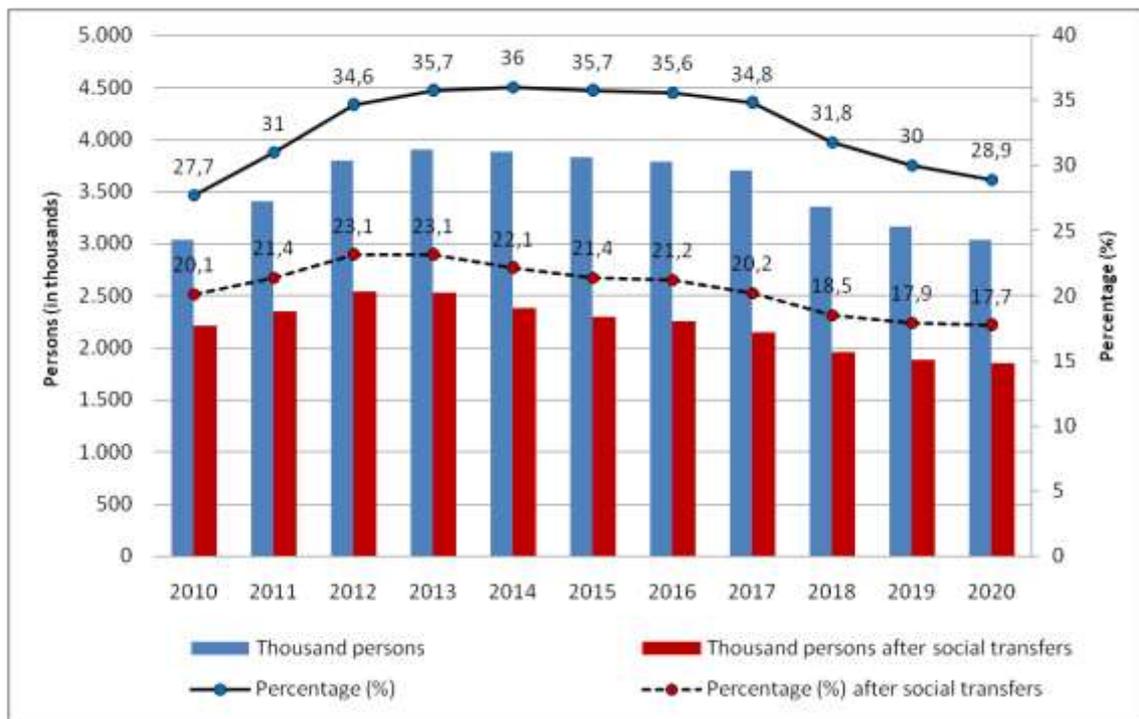
At international level, it is worth pointing out that Greece has donated over 4 million doses of COVID-19 vaccines, through bilateral agreements, to Albania, Armenia, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Egypt, Gabon, Ghana, Iran, Jordan, Kenya, Libya, North Macedonia, Rwanda, Tunisia, Ukraine, and Vietnam. The vaccines delivered, serve as an example of solidarity of Greece to its partner countries and of commitment to share resources to fight the COVID-19 pandemic. Moreover, via the European Union COVAX mechanism, Greece offered almost 6 million doses of COVID-19 vaccines, 4,3 millions of which were immediately donated to Djibouti, Ethiopia, Indonesia, Kenya, Laos, Nigeria, Pakistan and Syria, thus contributing to the full vaccination of approximately 17% of the combined population of these countries.

#### **4. Progress on Goals and targets**

##### **SDG 1: End poverty in all its forms everywhere**



### People at risk of poverty or social exclusion and at risk of income poverty after social transfers



#### Assessment of progress in relevant SDG indicators

- After 9 years of rates exceeding 30%, 2020 is the first year to see people at risk of poverty before social transfers reach 28.9%. Following a similar trajectory, the risk of poverty after social transfers showed the lowest rate in 11 years, at 17,7% (2020).
- During the decade of the financial crisis, severely deprived people reached a peak in 2016 (22,4%) and the rate has been declining to reach 16,6% in 2020.
- A significant decrease of people living in poor housing conditions has been observed as the rate has dropped, despite the financial crisis, from 17,1% (2010) to 12,5% (2020).
- Keeping houses warm is a challenge for Greek people as, in spite of the significant decrease of the high rates of the financial crisis, 17.1% (2020) of the population still cannot meet this need adequately, to this rate contributing 39,2% of people living on below 60% of median income.

#### Key challenges

Poverty eradication constitutes an ethical, social, political and economic imperative for mankind, and Greece has set the priority of reducing at least by half, the proportion of people living in poverty and to

achieve substantial coverage of the poor and the vulnerable. The main challenge is to address the high poverty rates created between 2008 and 2013, as a result of an economic crisis which brought an increase in unemployment rates together with a pre-existing inadequate social safety net. The policies implemented or planned aim to provide solutions for persons aged 67 and older with low incomes who do not receive any pension or social security benefit, for uninsured elders who do not own a house and for people living in deep poverty and social exclusion (school meals programme and meals for the most deprived). Regarding the poverty level of persons with disabilities, Greece faces the challenge to serve citizens with an integrated social inclusion and social cohesion mechanism for the provision of interactive applications and services through a Single Digital Portal and to ensure decent living independent conditions (camping programme, reduced travel ticket). Finally, measures address the country's demographic policy, promote parenthood and support the family and social cohesion.

### Main policy initiatives and measures

- In 2021, the Government adopted a comprehensive package of **relief measures** aimed at supporting society and particularly the most vulnerable, **against the adverse effects of the international energy crisis**. Indicatively, the most important measures include: increase of the disposable income of the citizens in order to support their purchasing power, increase of state subsidy for electricity and natural gas bills, increase of the heating allowance (by expanding the income and property criteria) and provision of additional financial support to low-income retirees and people with disabilities. [SDGs 1.3, 1.4, 7.1](#)
- In order to face the adverse effects of the **Covid-19 pandemic**, the Government adopted in 2020 and 2021 a comprehensive package of specific legislative measures targeting, in particular, the poor and most vulnerable. These measures include, *inter alia*: (i) the introduction of a programme to support borrowers affected by the enormous consequences of the Covid-19 pandemic, through a state contribution for the repayment of their loans with a mortgage to the main residence (Bridge I), and (ii) the establishment of a state contribution programme for the repayment of business loans, for borrowers affected by the severe impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic (Bridge II). [SDG 1.4](#).
- In order to assist the low-income households to deal with their debts, Greece adopted in 2019 a new law on the option of **regulating the primary residence mortgage loans**, by granting a state subsidy in the form of monthly installments for the repayment of the regulated amount. [SDG 1.4](#)
- In 2020, the Government passed a new law on **debt restructuring and second chance**, transposing the European Union (EU) Directive 1023/2019, which allows households and businesses to settle all their debts towards tax authority, social security funds, banks and servicers, through out-of-court or judicial settlement procedures or through bankruptcy and debt write-off proceedings. The new institutional framework provided for by this legislative initiative has three main pillars: (i) the establishment of an early warning mechanism, in order to avoid over-indebtedness and insolvency; (ii) the establishment of insolvency procedures by providing effective tools for the restructuring of all the debts, such as the out-of-court settlement mechanism for households and small businesses, the rehabilitation scheme for medium and large businesses, the use of mediation, and the provision of support to socially vulnerable groups, through state subsidy for loans with collateral on their primary residence; (iii) the establishment of bankruptcy procedures for natural persons and legal entities which are unable to meet their debts and simultaneously discharge them of all debts after liquidation of their assets. [SDG 1.4](#)
- The Government completed in September 2020 the drafting of the **National Private Debt Resolution Strategy**, a project which is to be implemented with the support of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), in cooperation with the European Commission's Directorate-General for Structural Reform Support (DG REFORM). [SDG 1.4](#)

- The Government has developed a **network of 52 borrowers' information and support centers**, providing free information to any interested party on the options for dealing with their debts, as well as the rights and obligations arising from the respective legislation. Through this, over 54,842 debtors (employees, pensioners, freelancers, small entrepreneurs, farmers, workers, vulnerable social groups, etc.) have the opportunity to receive free personalized advice, instructions and support, on the problems of arrears they face and in particular for the procedures provided for in the new integrated institutional framework. Five existing centers will be upgraded by Q4 2022. **SDG 1.4.**
- In the context of the **National Rural Development Programme (RDP) 2014-2020**, Greece pursues measures, which promote the design and implementation of local integrated development strategies, with the participation of stakeholders in rural areas implemented by Local Action Groups – LAGs (LEADER/CLLD). In this regard, particular emphasis is placed, *inter alia*, on the implementation of public works – infrastructure regarding the access of rural population, including the poor and the vulnerable farmers, to basic services or services enhancing the quality of life (indicatively basic services for old and young residents, restoration of areas, sport activities etc.) and facilitating the introduction of the related services. In addition, the RDP includes actions that support the development of broadband infrastructure and the provision of broadband services for all in rural areas. **SDG 1.4**
- In 2021, the Government adopted a new law entitled “**State support to businesses and non-profit entities for damages from natural disasters**”. The primary objective of this legislative initiative is to ensure the effective, coordinated and timely implementation of state support funds to businesses and non-profit entities, including those in vulnerable situations, on the basis of clear procedures and organizational structures, in order to cover emergencies and damages from natural disasters, primarily caused by climate change or other natural disasters such as floods, forest fires, landslides and earthquakes. State support actions and funds are implemented through the state support platform (arogi.gov.gr), a database with information on every support given to citizens, as well as to businesses and non-profit entities, after natural disasters. **SDG 1.5**
- The “**Help at Home**” programme has been running successfully in Greece since 1998. It is implemented by the municipalities of the country and the primary objective is to provide assistance to the elderly, the persons with disabilities, and those living alone or having a low income, through the provision of a wide range of services, from at home medical and nursing treatment to the supply of food and other basic necessities. **SDGs 1.1-1.5, 2.1**
- A 2020 law established a benefit of **2.000,00 euros for every child born** in Greece. The enactment of the childbirth benefit aims at strengthening the country's demographic policy, and supporting parenthood, as well as family and social cohesion, which have been seriously compromised during the period of economic crisis. **SDGs 1.2, 1.3**
- Following the rapid increase in poverty from 2008 until 2013, the rate of people at risk of poverty or social exclusion and at risk of income poverty after social transfers, are in decline ever since 2014 but still remain at high levels. A further improvement of the situation is expected due to the increase in employment and the reforms of the social protection system. Policies that have been implemented over the past four years to address the problem, include the **Social Solidarity Income**, the **social solidarity benefit for uninsured elders**, a **housing benefit for uninsured elders**, **two financial aid schemes for uninsured and financially weak elders**, and extensive food programmes described under SDG 2 below. **SDGs 1.3, 10.2**
- Greece is in full compliance with its international and European obligations regarding the reception of applicants for international protection. **Asylum seekers are entitled to protection**, including access to material reception conditions that include housing, healthcare, food and clothing provided

in kind, or as financial allowances or in vouchers. Moreover financial allowances are provided on a monthly basis ensuring that their needs are met, without exposing the applicants to financial hardship. [SDGs 1.1-1.4](#).

<b>Best practice example</b>
<b>Better employment opportunities for youth at risk - SDGs 1.1, 1.2, 1.4, 4.3, 4.4, 4.5, 8.3, 8.5, 8.6, 10.1, 10.2, 10.7</b>
<p>With a view to breaking the poverty trap of low skills that leads individuals to a lifelong economic struggle and instability, Greek authorities recognise the need for supporting adolescents and youth. OAED and UNICEF are implementing a partnership-based project (2021-2022) under the EU Child Guarantee Initiative Preparatory action, to Support adolescents and youth at risk for better employment opportunities. The project is mainly targeted at young people aged 16-24 at risk, including those with a migrant, refugee or minority background, children and young persons with disabilities, unaccompanied children, and children with complex needs, aiming at providing them with opportunities to enhance their employability. Activities completed include a labour market needs analysis in the Attica Region with emphasis on young people from groups at risk of social exclusion, a digital platform with multiple functionalities aiming at facilitating the integration services offered by OAED to these specific groups (skills assessment – e-portfolio – matching), as well as three targeted Vocational Training Actions: “Intercultural Mediator for young people with a migrant/refugee background” (completed), “Intercultural Mediator for Roma Education” (to be launched), and “Social Entrepreneurship” (currently implemented). Next steps, until conclusion at the end of 2022, include group counseling, such as job search techniques and active career guidance, as well as work placements, so that beneficiaries can acquire work experience and quality work opportunities linking their skills to labour market needs. Within the same framework, a support action for Social Cooperative Enterprises is under preparation, specially designed for young social entrepreneurs with disabilities and aiming to help them start their own businesses.</p>

### Forthcoming initiatives

- Launch a number of **projects funded by the EU Recovery and Resilience Fund (RRF)**, related to: (i) the establishment of a Public Credit Bureau, which will provide a valid and objective credit rating of natural persons and legal entities, based on their data and payment profile towards the public sector (tax authorities and social security institutions), in order to fill the information gap and information asymmetry between creditors and debtors; (ii) the development of an electronic platform to support the early warning mechanism and the out-of-court settlement of debts for individuals and legal entities; (iii) the implementation of the National Private Debt Resolution Strategy; and (iv) the development of a monitoring registry for private debt. [SDG 1.4](#)
- In 2022 a new program will be implemented concerning the **State support of the main residence loans of vulnerable households**, as an interim scheme until the creation of the Sale and LeaseBack Organization (SLBO) of the new insolvency law. Specifically, the program provides a state subsidy for the mortgage installment of vulnerable debtors in the amount of 70 to 210 euros per month, depending on the composition of the household. The duration of the program will be 15 months. The main benefit for vulnerable debtors is the avoidance of creditors' measures (eg foreclosures, auctions and evictions). Eligible are debtors who meet the income, property and other criteria that were established and are valid in the welfare program "Housing Allowance". These criteria are checked when issuing a certificate of vulnerability, which is necessary for participation in the

program and which is issued by a special electronic platform of the Special Secretariat for Private Debt Management. [SDG 1.4](#)

- At the end of the aforementioned program, vulnerable debtors who will not be able to adhere to a sustainable debt settlement, will be able to use the provisions of a private sector legal entity acting as an **Acquisition and Leaseback Body (SLBO)**, which will be selected by the State through a concession agreement. This Body will undertake the obligation to acquire the primary residence of a vulnerable debtor (who is bankrupt) or before the auction, by paying the commercial value of the asset. Then, the primary residence will be leased back to the insolvent person for twelve years, at the end of which, the debtor has a right to buy it back. In July 2021 a new electronic platform was launched, through which debtors have the opportunity to be certified as vulnerable under particular criteria and therefore be eligible for the social provisions of the Law -such as the SLBO- and the possible receipt of a housing benefit. The next steps include the selection of the financial advisor, the adoption of the relevant Ministerial Decision on Expression of Interest (Eol) and the launch of the SLBO interest process, as well as the evaluation and pre-selection of candidates for SLBO. The ratification of the respective law by the Parliament -according to the baseline scenario- is expected in June -September of 2023. [SDG 1.4](#)
- In Greece, non-performing loans and excessive debt cause obstacles to economic prosperity at the individual level, but also to the economic stability in general. In this context, the Greek Government is in the process of developing a **national strategy for financial literacy and financial skills** for its citizens, in order to improve their financial well-being and at the same time promote the health of the financial system. As part of the project, a mapping study of the existing financial education activities in Greece will be completed by May 2022 and a gap analysis from the desired situation as well as a benchmarking report based on the collection of quantitative data on the financial literacy of adults and young people (15-18) in school will be completed by November 2022. [SDG 1.4](#)
- Beginning in 2022, the **Single Digital Access Portal to Social Protection** will be gradually developed. The project will be funded by the RRF. The Single Digital Portal aspires to expand the functions of the National Mechanism for Coordination, Monitoring and Evaluation of Social Inclusion and Social Cohesion Policies (NM) and to eventually integrate the electronic application forms of the cash social assistance benefits into a single digital portal. [SDG 1.3](#)

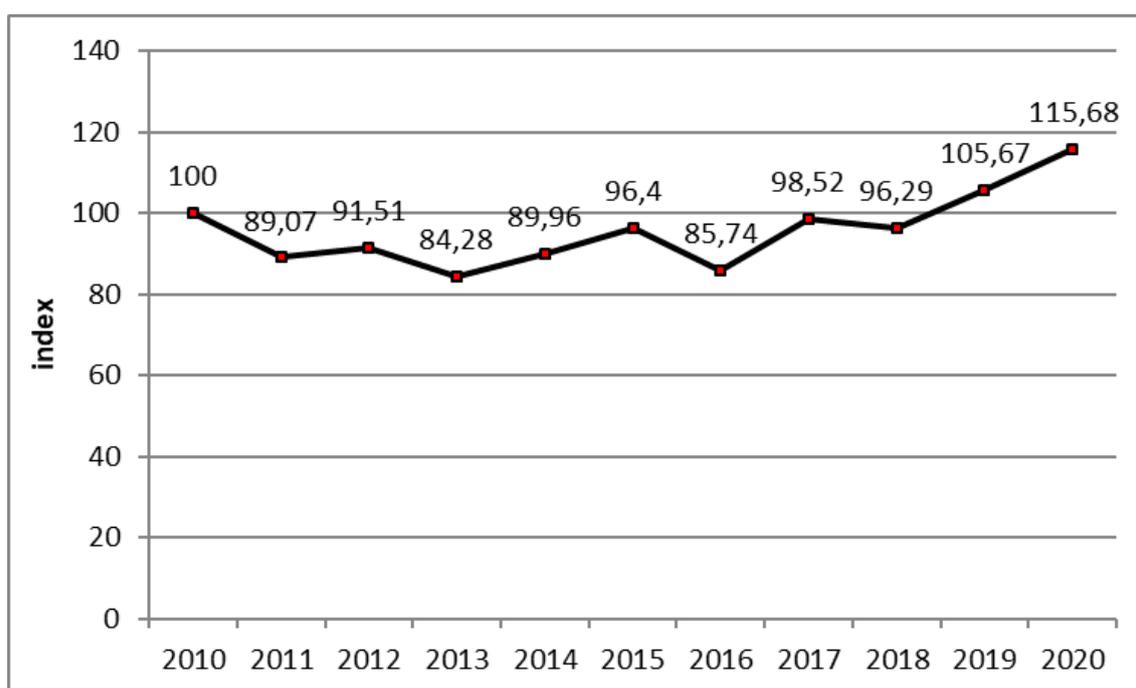
## SDG 2: End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture



### Percentage of pre-Obese and Obese people

Year	% Pre-Obese	% Obese	% Overweight
2014	39.4	17.3	56.7
2019	41.0	16.7	57.6

#### Index of the real income of factors in agriculture per annual work unit



#### Assessment of progress in relevant SDG indicators

- Overweight (pre-obese and obese) adults in Greece remain a relatively stable proportion of the population at 57,6% with a tendency to increase. This ranks the country above the EU-members average, although not in the highest cluster. There is currently an effort to bring out obesity as a serious risk factor for health problems and diseases.
- The index of real income of agricultural factors per annual unit of work, showed fluctuations during the period 2010-2018. Since 2019 it demonstrates an increase, mainly due to the implementation of policies in the agricultural sector placing emphasis on technological and organizational modernization, human resources development, close cooperation with research agencies and the repositioning of Greek agri-food products to the domestic and international markets.

- The government financial support to agricultural R&D which had been relatively low at up to 3.1 euros per inhabitant, shows an increasing trend especially after 2019 and onwards, reaching 5.3 euros per inhabitant (2019). Areas under organic farming increase slowly, marking 1% more in a decade.

## Key challenges

The attainment of the zero hunger goal is facing challenges such as the steady, and at times pressing, influx of migrants and asylum seekers, as well as the vital need to ensure that all children up to 12 years old have access to at least one nutritious meal per day. Poor nutrition and dietary risks, including low fruit and vegetable intake, and high sugar, salt and sugar-sweetened beverages consumption, are estimated to account for about 15% of all deaths in Greece. At the same time, while adult obesity rates are close to the EU average, the relevant childhood and adolescence obesity percentages are steadily growing and more than one in five 15-year-olds are overweight or obese, a percentage higher than in most other EU countries.

The framework for achieving food security and sustainable agriculture is set by the EU Green Deal, "Farm-to-Fork" and Biodiversity Strategies, in combination with the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). This framework has been implemented nationally since 2014 through the Rural Development Program, and a new period is now beginning with the aim to address challenges such as improving the productivity and incomes of small-scale farmers, promoting secure and equal access to land and other productive resources, fostering knowledge, technology, financial services, markets and opportunities for value addition, and supporting sustainable and innovative food production systems and organic farming practices. Within the Recovery and Resiliency Fund (RRF) framework, the reform "Economic Transformation of the Agri-Food Sector" seeks, inter alia, to improve the environmental profile of agricultural holdings and to ensure food safety and adequacy, and the reform "Digital Transformation of the Agri-Food Sector", aims at promoting the sustainable management of natural resources.

## Main policy initiatives and measures

- **Food and meals distribution system** through the Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived (FEAD) contributes to achieving the specific objective of alleviating the worst forms of poverty, by providing non-financial assistance to the most deprived persons by food, basic material assistance and social inclusion activities, aiming at the social integration of the most deprived persons. The Program is implemented nationally since 2015. The Greek FEAD supports i) national schemes whereby food and basic material assistance, are distributed to the most deprived persons **through 57 Social Partners** and ii) accompanying measures, complementing the provision of food and basic material assistance with a total budget of €276m for Food and €45m for Basic Material Assistance. In July 2021 an additional budget of € 62.797.650 was approved in order for the financial gap between the two periods to be covered. In view of the new programming period, the budget of the program is expected to reach €400m. FEAD has been totally integrated since 2017 in the Guaranteed Minimum Income (GMI) eligibility rules and business processes, in relation to the implementation of the second pillar, to deliver complementary social services. Each GMI's recipient unit can be automatically included in FEAD, without a separate application. Each recipient receives a food package or takes part in the accompanying measures if the payment of the GMI income support has not been discontinued. Indicative accompanying measures are: psychosocial support, empowerment and social integration services to children and their families, dietary and healthy eating advice, family budget management advice and supportive after-school tutoring. Number of beneficiaries: 347.214

- **Asylum seekers** in Greece receive **groceries** and cooked **meals** through framework contracts by the Ministry of Migration and Asylum, as well as **cash assistance**, ensuring a long term food planning and nutrition security. **SDGs 2.1, 2.2**
- As of the second half of 2019, a dedicated effort was initiated towards combating malnutrition and obesity. The '**National Food Policy Plan**' aims to integrate healthy dietary habits and exercise into the daily lives of the Greek population. A specific online questionnaire, to collect statistical data on infant nutrition, was disseminated in public and private nurseries and kindergartens. Moreover, initiatives were taken scoping on raising awareness, dietary specifications were issued for the School Meals program and a specific section regarding nutrition and exercise was introduced in schools under the Skills Labs as seen in SDG4. Furthermore, the National Public Health Strategy "Spyros Doxiadis" Program, was launched in 2020, targeting -among others- the adoption of healthy dietary habits, while promoting the necessity of physical activity for all age groups. Key priorities include: (i) the mapping of behavioral, social and environmental risk factors, in order to address each of them with specific action plans; (ii) the control and management of risk factors related to malnutrition and physical inactivity; and (iii) the implementation of information and awareness-raising campaigns for the general population on the benefits of well-being by changing daily habits. **SDG 2.2, 3.4**
- Cooperation between the Government and the food industry is pursued for the improvement of the nutritional composition of food products (food reformulation), with the aim of reducing the addition of salt, sugars, saturated fatty acids and industrially produced trans fatty acids. Suggested actions aimed at food reformulation include producing food with healthier profiles (e.g. less salt and sugar), selling food in smaller portions, limiting advertising and other promoting techniques for foods high in salt, added sugars, and trans fats, and setting nutritional standards for foods offered in specific structures (such as schools, kindergartens, nursing homes, camps, etc.). **SDG 2.2**
- Authorities issued specific instructions regarding the diet offered to infants and toddlers in public and private nurseries and kindergartens. The nurseries were encouraged to include wholemeal products to ensure that children have an adequate intake of fiber, to include vegetables on a daily basis and to exclude foods containing added sugars. Furthermore, recommendations regarding the feeding of pupils were sent in all-day schools, both in terms of measures to prevent the spread of coronavirus and measures to prevent foodborne diseases. **SDG 2.2**
- Within the framework of the **RDP 2014-2020**, Greece promotes measures and actions aimed at: (i) reducing water pollution from nitrate ions and other polluting inputs (e.g. phosphate ions) related to agricultural activity, targeting at vulnerable areas, including wetlands, through the take up of relevant eco-friendly commitments such as green manure incorporation and land being left fallow; (ii) supporting both switching to and conservation of organic agriculture practices, which contribute to the protection of the environment (soil, water and biodiversity), the production of quality products and animal welfare; (iii) increasing the competitiveness of viable agricultural holdings, through the realization of related investments (buildings, constructions, machinery), the purchase of perennial plantations, fencing and landscaping works, purchase of software and office equipment; and (iv) supporting new farmer entrepreneurs in developing their agricultural activities and increasing the competitiveness of their agricultural holdings. **SDGs 2.3, 2.4**
- Regarding food security, the last 2,5 years, in order to prevent the adulteration of products and eliminate products with forged identities, joint committees (of the Ministry of Rural Development and Food, of Hellenic Food Authority "EFET", of Hellenic Agricultural Organization "ELGO-DIMITRA", of the Economic Police, of the General Directorate of Customs, of Special Secretariat for Financial and Economic Crime Unit, of the General Secretariat of Trade & Consumer Protection and of the

Directorates of Agricultural Economy and Veterinary of the Regions), are carrying out intensified audits on the market and the entrance gates of the country.

Best practice example
<b>School meals programme - SDGs 2.1, 2.2</b>
<p>The school meals programme was introduced in 2017. It is funded by the state budget and is implemented by private contractors providing the meals directly to schools. The programme is implemented in specific primary schools across the country and is gradually expanding every school year. During the pilot school year 2016-2017, 60 schools had been included in the programme with 9.014 pupils. The following school year 2017-2018, 800 schools had been included in the programme with 130.000 pupils. During the school year 2018-2019, the programme was extended to cover 153.244 pupils and the following two school years, 2019-2020 and 2020-2021, 1.353 schools had been included in the programme with 185.311 pupils. Finally, during the current school year 2021-2022, a total of 1.621 schools had been included in the programme with 224.335 pupils. The government wishes to keep the programme oriented in areas affected by hardship or underprivileged ones. Its main aim is to provide young children with one nutritious meal per day so that it is ensured that all children have access to indispensable, in quality and quantity, nutritional elements. In 2019 an interim evaluation took place in which students from 12 schools (random sampling), contractors, teachers, programme coordinators and parents participated by filling in an anonymous electronic questionnaire. The purpose of the evaluation was to highlight the positive and negative elements of the programme in order to help improve it.</p>

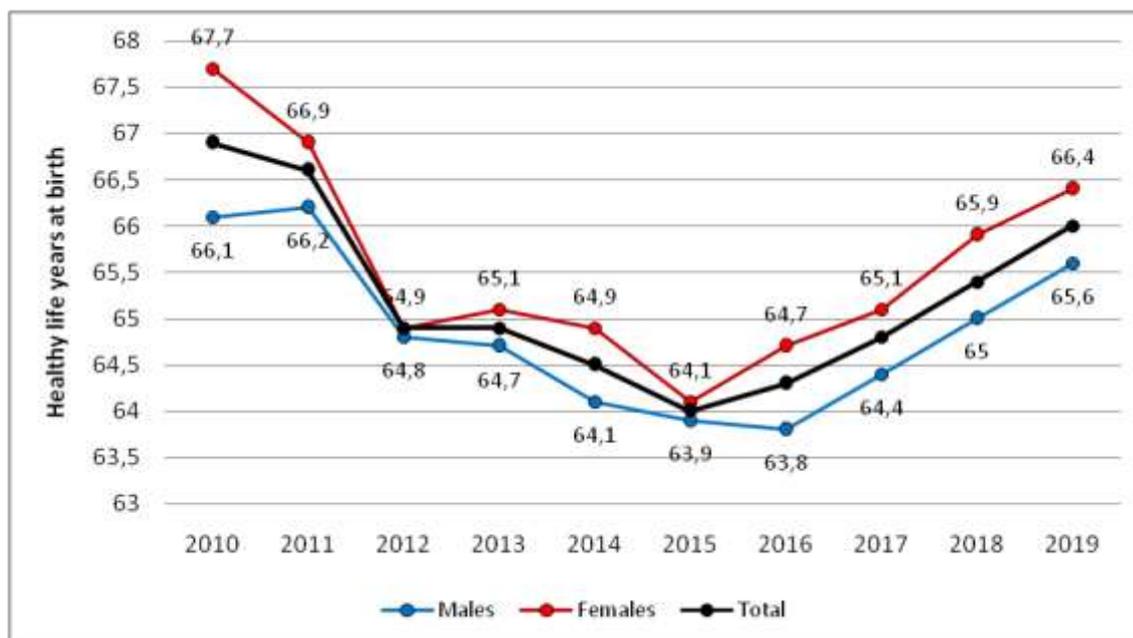
#### Forthcoming initiatives

- A key milestone for tackling obesity is the roll-out of the **National Action Plan for Public Health 2021-25**, that encompasses a comprehensive program to address the risk of obesity in Greece, with a focus on specific initiatives for children and adolescents. [SDG 2.2](#)
- Implementation measures and actions of the **RDP 2014-2020**, covering the transitional period 2021-2022. [SDGs 2.3, 2.4](#)
- Implementing the reform "**Economic Transformation of the Agri-Food Sector**" which seeks, among other things, to improve the environmental profile of agricultural holdings and to ensure food safety and adequacy, prioritizing actions such as the promotion of innovation and the transition to "green" processing of agricultural products, the "green" agritourism, the restructuring of crops and the genetic improvement of animals. [SDGs 2.3, 2.4, 2.5, 2.a](#)
- Implementing the reform "**Digital Transformation of the Agri-Food Sector**", aiming, among others, at the sustainable management of natural resources, particularly water and soil, in order to contribute to the mitigation of climate change and the production of sustainable energy sources. [SDGs 2.3, 2.4, 2.5, 2.a](#)

## SDG 3: Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages



### Healthy life years at birth by sex



### Assessment of progress in relevant SDG indicators

- Healthy life years have been steadily increasing for both sexes, from 64 in 2015 to 66 in 2019. However, the number of remaining years that a person of specific age is expected to live without any severe or moderate health problems still remains below pre-crisis levels (67 years).
- Despite the multi-year economic crisis and the outbreak of the pandemic, the percentage of people with self-perceived health as “good” or “very good” has risen slightly over a decade, from 75.7% to 78.6%.
- Smoking prevalence remains a significant problem, as the percentage of the population aged 15+ years who report tobacco smoking every day fluctuated around 40% over the past decade.
- Apart from a minor setback regarding HIV, the standardized death rate due to tuberculosis, Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) and hepatitis by type of disease remained very low, and even decreased slightly from 2012 (1.6) to 2018 (1.45).

## Key challenges

In the aftermath of the economic crisis, the Greek health system was already facing serious challenges, which the outbreak of the pandemic only exacerbated. Compared to other European countries, public spending for Health in Greece has been low, as a result of the economic crisis during the previous decade, particularly concerning long-term care. Out-of-pocket expenditure in Greece is 35%, with the average in the EU being 15% (2019). Investment in the health sector progresses yet slowly, especially in priority areas such as primary care, whereas access to complementary social services is still not sufficiently developed. It is evident that the public health system is in need of organizational reforms to ensure its resilience, starting with more efficient prevention, primary and at home/outpatient care, particularly with an aging population and a relatively low rate of long-term care workers. The elderly and other vulnerable people require more special attention. The pandemic also revealed weaknesses in the mental health system. Moreover, the insular and remote mountain communities of the country face difficulties in accessing quality health services, specialist doctors and specialized laboratory centers.

## Main policy initiatives and measures

- In 2019, the **National Public Health Organization** was established, which is responsible for promoting health, preventing chronic diseases, and reducing the burden of non-communicable diseases. It has issued guidelines for the administration of antiretroviral therapy and treatment of opportunistic infections in adults and adolescents with HIV infection. **SDG 3.2**
- In order to promote healthcare quality and patient safety, a **Health Quality Assurance Agency**, responsible for quality assurance of health services, was established in 2020. With a view to adopting a Common Assessment Framework for hospitals, the HQAA has already issued directions for specific standards for patient identification and patient file management. It has also developed an operational plan for safe hospital operation under emergency situations. At the same time, training is conducted for medical personnel, regarding quality issues and prevention of disease control protocols. **SDG 3.8, 3.c**
- The **National Vaccination Programme**, targets specific and vulnerable groups of the population, minors and adults, migrant populations and populations at risk. In 2021, three new digital services were launched: the **Child and Adolescent Vaccination Register**, the **Pupil Health Registry** and the **Children's Digital Health Booklet**. In 2022 universal vaccination of boys and girls against the Human Papillomavirus (HPV) in order to meet the target set by the WHO and to eliminate HPV (and the cancers it causes) by 2030 was introduced. Boys and girls aged 9 to 18 will now be vaccinated against HPV free of charge, whereas previously the vaccine was only free for girls. **SDG 3.2, 3.4**
- As part of an information campaign, material from the Global Alliance for **Breastfeeding Action** was promoted in health care facilities and other places where breastfeeding can be encouraged. Institutional interventions took place regarding the operation of “breastfeeding areas” in health structures under the supervision of the Ministry of Health (hospitals and health centers), in structures under the supervision of the Ministry of Culture (museums and sports facilities) and in workplaces for breastfeeding working mothers. “Human Milk Banks” in public hospitals became operational. Moreover, use of breast milk substitutes for newborns for acceptable medical reasons or with the written consent of the mother, was strongly encouraged. **SDGs 3.4, 1, 4, 8, 5**
- A 5 year **National Action Plan for Public Health** was introduced in 2020, which includes the **National Prevention Programme “Spiros Doxiadis”**. The Programme focuses on prevention of behavioral and environmental factors, such as tobacco use and poor dietary habits related to mortality rate as well

as on the early identification and effective prevention of diseases. An extensive screening programme has been launched, focusing on the early detection of common Non-Communicable Diseases in the general population. It is estimated that more than 50% of unidentified cases of cancer will be detected thanks to the mass screening program and more than 4 million diagnostic procedures will be performed by 2025. More specifically, the actions consist of free of charge screening tests for cervical cancer, breast cancer (an SMS has been sent initially to 1,300,000 women to have a free mammogram and have their results examined by a doctor), colorectal cancer, abdominal aortic aneurysm and cardiovascular risk assessment (National Plan for the treatment of Vascular Strokes in specialized centers throughout the country sets procedures that ensure the treatment of patients within a few hours after the occurrence of the stroke), which are the most common non communicable diseases linked to mortality rates. **SDG 3.4**

- A **National Childhood Cancer Registry** was established in 2020. Registration of minor patients and data gathered from different sources will gradually feed into a mechanism to assess the demand for health services and provide scientific staff with the necessary information to manage and monitor specific patients throughout the country. **SDGs 3.2, 3.4**
- A rigid approach towards tobacco use has been followed since 2019, in accordance with the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control. The legislative and regulatory framework for **Tobacco Control** was amended, banning tobacco use in all indoor and specific outdoor public spaces, and foreseeing extensive controls. A 4-digit telephone line (1142) is available for citizens to report violations of legislation and seek information or help to quit smoking. Smoking Cessation Clinics were upgraded, along with the introduction of the relevant regulatory framework of operation. The Ministry of Health, in cooperation with the responsible supervising bodies and services, has been implementing since 2018 actions and interventions to raise awareness and inform the student population on the hazards of tobacco use. Also, information materials, such as posters and table tabs on prohibition of tobacco and related products, have been distributed across public areas and offices. **SDG 3.a**
- In order to address the increased hospitalization needs that were exacerbated during the Covid-19 pandemic, the total number of available **Intensive Care Unit (ICU)** public beds was significantly increased. In February 2020, there were a total of 565 ICU public beds in Greece with no availability for potential hospitalization of COVID-19 cases. As of February 2022, Greece has 1.343 operational ICU beds, of which 704 are dedicated to COVID-19 patients. **SDGs 3.3, 3.8**
- Implementation of the program "**No One Alone in the Pandemic**" (2021), a psychological support program through teleconsultation, for Covid-19 patients who are hospitalized or are in quarantine at home, for their family members and for the health staff of Hospitals (providing support for anxiety, depression, and suicidal behavior). In the context of the program, hospitalized Covid-19 patients are provided with tablets in order to counter the negative effects of quarantine. A 5digit telephone helpline (10306) provides tele-counseling and support from qualified professionals addressed to the general population, free of charge and on a 24-hour basis. The range of services provided include psychiatric care to patients with mental illness, psychological support to children, families and health personnel, as well as social support to the adult population with mental health issues. The line has incorporated new features in order to support children, adolescents and their families, as well as fire- or earthquake-stricken fellow citizens. Meanwhile, ad hoc initiatives have also been carried out to address emergency situations that act as stressors for the affected population. **SDG 3.4**

- The institution of **Family Doctor** and the **Primary Health Care structures** have been established since 2017 for the provision of essential health care services, such as medical and dental care, reproductive health and care of the mother and child, and the implementation of vaccination programs. Furthermore, the population coverage was expanded, through Local Health Groups which will also operate as family medical groups. Primary health care facilities played a leading role in the management of the pandemic, as sampling points. They also provided home or remote medical services, by operating Special Mobile Health Teams (SMHTs) to serve mountainous and remote areas and to vaccinate vulnerable groups and people with mobility difficulties. **SDG 3.8**
- In order to support the inhabitants of mountainous and remote/inaccessible regions, a new preventive healthcare programme, "**Prevention at Home**" was introduced in 2020. The Programme makes possible, on the one hand, medical examinations at home for the inhabitants of the above regions who belong to vulnerable groups of the population and, on the other hand, the automated dispatch of the results to contracted practitioners through the use of information and communication technologies. **SDGs 3.8, 1.4, 10.2**
- A **National Mental Health Committee**, consisting of specialized - distinguished scientists in the mental health field, was established in 2021 with a mandate to design a mental health strategy, which will lead to a new 10-year National Action Plan for Mental Health. Funding of mental health and addictions programs was increased by 62% in 2021 for strengthening the mental health facilities and services and the development of new ones throughout the country, aiming to provide care to all population groups. **SDG 3.4**
- In recent years efforts have been made to further develop programs for the prevention, damage reduction, detoxification and social rehabilitation of users. A significant new initiative is the establishment, in 2021, of a **safe drug consumption space**, specially designed to reduce risk and prevent overdose among socially marginalized, usually homeless, adult users. **SDG 3.5**
- The "**National Central Health Procurement Authority**" was reorganized in order to rationalise expenditure for a sustainable health care system. A 30% target for centralization of procurement has already been achieved, resulting in the procurement of higher quality materials and better health services; a new target of 40% has been set for 2022. Also, structural measures to reduce clawback have been taken since 2019, setting yearly reduction targets up to 2025. In this direction, incentives were introduced for pharmaceutical companies, offsetting clawback with R&D expenditure. **SDG 3.8**
- As regards the problem of bloodstream infections due to selected antimicrobial-resistant organisms, the **National Action Plan (2019-23) for the Treatment of Microbial Resistance** in Greece was published in 2019. The Action Plan was developed in the framework of One Health in collaboration with the Ministry of Rural Development & Food and the Ministry of Environment & Energy. In parallel, from 2020, the **National Programme for the prevention and control of hospital-acquired infections and antimicrobial resistance** is being implemented in cooperation with donors and stakeholders. **SDGs 3.d., 2, 17.17**
- A series of measures have been taken to **prevent the West Nile virus and malaria epidemics**, as well as to avoid outbreaks due to imported cases of dengue, chikungunya or Zika. Attention is being paid in order to avoid area designation as malaria-endemic by the World Health Organization (WHO). **SDG 3.3**

- Regarding protection of public health from major-accident hazards involving **dangerous substances**, consultation of all competent authorities is taking place. The consultation seeks to update the institutional framework, aiming at more effective control for the prevention of the occurrence of a major accident and at the clarification of response procedures after a major accident occurs, in order to minimize its consequences. [SDG 3.9](#)
- To enhance informed decisions regarding sexual relations, contraceptive use and reproductive healthcare, a series of awareness-raising and information activities and interventions on **sexual and reproductive health** have taken place since 2020, with topics such as contraception in adolescence, sexually transmitted infections, sex education for boys, sex education for girls, and relationships in adolescence. [SDGs 3.7, 5.6](#)
- Another important type of facility is the Day Centre for Psychological Support of People with Oncological Diseases, which has already been established. Also in 2021 a pilot program of Psychogeriatric Support for the promotion of health and the prevention of mental disorders of the elderly, with emphasis on depression, which is an important risk factor for dementia was established in Aiginiteio University Hospital (pilot phase with island regions, such as Tinos, Syros and Andros, and remote areas, such as Evros and Xanthi). [SDG 3.4](#)
- Development of a Telepsychiatry network, in the form of an integrated digital outpatient clinic (prescription services, consultations, issuance of certificates) for the remote support of adults and minors in remote areas. Implementation has already started in the Greek islands of Kastelorizo and Symi while similar units will be developed in border islands and mountainous areas shortly afterwards. [SDG 3.8](#)
- The Government adopted a new **National Strategic Plan for Road Safety 2021-2030**, which introduces the Safe System Approach and the long-term Vision Zero road fatalities by 2050. The quantitative targets of the Greek Road Safety Strategic Plan are aligned with the EU targets of reducing the number of fatalities and serious injuries in crashes by 50% by 2030. [SDGs 3.6, 11.2](#)
- A new legislative framework promoting Road Safety and aiming at reducing the level of road traffic fatalities and injuries through managing the interaction between speed, vehicles, road infrastructure and road-user behaviour in a holistic manner, came via L.4850/2021. Next steps include the re-evaluation and updating of the educational material for the assessment of the candidate drivers as well as the revision of the Highway Code, taking into account the international experience. [SDGs 3.6, 11.2](#)
- Traffic **education and road safety** for children and youth is fundamental for the national goal of reducing the number of road accidents, and this is done via the “e-Drive Academy” platform and the introduction of a road safety course in all the primary schools of the country. [SDGs 3.6,, 4.7, 11.2](#)
- The Ministry of Citizen Protection has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the **Organisation Against Drugs (“OKANA”)**, which provides for the development of common actions and training programs in the field of prevention, treatment, harm reduction and social reintegration for drug users. [SDG 3.5](#)
- As regards **access to public health services by residents of remote areas** and small islands, particularly in emergencies, patient airlift services to city hospitals are provided by both the NHS and the military. Health care services are also provided in military hospitals for family members of Armed Forces personnel and all citizens. Air medical evacuation flights across the country and

abroad are carried out by the Ministry of Defense supplementary to the Ministry of Health. **SDGs, 3.4, 3.6, 3.8**

<b>Best practice example</b>
<b>Early Intervention Units in Psychosis - SDG 3.4</b>
Every year around 3.500 young children are expected to experience a first episode of psychosis following which they will be intense users of inpatient or outpatient mental health services of the National Health System (NHS). Within the framework of the psychiatric reform, prevention and treatment structures are being set up since 2021 with emphasis on regional Greece. New types of Mental Health Units, under the name "Early Intervention Units in Psychosis", aim at the preventive detection and treatment of the most severe forms of mental disorder, in order to minimize the long-term effects and to prevent or reduce the relapse rates. They also improve the functionality of young patients and their occupational, educational and social integration. Short-stay facilities for patients with autism have been established throughout Greece, as well as distance learning psychoeducation and support programs for their family or caregivers (in cooperation with non-profit organizations) have been created.

#### **Forthcoming initiatives**

- As part of the National public health Prevention Program "Spyros Doxiadis" and with the main goal of reducing risk factors for public health and the indirect relief of hospitals, a series of initiatives are planned as follows: the **National Program for the Promotion of Physical Exercise and Healthy Nutrition**, is scheduled to begin in 2022, the **prenatal screening** for 270,000 pregnant women and perinatal screening for 270,000 newborns is planned over the next 3 years, and the **alcohol prevention programme** (estimated benefit to around 291,000 young people in the 14-24 age group) will unfold in the next years. **SDG 3.2, 3.4, 3.5**
- A set of **mental health structures and services** will be rendered operational by end 2022, for patients with dementia and Alzheimer's disease, patients with autism, patients in the age group of children, adolescents and young adults, for the support of employed and unemployed people, migrants and refugees. A series of projects aiming to promote mental health will be financed under the Recovery and Resilience Plan (RRP); for instance, the development of new mental health facilities and services aimed at ensuring citizens' access across the country and the implementation of actions related to addressing the adverse effects on the mental health of the population due to the pandemic (totaling amount € 55 million - Start of implementation: 2022) **SDG 3.4, 3.8**
- In the context of the National Strategic Reference Framework 2021-27 the following objectives of the ongoing **psychiatric reform** will start to be implemented in 2022: abolition of institutional care, development of community care and promotion of social integration of people with psychosocial disability, improvement of the quality of mental health services and development of tele-psychiatric services and home care. **SDGs 3.4, 3.8**
- Supply of two mobile health clinics (June 2022) that provide age assessment and essential health services to **unaccompanied children**. **SDG 3.8**
- The development of **National Registers and Codifications**, the **Central Data Repository** and the universal implementation of the **Individual Electronic Health Record** will create a unique network for the exchange of information between doctors and patients, protecting personal data and

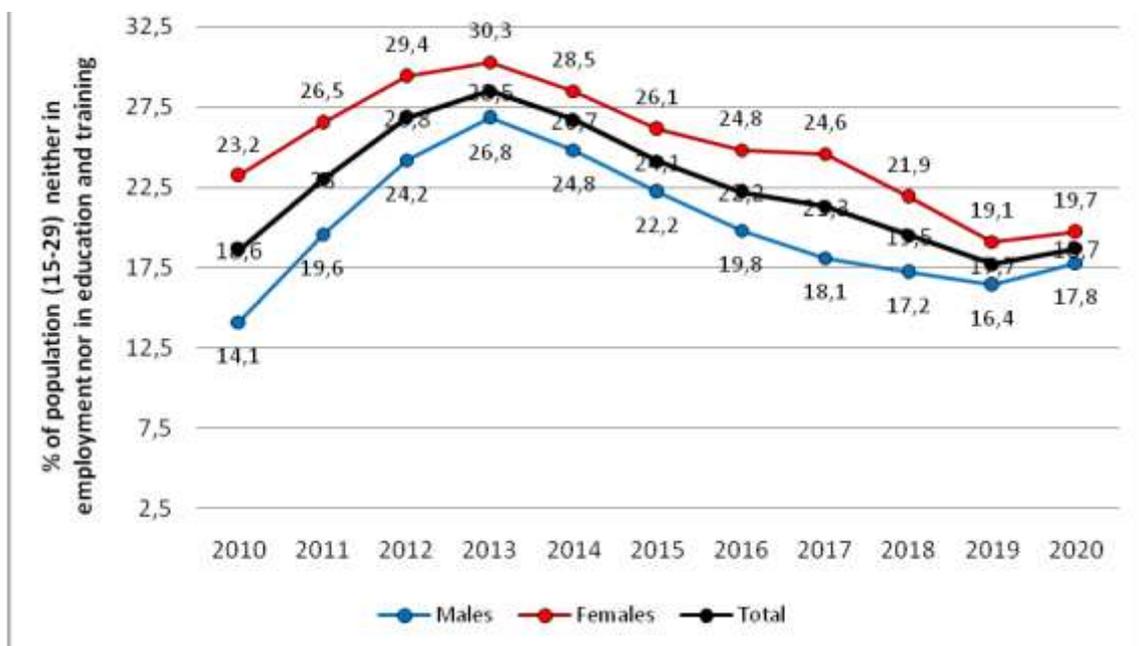
ensuring medical confidentiality. A strategic plan for interoperability in health services will be finalised by the end of 2022. **SDG 3.8**

- The **national digital infrastructure** is under way to support **oncology patients** throughout their interaction with the healthcare system. **SDG 3.8**
- Two new services, which will be supported by digital technology and telemedicine, are to be introduced in the near future. These are the "**home care**" and "**hospital at home**" programmes, which bring health services from hospital to home. In order to promote equitable health coverage and access to quality essential health-care services, 8 reference sites will be established by Q2/2025 so as to provide hospital at home services. Also, a national registry for patients treated through home care will be set up. **SDG 3.8**
- A substantial reform in Primary Healthcare is in full progress; following the newly introduced legislative framework, 60 local health units will be rendered operational within 2022, while more health units will be upgraded in terms of infrastructure and equipment. **SDG 3.8**
- Adopt measures and actions aimed at implementing the new National Strategic Plan for Road Safety 2021-2030. **SDG 3.6**

**SDG 4 Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all**



**Percentage of population aged 15 to 29 years neither in employment nor in education and training (NEET) by sex**



**Assessment of progress in relevant SDG indicators**

- Over the last decade, the proportion of the population aged 18 - 24 who are early leavers from education and training, has fallen from 13.5% in 2010 to 3.8% in 2020, a year when Greece ranked second best among European Union (EU) Member states.
- In 2020, the percentage of people aged 25 - 34 who have successfully completed tertiary studies (e.g. University, Higher Technical Institution, etc.) was 43.7%, being well above the EU average. It has been an encouraging increase, compared to 2010 (30.6%), yet recent graduates seem to still face particular employability challenges.
- The percentage of adults aged 25-64 who participate in learning (formal or non-formal, both general and vocational, after leaving initial education and training) has increased from 3.3% in 2010 to 4.1% in 2020, though still remaining far below the EU average.

- There is still a high proportion of NEETs, despite showing a tendency to decrease, linked to many concurrent structural and employability issues and a persisting low youth employment.

### Key challenges

Ensuring quality education and lifelong learning for all constitutes a policy priority of utmost importance at national and international level, as it is inextricably linked to ensuring access to full and productive employment and decent work, as well as to equal participation in society. The initiatives of the Greek Government that serve this goal are not only related to the particularly high unemployment rate among young people in the country, but also to the “brain drain” problem. They are also directly linked to the shortage in basic, soft and digital skills within the education community and labour market. Applying to all education levels, the country has to increase its efforts to guarantee inclusion, in line with the relevant recommendation of the UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. In the same vein, there is a need to address the challenge of the insufficient involvement of stakeholders in the design of education and training systems, the deficit in matching qualifications to market needs and the yet to be improved international competitiveness and visibility of education structures. Undoubtedly, government initiatives are called upon to address established negative social stereotypes as Vocational Education and Training (VET) is still considered an option for low-achievement students or for those of low socioeconomic status, and outdated laboratory equipment. Finally, the strong central state presence in the organization and funding of education, as well as reduced levels of accountability also need to be counterbalanced, as the benefits of implementing a more decentralized education system include reduced social inequalities, greater adaptability to the needs of pupils and students, encouragement of innovative practices and initiatives, cultivating critical thinking and enhanced student performance.

### Main policy initiatives and measures

- In order to improve the quality and effectiveness of public education, along with the inclusiveness of the education system, the Government adopted in 2021 a new law, entitled **Upgrading of the school, empowerment of teachers and other provisions**. The Law seeks to strengthen the autonomy of schools, support the creative initiatives of teachers - giving them more freedom in the organization of teaching (i.e. free choice of textbooks) and strengthen the role of the School Head. [SDG 4.3](#)
- The implementation of universal mandatory education from the age of 4 and introduction of English in all public pre-primary kindergartens is linked with broader policy to ensure access to education and more fair and equitable learning outcomes over time. This policy is expected to contribute to the long-term reduction of inequality. [SDG 4.2](#)
- In 2020, the Government established by law the **National System of VET and Lifelong Learning** with a view to further improving and reforming VET, placing particular emphasis, among others, on apprenticeship for persons with disabilities and/or special educational needs (SDG 4.3, 4.4). Other key reforms in this direction, include: the participation of social partners in the formation of learning modules, the creation of model vocational high schools, the establishment of experimental and thematic post-secondary institutes for VET, the creation of over 200 new job profiles (with particular emphasis on digital and green industries) and the upgrade of all laboratory centres of VET. [SDG 4.4](#)
- Ensuring equal access for all women and men to technical, vocational and tertiary education is a core priority of the Ministry of Education. It is within this context that a number of initiatives have been taken towards achieving the full and complete implementation of all the **education-related policies embedded in the National Action Plan (NAP) for People with Disabilities**, focusing

particularly on accessibility to physical spaces and digital materials for all students across learning groups. [SDG 4.3](#)

- The Government has put forward a number of specific measures aimed at promoting **inclusive and equitable education**, with a focus on the most **vulnerable students**, including the employment of 4,500 special education teachers as permanent staff, the completion of inclusive Education Guide for schools and the development of curricula for special education schools. [SDGs 4.3, 4.5](#)
- For the purpose of facilitating the access **of unaccompanied minors to education**, the Government has adopted a series of actions, such as supplementary tutorial courses for children that live in hostels for unaccompanied minors, constant information to the institutions that operate hostels and have in their responsibility or teach unaccompanied minors, activities for the empowerment of hostels' staff that support the unaccompanied minors in the accommodation structures etc. [SDGs 4.1, 4.5](#)
- In order to improve the quality and inclusiveness of education and to substantially upgrade the skills of the students, the Government decided to introduce in the educational system **new School Curricula**, which attribute particular importance to the cultivation of soft and digital skills across all ages and disciplines through the use of innovative digital tools and materials, and educational methods that foster the creativity, critical thinking, collaboration, communication and curiosity. [SDGs 4.1, 4.7](#)
- A systematic effort has been made in the context of the digital transformation of education, with the **supply of technological equipment to schools** and the upgrade of digital infrastructure and connectivity; at the same time, the Government is implementing projects funded by the Recovery and Resiliency Fund (RRF) to further equip schools with interactive whiteboards, robotics and Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) learning infrastructure, development of digital content, etc. What is more, over 500.000 children and young people aged 4-24 have already received a 200-euro voucher for the purchase of technological equipment, based on socio-economic criteria. [SDG 4.1](#)
- Quality in education is also promoted through the **evaluation of the educational work** performed by school units, which allows them to monitor the way they are organized and operate as well as constantly improve their weaknesses. The evaluation of primary and secondary school teachers has also been established as a necessary means of implementing a strong feedback mechanism and ensuring the continuous improvement of the education provided. Last, a mechanism for evaluating the effectiveness of the education system has been established, with the launch of an anonymous test to assess performance levels at Greek schools, based on the standards of the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) [SDG 4.1, 4.4](#)
- As a further means of promoting equal opportunities for all, the Greek Government also reinforced the network of **Model and Experimental school units**, which operate as local centers of excellence across the country for all students, regardless of socioeconomic background. [SDG 4.1](#)
- In **Higher Education**, in an attempt to introduce transparency and meritocracy in the allocation of available resources, State funding is provided based on objective criteria – 80% (e.g. number of students and staff), while the rest 20% is allocated based on performance to quality indicators (e.g. excellence in research, connection with society / labour market, internationalization). The Government has also instituted an integrated framework for upgrading the security and protection in the academic environment (including controlled admission to universities, security plans, establishment of special security and protection units and structures). Further, in order to promote extroversion and internationalization, the Government provided Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) with the opportunity to establish international undergraduate programs taught in foreign

language -through more flexible procedures and it is building on international collaboration between Greek and foreign HEIs. [SDGs 4.3, 4.7](#)

- Under the European Digital Skills and Jobs Coalition, and in line with the new National Digital Strategy (2020-2025), the Ministry of Digital Governance launched the “**National Digital Academy**” **platform**, whereby a plethora of educational opportunities is offered to the citizens, in order to further develop and evaluate their digital skills. [SDGs 4.4, 4.7, 16.10](#)
- Education and awareness-raising on sustainable development, climate change and the SDGs is being pursued not only in the primary, secondary and tertiary school curricula, but also in the **Military Academies**, where officers are taught relevant courses. [SDGs 4.7, 13.3](#)
- In 2021, the Government initiated the development of a series of cooperative actions with the National School of Judges in order to enhance the quality and enlarge the scope of **education and training of judges and prosecutors**. The first training project, which took place in October 2021, brought together judges of all directions of justice and students of the National School of Judges, working under the theme “The rights of persons with Disabilities in legal order (civil, penal and administrative approach)”. [SDGs 4.7, 16.3, 16.6](#)
- New provisions and revisions of the legislation, as well as concrete policies and measures, aiming at modernizing and strengthening the **tourism education** and vocational training were introduced in recent years (2018-2021). [SDGs 4.4, 4.7](#)
- Greece as a traditional maritime country has developed a training system ensuring a high-level vocational training for Greek seafarers so that they can fully meet the ever-increasing requirements, dictated both by technological development as well as international conventions’ provisions. With a view to further improving, enhancing and modernizing the framework for the organization and operation of **public maritime education**, Greece decided to proceed, over the last two years, to the conduct of a number of specific actions and projects, which foster the digital transformation of the whole maritime education system. In addition, initiatives have been taken towards ensuring the equal access for all women and men to the Merchant Marine Schools, without discrimination related to gender. [SDGs 4.3, 4.4](#)
- In order to ensure equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for persons with disabilities, the legal requirement of being able-bodied so as to attend the **Higher Schools of Dramatic Art**, both public and private, was abolished in 2017. [SDGs 4.5, 4.7](#)
- The 2021 **National Strategy for the Social Integration of Applicants for and Beneficiaries of International Protection** underlines that “**the educational process is governed by the principle of equal access to quality education, without discrimination and exclusions**. In addition to formal education, non-formal education is also provided during the “pre-integration” stage. The non-formal education is holistic and includes, beyond Greek language learning, the familiarization with the European way of life, the principles of democracy, gender equality, sports, as well as special programs on disability, the prevention of domestic violence, and the fight against human trafficking. It should be noted that the access of immigrants and refugees’ children to the educational system is supported for over two decades through the establishment and operation of the intercultural schools, reception and tutorial classes, and second chance schools. Since 2019, the **HELIOS** (Hellenic Integration Support for Beneficiaries of International Protection) programme, offers, among other, integration courses to beneficiaries of international protection, which are conducted in the **Integration Training Centers** throughout the country. [SDGs 4.1, 4.3](#)

- A 2020 law provided for an extensive regulation of **VET** and the operation of Manpower Employment Organization (OAED)'s Apprenticeship Vocational Education Schools ("EPAS"), Experimental EPAS, and Vocational Training Institutes (IEK). **SDG 4.4**
- Enterprises, cooperatives and municipal and regional enterprises, as well as the public sector enterprises, bodies and organizations engaging in economic activity participate in the **Ergonomic Workspace Arrangement programme**, with a view to hiring persons with disabilities and ensuring their easy access to the workplace. OAED contributes 90% of the cost of ergonomic workplace arrangements (specially adjusted technological facilities, workplace adjustments, special equipment, and purchase of software for persons with disabilities) up to the amount of €2.500. **SDG 4.5**
- Interventions aimed to upskill the low-skilled/low-qualified adults include the **2018-2020 BASIC-Building Alternative Skills' Innovative sChemes Action**, the **2020-2022 EaSI REFLEX-REcommending FLEXible learning for low-skilled adults Action**, as well as the **2021-2022 OAED and United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) partnership Agreement** to implement a project (under the EU Child Guarantee Initiative Preparatory Action) targeted at young people aged 16-24, including adolescents and youth at risk, with a migrant, refugee or minority background, children and young people with disabilities, unaccompanied children, and children with complex needs, with the aim of providing opportunities for basic, soft, and vocational skills development. **SDG 4.4**
- A **new online platform for persons with disabilities "prosvasis.oaed.gr"** has been in operation since October 2021. Particularly user-friendly, the platform was designed so that it can ensure enhanced access to OAED's website content. The platform can be easily accessed by persons with visual difficulties (adjustment of size/colour combinations, text in place of images, conversion of text into speech), hearing difficulties (text of sound files/videos), physical disabilities (keyboard/mouse browsing) and cognitive/mental difficulties (simplified content presentation). **SDG 4.5**
- As a member of the **National Alliance for Digital Skills and Employment**, OAED has embarked on several **partnerships** with internationally renowned **online training providers**, effectively utilizing their state-of-the-art digital infrastructure, organization and professional experience. Through these innovative partnerships, OAED has implemented a number of training programmes focusing on the digital and green transitions, with a view to supporting the unemployed by updating and enhancing their skills. **SDGs 4.4, 17.17**

<b>Best practice examples</b>
<b>Skills Labs (SDGs 4.1, 4.2, 4.7)</b>
In 2020, the Government introduced, in the primary and secondary education, the pilot phase of the «Skills Labs», an innovative initiative, which contributes significantly to the promotion of education for sustainable development through the development and improvement of a wide variety of pupils' skills (i.e. soft skills, life skills, technology and science skills). The key idea behind the «Skills Labs» - which are focused on four thematic areas (well-being, the environment, social empathy, and innovation) - is to equip students with the appropriate skills, values, and attitudes to make them successful life-long learners, as well as global citizens of the world. The «Skills Labs» have been introduced in the mandatory national curriculum throughout compulsory education (ages 4 to 15) and take up 10% of teaching time in pre-primary and primary education. It is worth pointing out that the new module Skills Labs» has been awarded the Global Education

Network Europe (GENE) Global Education Award (2020/2021) for its innovative educational approach and the way in which it promotes education for global citizenship.

#### **Moving forward with an inclusive education system (SDGs 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.5)**

Inclusion is a top priority of governmental policy and inclusive education is a horizontal principle in all actions of the competent Ministry of Education. The Strategic Plan for Equal Access of Persons with Disabilities to Education, under the National Action Plan for Rights of Persons with Disabilities, aims at the equal and inclusive access of students with disabilities (children and young people) in learning communities across all levels of education. It involves supporting activities to respond to their diverse learning needs and pilot projects to boost accessibility, both physical, as well as in terms of suitable learning materials. To further support inclusive education, for the first time since school year 2021-22, two-year compulsory education, from the age of 4, was implemented across the country, assuring equal access to a quality and free education program for students from different socio-economic backgrounds. Moreover, the Government, in order to ensure that each child in the country enjoys the inviolable right to inclusive education of high quality, has launched policies for their gradual integration into the mainstream education system, namely recruitments and training seminars for teachers, refugee reception classes, interpretation services in 20 languages. In fact, as of school year 2021-2022, the Greek Ministry offers access to public schools for children from Ukraine. According to UNICEF, Greece hit a record in registration and attendance (95%) of refugee and immigrant children, with more than 16.417 children of refugee and immigrant background attending classes in primary and secondary education.

#### **Forthcoming initiatives**

- The Reform “**Child Protection**” is included in the Greek Recovery and Resilience Plan (RRP). The measure consists of a **reform of the curriculum and educational program of infants aged from 3 months to 4 years aimed to promote their cognitive development, including early diagnosis of cognitive impairment**. The reform is accompanied by investments in educational material and cognitive development assessment tools for 3,000 childcare centers. The implementation of the reform and investments shall be completed by the end of December 2025. [SDG 4.2, 4.a, 3.4](#)
- Promote, through legislation, **sustainability in higher education** with the creation of a specialized unit for sustainable development in each university. [SDGs 4.3, 4.7](#)
- A new University Reform draft legislation is expected to be adopted by Q2 2022 and to include provisions aiming at enhancing HEI’s autonomy, strengthening connectivity with the labour market and supporting extroversion and internationalization of HEIs. A relevant RRP reform (Strategy for Excellence in Universities & Innovation) that is also going to support the modernization in the area of Higher Education, will soon begin implementation (first calls for proposals are expected by Q3 2022). [SDG 4.3](#)
- The first year of the new school Curricula pilot implementation is going to be completed in June 2022. The second year of pilot implementation will begin in September 2022. [SDGs 4.1, 4.7](#)
- Complete all the education-related actions and sub-actions of the **NAP for People with Disabilities**, placing emphasis on physical and digital accessibility, the creation and piloting of special education learning modules, and the comprehensive collection of statistical data on students with disabilities. New legislative provisions for the education of pupils with disabilities with particular emphasis on inclusive education are expected to be tabled by Q2 2022. [SDGs 4.3, 4.4, 4.5, 4.7](#)

- Expand and improve teacher training programs and actions promoting **education for sustainable development**. [SDGs 4.7](#)
- Continue **investments in infrastructure for general and special education** as well as VET, placing emphasis on the procurement and installation of digital equipment. [SDGs 4.3, 4.7](#)
- The first Vocational Training Schools (ESK) are expected to be established by September 2022. The main aim of these schools is to tackle early school leaving, upskill basic skills of compulsory education graduates and care for the inclusion of vulnerable social groups to professional life. [SDGs 4.4](#)
- An expansion of the network of model vocational high schools, as well as that of experimental and thematic post-secondary institutes for VET is expected by October 2022. [SDGs 4.4](#)
- Complete the **digital transformation of maritime education** through specific and multi-targeted projects. [SDGs 4.4, 4.7](#)
- The action “Strengthening the **social integration of third country nationals**” will promote awareness of the host society on migration and integration, actions of interculturalism and interaction with migrant populations, as well as a vocational training program for beneficiaries of international protection. Key targets include the provision to the beneficiaries of a) learning basic elements of the Greek language, context and culture, as well as the European way of life and institutions, b) job counseling sessions, c) vocational training, d) internship, e) information sessions with the help of employment consultants about future prospects, as well as f) the possibility of covering the cost of certification of professional qualifications/skills. [SDGs 4.1., 4.3, 4.5, 4.6, 4.7, 8.8](#)
- The **Integrated Action for Facilitating Job Integration of Refugees** (I.Ref.JOB) is planned for implementation in 2022-2023 and carried out in collaboration with the European Commission and the World Bank; moreover, targeted collaborations are also developed with competent national authorities and stakeholders with a view to exchanging know-how and ideas on the utilization of appropriate innovative practices, methods and tools, such as an assessment tool for the recognition of refugees’ prior experience and skills. A pilot intervention is being designed for 1,000 recognized refugees who are registered with OAED. The intervention aims to develop a lasting, effective mechanism (tailored to the needs of beneficiaries and enterprises) of integrating the refugee population into the labour market. It includes a broad set of interrelated actions, based on a customized approach, such as Individual and Group Counseling – Linguistic & Intercultural Training - Vocational Training and Internship – Wage Subsidy. [SDG 4.4, 4.5, 8.3, 8.5, 8.6, 8.7](#)
- The action “Promote **integration of the refugee population** into the **labour market**” (to be funded by the Recovery and Resilience Facility), will include 10 distinct sub-projects among which Linguistic and Intercultural training, Active Vocational Guidance, Vocational Training on basic, digital and technical skills, as well as Skills Certification. [SDG 4.4, 4.5, 8.3, 8.5, 8.6, 8.7](#)
- Two training programmes to be funded through the RRF, include the **Labour force skilling, reskilling and upskilling through a reformed training model/ Umbrella VET programme** (vocational training for 78.000 unemployed people, mainly focused on upskilling or reskilling in basic and advanced digital skills for a diverse set of social groups and sectors), and the **New Strategy for Lifelong Skilling: Modernising and Upgrading Greece’s Upskilling and Reskilling System / Horizontal Upskilling Programmes to targeted populations** (tackling the needs for digital, green and other highly demanded skills for, by offering upskilling programmes for 80.000 unemployed people in baseline digital skills, medium-level digital skills, and green skills). [SDG 4.4](#)

- Implementation of a project funded by the European Commission and supported by the OECD regarding the **development of a national strategy for financial literacy for Greece**. This Project is expected to increase the financial literacy of the whole population in Greece as a way to empower people to make effective financial decisions and use traditional and innovative financial services safely. The ultimate users of the Project outputs will be the individuals, households and businesses in Greece. **SDG 4.6**
- Digital skills, training programs and certification for conscripts during their military service. Moreover, vocational training programs in the army's most required professional specialization, valuable for conscripts' access to the labor market, will be carried out from the newly established Lifelong Learning Centers of the Armed Forces. **SDGs 4.3, 4.4, 8.6**

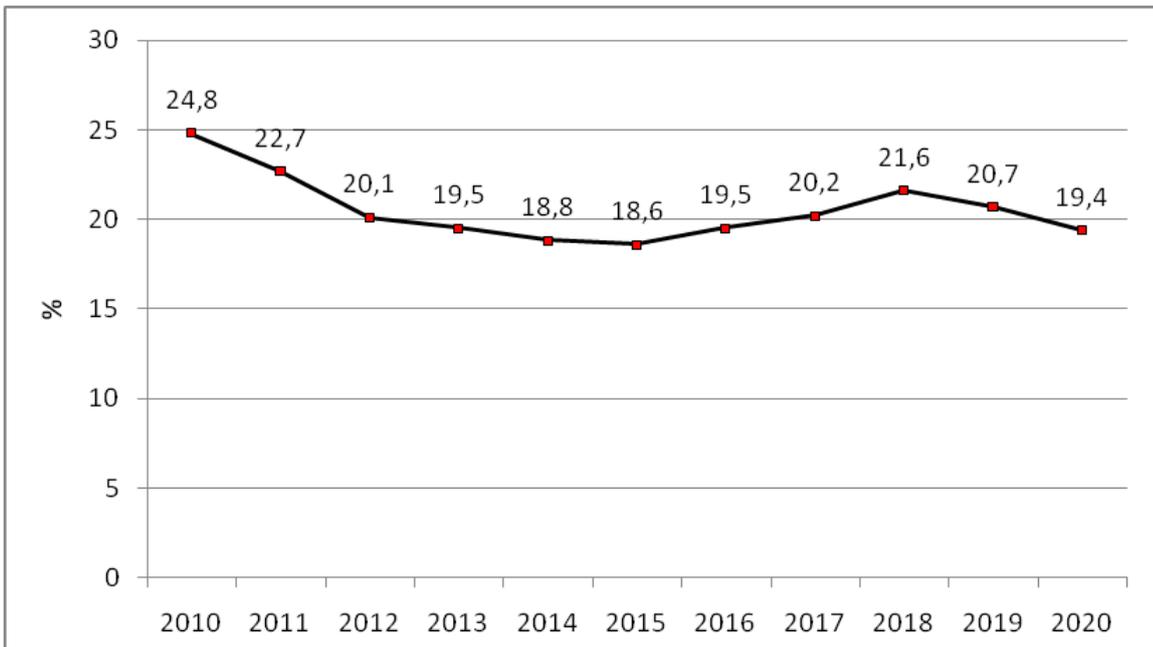
**SDG 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls**



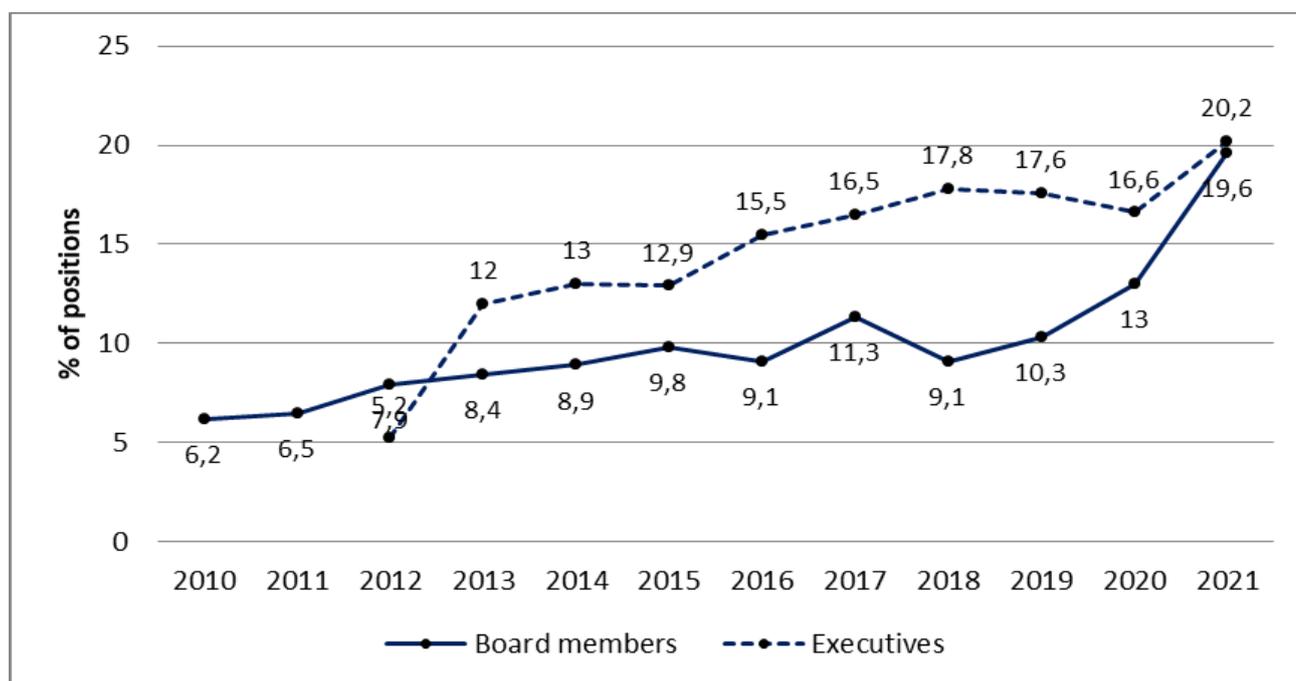
**Difference between average gross hourly earnings of males and females employees**

	2010	2014	2018
% of average gross hourly earnings of men	15.0	12.5	10.4

**Gender Employment Gap - Difference between employees and employment rates of men and women aged 20 to 64**



## Percentage (%) of women in senior management positions



### Assessment of progress in relevant SDG indicators

- As regards to the gender pay gap, the difference between the average gross hourly earnings of male and female employees has declined significantly between 2010-2018 dropping from 15% to 10.4%.
- In a context of an overall low employment affected by the financial crisis, low female employment rates (48,7%, see SDG 8), high female long- and short-term unemployment rates, and their stable significant difference to mens' (20% difference in employment), have been persisting issues for the economy since even before the crisis.
- Participation of women in senior management positions was traditionally extremely low, marking around 6% until 2011. An impressive change has been observed since, with a recent decisive support of legislation (2020), which elevated the rate to around 20% for both board members and executives.

### Key challenges

Gender equality is a fundamental human right and a prerequisite for sustainable development. During the Covid pandemic the risk of domestic violence rose while the negative socio-economic consequences on the economy affected women more than men. Longstanding challenges persist, such as the prevention and elimination of all forms of abuse, sexual and domestic violence, the eradication of harassment or gender discrimination in the workplace, the enhancement of equal participation of women not only in the labour market but in leadership and the decision making processes. Last but not least, gender-based stereotypes have not yet ceased to exist, affecting participation of girls and women in sports.

## Main policy initiatives and measures

- Greece introduced in 2016 and 2019 new provisions aimed at **encouraging the participation of women in elections for the national and European parliaments** and by raising the 1/3 quota to 40%. The same percentage is set by a new law passed in 2021 for the **election of local and regional authorities**. Extending participation in the democratic decision-making procedures was also the goal of reducing the voting age from 18 to 17. [SDGs 5.5, 16.7, 5c](#)
- A 2020 law on Corporate Governance envisages provisions regarding a more comprehensive gender representation in the Board of Directors, by introducing mandatory quotas and stipulates the company's obligation to set diverse criteria for the selection of its directors. It provides for the first time in Greece a **gender quota of at least 25% on listed company boards**. This provision, which was deemed necessary in order to address the under-representation of women in the BoDs, complements the voluntary adoption of the principle of diversity (regarding knowledge, skills, including gender of advisors) by the Greek Code of Corporate Governance. [SDG 5.5, 16.7, 5c](#)
- Women's participation in decision making in sports clubs/associations is promoted by a 2020 law on sports, which states that in relation to the composition of the management board of the sports clubs, the number of candidates from each gender/sex must be at least equal to 1/3 of the number of the vacant seats for election, including the seat of the president/head of the management board. [SDG 5.5, 16.7, 5c](#)
- A 2021 labour reform law transposes into national Law the EU Work-life Balance Directive that aims at better supporting a **work-life balance for parents and carers**. It encourages a more equal sharing of parental leave between men and women, while introducing paternity leave for the first time and addressing women's underrepresentation in the labour market. The legal framework for parental leave and other provisions and facilities for parents and carers is completed, and workers are protected from dismissal on the grounds of applying for or taking parental leave. [SDGs 5.c, 8.8, 8.5](#)
- In 2021, the Government initiated a new legal reform aimed at **reformulating and improving the family relationships**, particularly **between parents and children after spouse separation**. This law reform provides for the active presence of both parents in the upbringing of their children and the fulfillment of their shared responsibility toward them, despite the existence of a separation, divorce or annulment of the marriage, placing particular emphasis on children's mental health, their ordinary integration into the family environment and the development of their personality. [SDG 5.4, 16.3](#)
- In 2021, the Government and in particular the Ministry of Citizen Protection adopted a comprehensive **Strategy on Fighting Trafficking in Human Beings** (2021-2025), setting out a number of targeted objectives and priorities aimed at effectively addressing organized human trafficking networks, developing preventive measures, with particular focus on the most vulnerable groups, and strengthening inter-agency and cross-border cooperation. [SDGs 5.2, 16.2](#)
- In 2021, Greece was one of the first countries to ratify by law the International Labour Organization (ILO) Convention concerning the **elimination of violence and harassment in the workplace** (No. 190). The adoption of this landmark instrument recognizes the right of everyone to work free from violence and harassment, including gender-based (articles 1-23). It introduces new measures and new rights and obligations, including the right of the employee who is subject to such behavior to leave the workplace for a reasonable period of time, without any salary loss or other consequences, and the obligation of employers with more than 20 staff members to adopt written policies to

prevent and combat harassment and violence in the workplace and to handle internal complaints. This protection is afforded not only to employees, but to every person that provides services at the workplace, including independent contractors, interns and volunteers, regardless of the contractual relationship with the employer. The Ombudsman and the Hellenic Labour Inspectorate (“SEPE”) work closely together in order to effectively identify enterprises that violate the principles of equality and non-discrimination. [SDG 5.2, 5c](#)

- A 2019 law promoting substantive gender equality and combating gender-based violence, was the first attempt in Greece of creating the necessary conditions for the elimination of gender inequalities in all sectors of public, social and economic life. **Gender mainstreaming** and **gender budgeting** were introduced for the first time into a legislative text. All basic concepts, mechanisms, institutions and stakeholders are explicitly clarified, aiming at the implementation of the principle of gender mainstreaming and at preventing and combating violence against women. A **national network for gender-based violence** is established to run by the General Secretariat for Family Policy and Gender Equality and the Municipalities (Counseling Centers, Shelters, a 24-hour SOS 15900 helpline). The National Council for Gender Equality is established as “a collective advisory counseling body” in order to evaluate and assess the existing gender equality policies. Special provisions have been put in place in the crucial fields of education, labour, mass media and health. [SDG 5.c, 16.1, 16.2, 17.17](#)
- The General Secretariat for Demography and Family Policy and Gender Equality, which is the principal entity for preventing and combating violence against women, has developed and continues to implement, over the last years, the **National Programme on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women**. A comprehensive network of structures for preventing and tackling all forms of violence against women has been created, including: (i) the national SOS 15900 24-hour helpline; (ii) 43 Counseling Centres throughout the country providing social, psychological, legal and employment support using a gender perspective and legal aid, in cooperation with bar associations; and (iii) 19 Women’s Shelters that provide accommodation and food to women victims of gender-based violence and their children. [SDG 5.2](#)
- The 2021 **National Strategy for the Social Integration of Applicants for and Beneficiaries of International Protection** seeks to “strengthen the primary, secondary and tertiary prevention of gender-based violence, child abuse and human trafficking, primarily at first reception facilities, with an emphasis on women and children”. In this context, actions are implemented such as (i) workshops on gender equality and the prevention of gender-based violence; (ii) cooperation with the competent authorities for early detection of signs of violence and abuse and referral for intervention; and (iii) development of a holistic support program for the rehabilitation of the victims through the provision of specialized services and their participation in a range of cultural activities and vocational training activities, so as to develop interests and skills. [SDG 5.2, 16.1, 16.2](#)
- Greece’s gender equality goals are depicted in the **National Action Plan (NAP) for Gender Equality**. The **NAP 2021-2025** complements and builds on the previous ones, **taking into consideration the country’s specific needs and the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) effects**. Its main priorities are in line with the priorities of the EU Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025, the Council of Europe Gender Equality Strategy 2018-2023 and the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, having as strategic women-empowerment goals the: (i) prevention of violence against women and domestic violence; (ii) equal participation of women in the labour market; (iii) equal participation of women in decision making processes; and (iv) gender mainstreaming in sectoral policies. The National Action Plan went through public consultation so as to have the widest possible consent (Ministries, civil society, academia) and includes 67 actions/measures. 17 Ministries have

contributed to its elaboration with their initiatives regarding its strategic axes and their implementation. [SDGs 5.1, 5.2, 5.4, 5.5, 5.c](#)

<b>Best practice examples</b>
<b>Nannies of the Neighborhood (SDGs 5.4, 8.3, 8.5, 8,8)</b>
<p>The Nannies of the Neighborhood initiative was established by a 2021 law, aiming at promoting equality through work-life balance and at strengthening women’s access to the labour market. The programme is designed to support working mothers to take care of their babies, aged from 2 months to 2.5 years, by giving them access to accredited caregivers and providing financial support to working mothers to cover a part of the childcare cost through a voucher. The goal of the program is twofold. On the one hand, it is to support and facilitate new mothers and guardians to attain their full and prompt reintegration into the labour market, prevention of severe loss of household income and continuation of their professional career. On the other hand, it is to reduce the undeclared work of baby-sitters by encouraging the unemployed women to work as certified caregivers, providing them with training if needed and supporting decent wages.</p>
<b>Innovation Centre for Women (SDGs 5.5, 5b, 8.2, 8.3, 8.5, 17.16, 17.17)</b>
<p>The Centre is a synergy of 20 entities: ministries, research centres, universities, chambers and private companies. Its creation is based on the United Nations model for Sustainable Development. Through a detailed Action Plan the partners will subsist a series of interventions to help women in Greece make the most of opportunities arising in the context of the 4th Industrial Revolution including (i) designing innovative actions in order to attract more women to study in STEM and increase their participation in companies, (ii) creating of a platform for the development of female entrepreneurship that will be based on high technology, guaranteeing conditions for female talent participation in the new environment and (iii) assessing the impact of gender-based policies. The European Centre for Women and Technology (ECWT) will cooperate for its development through the transfer of know-how from countries, such as Norway, with a tradition in female innovation and entrepreneurship. The ECWT is a European multi-stakeholder partnership of more than 130 organizations and a rapidly growing number of individuals representing high-level expertise in women and technology development from government, business, academia, and non-profit sectors working together to measurably and significantly increase the number of girls and women in technology and ICT.</p>

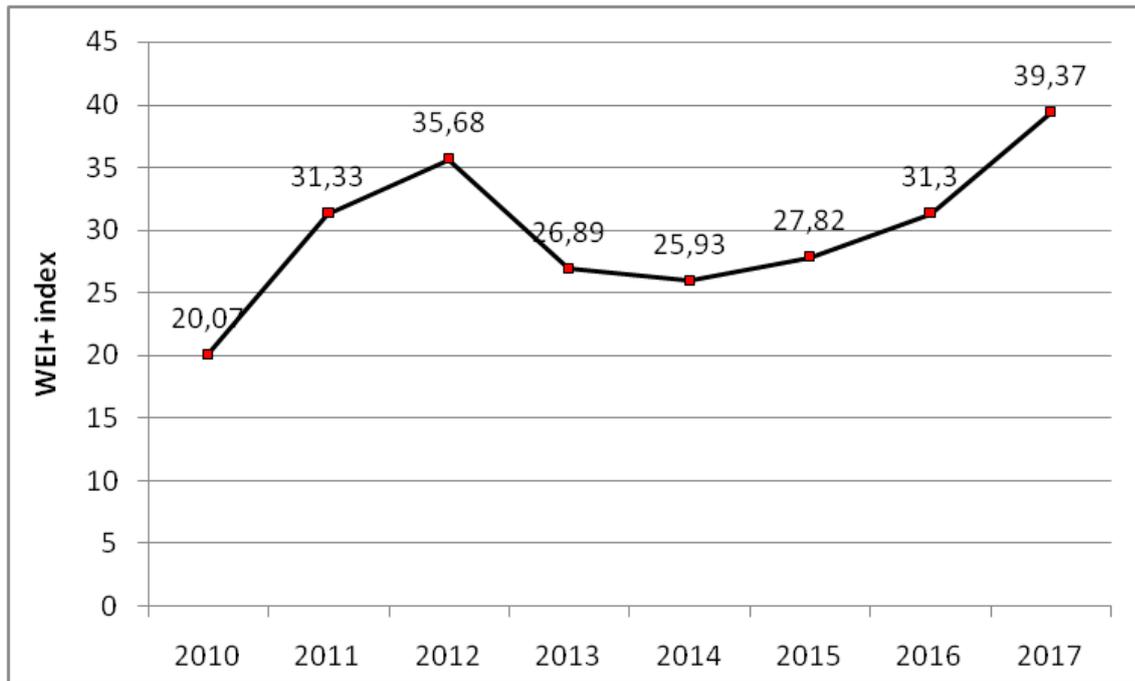
### Forthcoming initiatives

- Enhancing the work-life balance, female participation in the labour market and the promotion of shared responsibility in the family is pursued by 2 projects to be implemented beginning in 2022: (i) The Project **Creation of Childcare units within large companies** (funded by the RRP and included in the “GREECE 2.0” recovery plan), which offers financial support to companies in order to create childcare units; and (ii) the flagship program called **Nannies of the Neighborhood**, designed to support working mothers to take care of their babies, aged from 2 months to 2.5 years by giving them access to accredited caregivers. [SDG 5.4](#)

### [SDG 6: Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all](#)



Percentage of Water exploitation index, plus (WEI+)



#### Assessment of progress in relevant SDG indicators

- The percentage of people in Greece not having a bath, shower and indoor flushing toilet in their homes is extremely low, at 0,1%, ranking in the 2nd best cluster of countries in the EU and well below the Union's average (1,5%).
- The proportion of population connected to at least secondary wastewater treatment presents a mild but steady increase, approaching a percentage of around 95% in 2018.
- The pressure on renewable freshwater resources due to water demand, measured as the annual average difference between water abstraction and return after use to the environment, is quite high, revealing a situation close to water scarcity in 2017.

#### Key challenges

Sustainable use of resources, resilience to climate change and environmental protection are key challenges for Greece. Nevertheless, investments are still needed to improve water treatment and water infrastructure in general. About 10% of generated wastewater is not connected to collecting systems. The performance of the water supply services is relatively poor, particularly regarding distribution leakages. Moreover, Greece faces challenges with water abstraction and prolonged periods of drought, which is estimated to intensify due to climate change. The restoration of the water bodies to good status as provided by the Water Framework Directive (WFD) remains an issue. Reversing soil erosion and improving water use efficiency are considered as important priorities.

In this context, Greece should modernize the water resources management, while effectively managing urban waste water supporting the transition towards a circular economy and to enhance the sustainability of activities and investments in the water supply sector, in addition to improving drinking water supply and sanitation. Furthermore, at the agricultural field regional and farm-level water management should be performed more via the irrigation and the drainage, the salinity management, the rainwater harvesting and crop water management, the use of wastewater and the conjunctive use of groundwater and surface water. Finally, insularity calls for integrated management of water resources and waste, highlighting the circularity of the economy and promoting the sustainable and balanced economic development and prosperity of the Greek territory.

### **Main policy initiatives and measures**

- In the context of measures to control the spread of COVID-19, the Government emphasized the need to take urgent action in Roma settlements (type I and II) as well as to address the serious social consequences that particularly affect disadvantaged and socially excluded Roma communities. Based on these needs, emergency funding of 2,485,000€, was approved and targeted at 106 municipalities and 1 region of the country, for the supply of sanitary material and other services, including information activities on precautionary Covid-19 measures, disinfection and drinking water. It is estimated that approximately 80% of the municipalities took relevant preventive measures.
- The 2nd Update of the **River Basin Management Plans (RBMPs)** of the country's 14 River Basin Districts, covering surface freshwaters such as lakes and rivers, groundwater, transitional and coastal waters up to one nautical mile, is currently underway to be completed within 2022. It will provide the necessary information, the objectives and operational instructions for Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) within a River Basin, in accordance with the provisions of the EU Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC), including at the transboundary level as four transboundary rivers from upstream countries provide approximately one-fourth of the total mean surface runoff of Greece's mainland rivers. [SDG 6.5](#)
- The 1st update of the **Flood Risk Management Plans (FRMPs)** is underway, and it involves the assessment and management of flood risks, in accordance with the provisions of the EU Directive 2007/60/EC. Based on new data (flood events, forest fires, technical infrastructures, land-uses etc.) that also take into account climate considerations, the 1st update of FRMPs addresses all aspects of flood risk management and establishes the appropriate Programme of Measures, towards, *inter alia*, the adaptation of water resources to climate change impacts, also in conjunction with the 13 Regional Adaptation Action Plans of the country. [SDGs 6.5, 13](#)
- In order to improve further water monitoring and to build consistent time series of data on water abstraction and quality and in accordance with the River Basin Management Plans and the provisions of the WFD, the **National Water Monitoring Network** was recently revised to monitor the qualitative and quantitative status of surface water and groundwater bodies. Based on the monitoring data of the network, an overall assessment of the status of water bodies is taking place and the results are being used for the 2nd Update of RBMPs and the establishment and implementation of the

appropriate Programme of Measures for improving water quality. The aim is to unify all relevant water-related databases in the country under one all-inclusive Water Registry, to guide informed decisions and assist a shift in behaviors and in consumption patterns. [SDG 6.3](#)

- In order to ensure universal and equitable access to affordable high quality drinking water and drinking water services for all, an **Information System** for the annual collection of **operational and financial information of water supply service providers** has been set up and is operational since 2019. Based on the data collected, an **annual report** on the operation of water providers is issued, that includes provisions for the improvement of their performance. In this direction, Greece aims to intensify efforts to further improve the accountability and co-ordination of actors in the water sector as well as the assessment of utilities' performance to increase cost recovery and ensure that water prices cover the full cost of service provision and adequately reflect the environmental and resource cost in water charges. [SDG 6.1](#)
- Heading to fully abate the release of pollutants from wastewater into the environment and particularly in freshwaters, a key priority with regard to **urban wastewater treatment** is the **completion of urban wastewater management projects** and the increase of the percentage of the population served by urban wastewater collection and treatment infrastructure as well as the implementation of projects for upgrading the existing infrastructure. The majority of the projects are expected to be completed in 2025. The main goal is to achieve full compliance with the requirements of the EU Directive 91/271/EEC to maximize the protection of surface and groundwater and the environment in general. [SDGs 6.2, 6.3](#)
- With regard to water savings, Greece, as a vulnerable country to the effects of climate change and droughts, places particular emphasis on efforts to complete the related legislative framework to allow for the **reuse of reclaimed water** from adequately treated urban wastewater in the context of a circular economy, aiming at saving water resources. In June 2023, EU Regulation 2020/741 will enter into force, which sets, at European level, the terms and conditions for the irrigation of crops with recovered water from treated urban wastewater. The transposition and implementation of the European regulatory framework is expected to considerably help increase the percentage of treated wastewater used for irrigation purposes in the country, with water abstractions for agricultural purposes remaining one of the key drivers of water demand and consumption in Greece. [SDG 6.4](#)
- Greece has applied a more sustainable and cost-efficient approach to the **management of water in arid Greek islands** through the extensive use of desalination. Fresh water is made available for all, and is used for drinking as well as for irrigation purposes. Such a policy also promotes sustainable treatment of vulnerable island ecosystems, combats desertification, and halts and reverses land degradation. [SDGs 6.4, 15.1, 15.3](#)
- In the context of the **National Rural Development Programme (RDP) 2014-2020**, Greece initiates measures that promote, *inter alia*: (i) the increase of efficiency in irrigation through reduction of water losses and the application of highly efficient irrigation methods, thus reducing pressure of agriculture in surface and groundwater; and (ii) the improvement of water efficiency and savings (reducing water pumped from ground or surface water) at the level of agricultural holdings. [SDGs 6.4](#)

<b>Best practice example</b>
<b>The 2010 Agreement on the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Prespa Park Area (SDGs 6.5, 15, 17.16).</b>
With respect to transboundary cooperation at the sub-regional level (SE Balkans), an important positive development that should be highlighted, regards the 2010 Agreement on the Protection

and Sustainable Development of the Prespa Park Area between Greece, Albania, North Macedonia and the EU, that entered into force in May 2019 and has been recently operationalized. The Agreement, which is unique in its kind in our region, provides the necessary institutional framework and directions for multi-stakeholder cooperation and joint activities among its Parties to ensure an integrated protection of the ecosystem and the sustainable development of the ecologically and hydrologically rich and sensitive Prespa Park Area, including the development of integrated river basin management approaches. The Prespa example provides a successful case and a model of transboundary collaboration, for duplication in other areas.

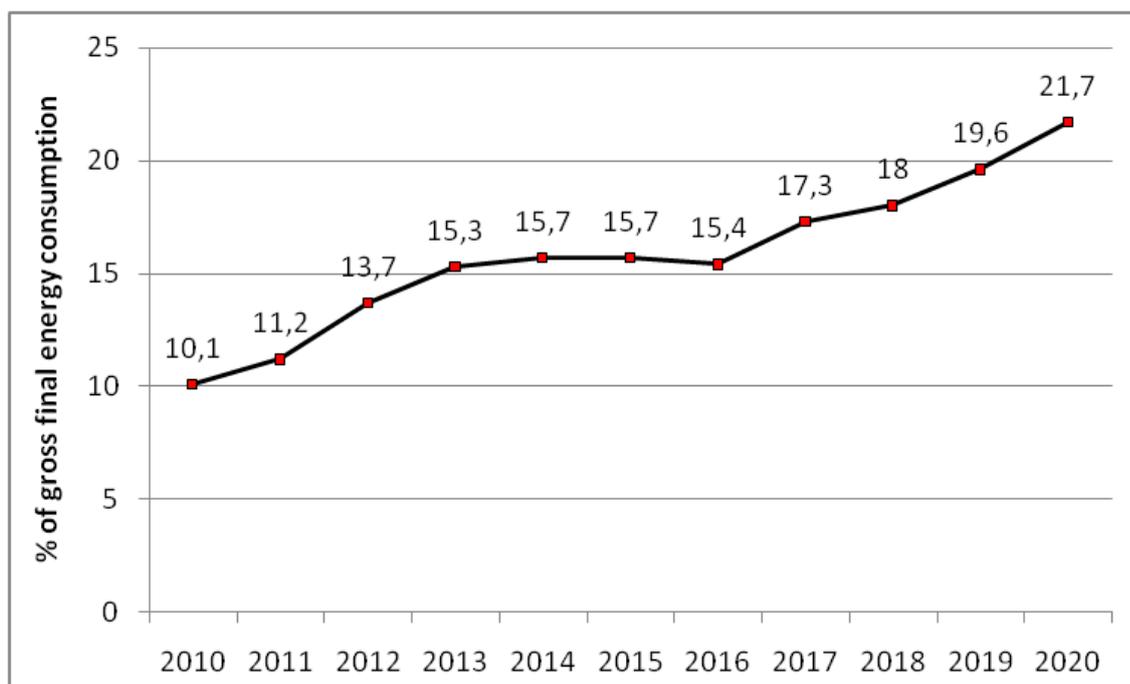
### Forthcoming initiatives

- Completion of the 2nd Update of the **RBMPs** and the 1st update of the **FRMPs**, taking into account all new data and considerations, which will enhance the integrated water resources management at all levels. **SDGs 6.5, 13**
- **Water reuse** is expected to considerably increase due to efforts for establishing a new legislative framework and especially with the enactment in June 2023 of the milestone EU Regulation 2020/741 on minimum requirements for water reuse. **SDG 6.4**
- Initiating new policies towards the development of more sustainable energy-efficient **freshwater generation methods** and **water consumption patterns**. **SDGs 6.4, 7, 12, 13, 15**
- Complete the implementation of measures and actions included in the **RDP 2014-2020**, covering the transitional period 2021-2022. **SDGs 6.4**
- Operationalization and further implementation of the **2010 Agreement on the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Prespa Park Area** between Greece, Albania, North Macedonia and the EU, which entered into force in May 2019 and promotes the cross-border cooperation on integrated water resources management. **SDGs 6.5, 15, 17.16**

## SDG 7: Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all



### Share of renewable energy sources



### Assessment of progress in relevant SDG indicators

- Final energy consumption demonstrates a reduction during the last decade which could be attributed mainly to the severe economic recession but also (as in the case of the 2019-2020 period of economic expansion) to a higher energy efficiency (as with the adoption of concrete policies in the building sector).
- The more than doubling of the share of renewable energy sources in gross final energy consumption after 2010 is considered to be a result of combined measures of regulatory and technical nature. Similar distributions and even more steep trends are presented by the share of Renewable Energy Sources (RES) in specific sectors like transport or electricity.
- Greece's energy import dependency shows a steady increase especially after 2013, which is due to the particularly high use of oil products and, to a lesser degree, natural gas, which together account for more than 65% of gross domestic energy consumption.

## Key challenges

The transition to a low-carbon energy model is both a challenge and a high priority for Greece. Having a history of lignite dependence, Greece originally committed to withdrawing all lignite power plants by 2023, except for one that would stay operational until 2028. This initial plan was further challenged and underwent partial revision after the severe fluctuations in energy stability caused by the war in Ukraine, extending withdrawal by 2 years. The decommissioning of lignite power plants and the closure of the lignite mines have significant effects on the local economies of certain regions. By the end of the delignification process, without compensatory actions, these regions will have lost 23% of local annual GDP, 13% of local jobs and 24% of local household income from wages, compared to the corresponding levels of 2019. Security of supply and energy poverty need to be also addressed. In this context, Greece needs to increase the share of RES in the electricity system in order to reduce prices and reassure security of supply. Offshore wind in particular is still at early stages although a good potential has been identified. The promotion of hybrid energy systems with storage devices can also support the decarbonisation of the economy through the accumulation of excess renewable electricity. At the same time the distribution infrastructure needs re-planning and support in order to become more environmentally friendly and socially inclusive. Completion of power interconnections with the islands of the Cyclades will be a significant step. Furthermore, Greece must promote electromobility and “green transport” especially in the two major cities of Athens and Thessaloniki. Public and private transport require strong investment towards sustainability in order to improve energy efficiency, reducing, simultaneously, their heavy dependence on oil.

## Main policy initiatives and measure

- After a decade of successful implementation of programmes for energy renovation of residential buildings, a **new enhanced one** was launched in November 2020. It is part of the policies and measures of the 2019 **National Energy and Climate Plan (NECP)**, a key element of which is the improvement of **energy efficiency of the building stock in the residential and tertiary sector**. It aims to optimize the operational energy profile of residential buildings by financing renovations related to energy efficiency. Eligible interventions include: replacement of household frames (windows/doors etc), installation/upgrading of thermal insulation, heating/cooling system upgrade, hot water system using RES or heat pumps and smart technologies and systems of energy production (thermal and/or electricity). The 2021 edition of the Programme, giving priority to expected level of energy efficiency improvements per application, aims to upgrade the energy efficiency of more than 50,000 households (38% more households than the previous edition of the programme). Moreover, since the public sector covers a major part of the building stock in Greece, a special **programme for public buildings** called “**ELECTRA**”, was launched for the period 2020-2026. [SDG 7.3](#)
- In 2020, the Government adopted a new law for the **promotion of e-mobility**, which organizes the charging services market and enables the provision of tax-based incentives for purchasing electric vehicles and the installation of charging infrastructure. The “**Go Electric**” **subsidy scheme**, launched for the period 2020-2021, provides economic incentives leading to an increased share of electric vehicles in new vehicle registrations, and efforts are being made to accelerate installation and deployment of public charging infrastructure. Currently all local authorities are preparing their plans for the installation of publicly accessible electric vehicle charging points and soon tenders will be launched for the concession of those points to Charging Point Operators. [SDGs 7.2, 9, 11, 13](#)
- In order to **address energy poverty and the increasing energy prices so as to ensure universal access to affordable, reliable and modern energy services**, a number of policies and measures have been introduced in 2020 and 2021, including:

- (i) The operation of new electricity markets according to the EU target model, since November 2020, for the design and operation of wholesale and balancing markets. The model will allow energy prices to gradually converge, and supply and demand to be balanced through market coupling, thus reducing energy costs for the benefit of the final consumer, but also stimulating investments.
  - (ii) The establishment by law in 2021 of the **market monitoring and surveillance mechanism**, run by the Greek Energy Regulatory Authority in order to ensure that the market operates in a cost-reflective way and is sufficiently competitive.
  - (iii) The establishment by law in 2021 of the **Special Account** under the name “**Energy Transition Fund**”, which subsidizes the consumption of electricity in the form of discounts to the electricity bill of each beneficiary. Beneficiaries of this subsidy are all the consumers connected in low voltage power grid as well as agricultural enterprises connected in medium voltage. Special care has been taken for consumers under the category of beneficiaries of the Social Household Tariff, a special tariff established in 2010 addressed to vulnerable consumers.
  - (iv) The **National Action Plan for Alleviating Energy Poverty**, entered into force in September 2021, as a detailed and binding policy and monitoring framework for abating energy poverty. The Plan integrates the relevant EU Guidelines and provides a mapping and clustering of the relevant measures under three core dimensions: consumers’ protection, promotion of RES and energy efficiency interventions. [SDG 7.1](#)
- Considering Greece’s high renewable potential, especially for solar and wind, and taking into account the overarching objective of the country for achieving carbon-neutrality by 2050, the following policies and measures have been introduced to further **promote RES** penetration in the energy mix, including:
    - (i) **The simplification of RES licensing procedure, as well as a new dedicated framework for offshore RES plants.** In 2020, the Government passed a new law on the modernization of the environmental legislation providing for the replacement of the Production License by the Registration Certificate, speeding up the process of submitting a request, and establishing a new Management Information System. Anext phase is now starting, with a further digitalization and simplification of the Connection Terms, Installation and Operational License.
    - (ii) **Therestructuring and enhancement of the RES and Combined Heat and Power (CHP) Account** which compensates RES producers. In order to ensure financial stability and long-term sustainability of the RES-CHP Account, the Government is currently planning to implement several measures, especially as regards new RES units (i.e. units commissioned after 1.1.2021), including a new scheme of Guarantees of Origin, in line with the relevant EU Guidelines. [SDG 7.2](#)
  - The Government committed in 2019 to **fully de-lignitise its energy mix by 2028**, through a front-loaded plan. This goal is reflected in the forecasts of the **2019 NECP**, which sets out the timeframe for shutting down the lignite-fired power plants currently in operation, while ensuring a fair development transition of the affected lignite producing areas. In this context, an Inter-ministerial Committee and a Steering Committee were established for the development of a **Just Development Transition Master Plan** in 2021. Reference to specific financing instruments was integrated and a clear timeline for the implementation of the specific measures was set, along with the monitoring mechanism. Special care is already being given to land repurposing. One of the primary and most important goals is to halt the consequences of unemployment due to de-lignification in the Regions of Western Macedonia and of Peloponnese, and to ensure social

cohesion. To this end, four initiatives of a total amount of EUR 107 million have been planned (two of which already launched) in cooperation with the Labor Force Employment Organization, which include, among others, business subsidies programmes for labor relocation, programmes providing work experience to unemployed young people, as well as counseling and training programmes. [SDG 7.2, 8.3, 13.2](#)

- The **interconnection of the islands to the mainland's power grid**, which is part of the 2019 NECP, as well as of the National Recovery and Resilience Plan (NRRP), concerns relatively bigger islands aiming to deploy their vast renewable energy potential, promote their energy security and downsize CO<sub>2</sub> emissions and energy costs. In 2021, the interconnection of the island of Crete to the mainland's power grid (with Peloponnese) was completed. A second interconnection of Crete (with Attica) is under construction. In addition, islands of central Aegean (Cyclades) are gradually (2017-2024) interconnected to the system, or their existing interconnection is upgraded. For the smaller non-interconnected islands, various tailor-made solutions are implemented, such as the installation of hybrid systems on autonomous islands, storage systems, e-mobility etc., in order to reduce their environmental footprint, or even to test and implement integrated solutions, aiming to make islands 100% carbon free and self-sufficient energy systems. [SDGs 7.2, 7.3, 10](#)
- In order to promote environmental protection and mainstream the sustainability values in the armed forces, in line with the respective national and EU legislation, as well as the NATO Standardization Agreements (STANAGs), the Ministry of Defense adopted in 2020 an official **Environmental, Energy and Adjustment to Climate Change Policy**, in which a wide range of fundamental environmental principles and priorities of the SDGs are fully integrated and highlighted. [SDGs 7.2, 7.3, 12.2, 12.4, 12.5, 12.8, 13.2, 13.3, 14.1, 15.1, 15.2](#)
- In an effort to promote sustainable maritime tourism, the Government has taken initiatives towards producing **clean energy at Greek ports** via RES and to provide this energy to yachts and cruise ships, including a proposal submitted for funding in the context of the EU Strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian Region (EUSAIR). [SDG 7.1](#)

Best practice examples
<p><b>GR-eco Islands” initiative (SDG 7.2, 13, 10)</b></p> <p>GR-eco islands is a strategic initiative of the Greek Government that aims to transform Greek islands into models of green economy, energy autonomy, digital innovation and eco mobility. Key pillars of the initiative that builds on the high renewables potential of Greek islands and takes into account their sensitive natural ecosystem, include: the promotion of renewables and energy efficiency practices, sustainable waste and water management, zero pollution schemes, electrification of transport, the green transformation of agriculture and tourism, and the development of port and other infrastructure through targeted subsidies and custom-made programmes by the Ministry of Environment and Energy and other competent Ministries, under the “umbrella” of the NECP. The first island that has joined this initiative is Chalki (a small island of the Dodecanese), where individual projects and actions are already implemented.</p>
<p><b>Smart and Sustainable island project on Astypalea (SDG 7.2, 13)</b></p> <p>The Astypalea “Smart and Sustainable Island” project is a highly innovative project built around four key pillars: (i) vehicle electrification, (ii) smart mobility, (iii) charging and energy from Renewable Energy Sources (RES), and (iv) autonomous driving as a future option. Regarding the charging and energy from the RES pillar, the aim is for the island to become completely energy autonomous through the use of renewable energy technologies like wind and solar power. RES alone would cover the additional electricity demand arising from the introduction of e-mobility.</p>

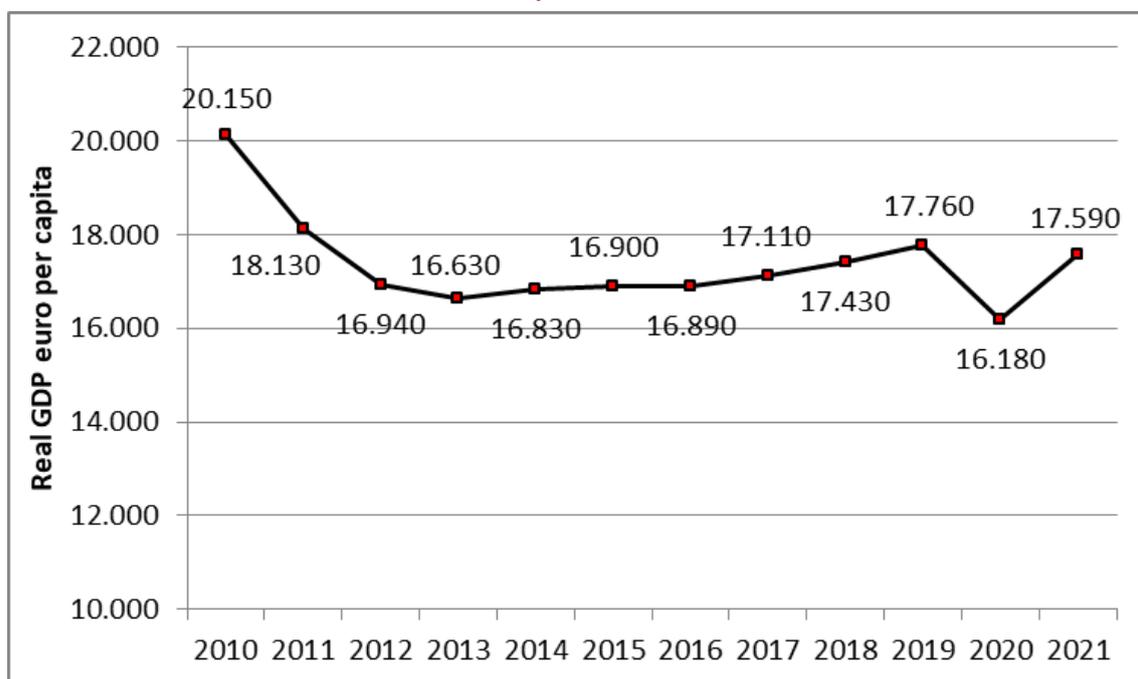
## Forthcoming initiatives

- New programmes on **e-mobility**, including three subsidy sub-programmes planned to be initiated within 2022, funded by the EU Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF), planning to (i) procure and install around 8,000 publicly accessible **charging points for electric cars** in urban and suburban locations within cities and in other points of interest such as highways, ports, railway stations etc. and is expected to be completed by end of 2025; (ii) subsidize the replacement of 2,000 old, conventional taxis with zero-emission electric “**Green Taxis**”, which is expected to be completed by the end of 2024; (iii) accelerate efforts in introducing **e-buses** to the public fleet, starting from Athens and Thessaloniki. Finally, e-mobility will be promoted also by the new **National Climate Law** (see also SDG 13), which foresees, *inter alia*, the **sales only of zero-emission passenger cars from the beginning of 2030**. **SDGs 7.2, 11, 13**
- Alleviate energy poverty through the support of **energy communities of small-scale RES producers and the development of photovoltaics (PVs)**, including a programme made for energy vulnerable households, to be launched by the end of 2022. The programme will aim at minimizing their energy costs, also implementing net metering. This programme will be funded by the EU RRF and will support the development, construction and installation of PVs by municipalities through local energy communities so as to cover the energy consumption of these households. **SDG 7.1**

**SDG 8: Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all**



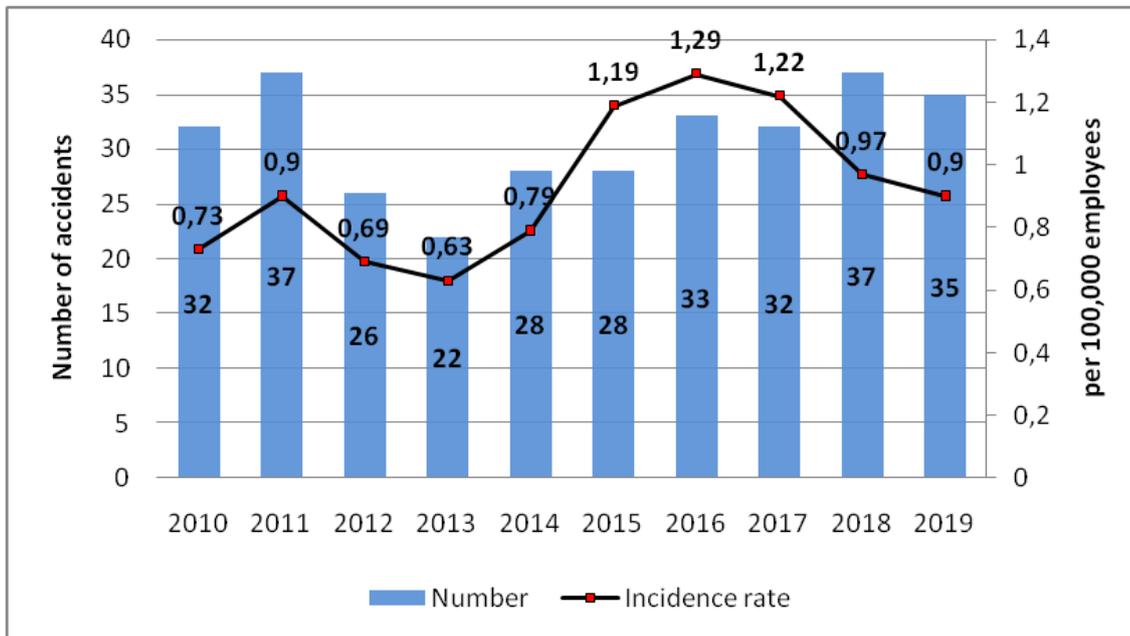
**Real GDP in euro per inhabitant**



**Long-term unemployment of the active population in total and by sex**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Males</b>	<b>Females</b>
<b>2010</b>	<b>5.2</b>	<b>3.4</b>	<b>7.7</b>
<b>2011</b>	<b>8.0</b>	<b>5.9</b>	<b>10.8</b>
<b>2012</b>	<b>13.1</b>	<b>10.7</b>	<b>16.3</b>
<b>2013</b>	<b>16.7</b>	<b>14.2</b>	<b>20.0</b>
<b>2014</b>	<b>17.5</b>	<b>15.0</b>	<b>20.8</b>
<b>2015</b>	<b>16.4</b>	<b>13.7</b>	<b>19.7</b>
<b>2016</b>	<b>15.4</b>	<b>12.4</b>	<b>19.2</b>
<b>2017</b>	<b>14.3</b>	<b>11.1</b>	<b>18.2</b>
<b>2018</b>	<b>12.5</b>	<b>9.3</b>	<b>16.5</b>
<b>2019</b>	<b>11.3</b>	<b>8.5</b>	<b>14.8</b>
<b>2020</b>	<b>10.5</b>	<b>8.2</b>	<b>13.5</b>

### Number and incidence rate of fatal accidents at work



### Assessment of progress in relevant SDG indicators

- GDP per capita, after a 6-year plunge during the economic crisis, started to slowly rise in 2017. It still has not reached its pre-crisis levels, the pandemic taking its toll too, remaining lower than the EU average.
- Long-term unemployment at 10.5% is the highest among EU countries and a persisting issue connected to unregistered precarious work, the informal economy and significant strains on social security and public revenue.
- Fatal accidents at work are on the same levels have overall slightly increased in the last decade, from 0,73% to 0,9%, presenting a decrease since 2018.

### Key challenges

Potential growth has been very low for Greece in the last decade and the country is still experiencing legacy vulnerabilities related to high government debt, incomplete external rebalancing and moderate to high non-performing loans. The macroeconomic and fiscal outlook continue to be affected by uncertainty related to the Covid-19 pandemic, although its impact is expected to gradually soften, as the accommodative fiscal and monetary policy, coupled with the strong boost from the Recovery and Resilience Fund (RRF), will help sustain the positive momentum. According to the April 2022 estimate by ELSTAT real GDP growth reached 8.3% in 2021 and according to the EU Commission Winter 2022 forecast, real GDP growth is estimated at around 4.9% in 2022 and 3.5% in 2023. The Greek banking sector has become more resilient, but vulnerabilities and challenges are still present and stem mainly from the high stock of non-performing loans (NPLs), which limit the scope of bank credit to support

the real economy, whereas alternative ways of non-bank financing (capital markets etc.) are still underdeveloped.

Despite its gradual reduction, unemployment remains high. Greece has the second highest unemployment rate (Feb 2022) and the second lowest employment rate in the European Union (EU) (2021). Many barriers remain at play that keep a significant part of the workforce lagging behind, especially women, youth and vulnerable social groups. Lack of relevance and low quality in Vocational Educational and Training is a persisting issue that calls for action. There is a large informal economy and labour productivity remains weak. While many short-time work schemes implemented during the crisis have prevented an increase in unemployment, support to help jobseekers reintegrate in the labour market is not effective enough. Reforms in the institutional framework governing the labour market are required, to promote productivity, flexibility, innovation, and inclusivity. Furthermore, there is a growing need to meet the demands of an ever-changing economy for a highly skilled workforce.

### Main policy initiatives and measures

- In order to face the adverse **economic and social effects of the Covid-19 pandemic**, in an effective, coherent and integrated manner, the Government has adopted, over the last two years, a comprehensive relief package of fiscal, monetary and financial measures. These measures, include: (i) the reduction of VAT for a number of products and services (i.e. restaurant services, non-alcoholic beverages, nonalcoholic drinks, all passenger transports, sanitary products, dialysis equipment), along with other specific relief measures associated with tax deferrals, enhanced tax refunds and income taxation (*fiscal measures*), (ii) the provision of refundable prepayment grants, advance payment programmes and State guarantee measures (*monetary measures*), and (iii) 40% reduction in commercial and primary residence rent, extension of deadlines for expiry and payment of bank cheques issued by affected enterprises and tourism industry, the suspension of performing loan repayments (for the principal amount) for affected enterprises (Banks' decision), the extension of procedures that are completed entirely by electronic means, and the disposal of confiscated ethyl alcohol to produce antiseptics and to the Ministry of Health (*financial measures*). **SDGs 8.3, 8.5, 8.6, 8.8, 10.4.**
- In 2021, the Government adopted a new coherent and comprehensive legal framework aimed at stimulating **strategic investments** and **improving the overall investment environment**. This legal framework lays the foundation for the simplification and acceleration of the licensing and implementation procedures related to private and strategic investments, and the provision of the necessary legal certainty for the strategic investors. Key regulatory interventions, include, *inter alia*: (i) the introduction of the category of strategic investments entitled "Emblematic Investments of Extraordinary Importance", which promote green economy, innovation, research and technology, sustainable infrastructure (hydrogen production systems, wind energy parks, floating photovoltaic parks), competitiveness, low-energy and environmental impact economy; (ii) the inclusion of new areas of business in the categories of strategic investments, including: agri-food, research and development, biotechnology, cultural and creative industry, space industry, digital transformation, cloud computing, data centers, waste management, robotics, artificial intelligence, business parks; (iii) the introduction of specific environmental and urban planning regulations and standards; and (iv) the provision of a number of incentives for sustainable investments, including tax, capital, location and quick licensing incentives. **SDGs 8.2, 8.3, 9.1, 9.4, 2.3, 2.4, 7.1, 7.2**
- Greek authorities are in the process of creating a **mechanism to facilitate the financing of mature private investments** through borrowing from the Recovery Fund, utilizing the maximum permitted lending resources of the Fund. This RRP Loan Facility, through various financial instruments and in cooperation with International Financial Institutions (IFIs), the InvestEU Fund and the Hellenic Development Bank (HDB), will provide loans intended for long-term investment projects (6-12

years), while providing a reasonable grace period. Work is advancing, as the Ministry of Finance has launched the open international call for the selection of commercial banks and has already signed operation agreements with 6 Greek commercial banks, as well as with EIB and EBRD. All the aforementioned banks have published their calls to the wider audience, so they can start receiving proposals. With some optimism, the first disbursement of 500m is expected to be fully utilized (signed with the final beneficiaries) by the end of Q4 2022. [SDG 8.1](#)

- Greece has established a comprehensive **microfinance legal framework** that provides for the licensing of microfinance institutions, which will provide credit of up to 25,000 euros to individuals and very small businesses, without the obligation of collateral on the part of borrowers. The aim of the reform is to provide access to funding to those excluded from bank lending. The competent authority for the supervision and licensing of the microfinance institutions is the Bank of Greece. Microfinance institutions are required to be transparent regarding interest rates, duration and overall funding costs, and need to follow some form of corporate governance. [SDG 8.10](#)
- Launch and implement a number of **reform projects funded by the EU RRF**, which aim, among other things: (i) to simplify and update the legislation for the major tax codes, the customs code and all relevant secondary legal provisions in line with EU best practices; (ii) to support the fight against smuggling, in particular for those products subject to excise duties (tobacco, alcohol, energy) through the modernisation of the Customs' tracking systems, audit processes, and equipment in order to increase the effectiveness of cargo audits; (iii) to ease the administrative burden for businesses and improve tax compliance by promoting and increasing electronic transactions; and (iv) to revise the Greek state aid legal framework and strengthen the capacity of the network of state aid units across Ministries. [SDGs 8.1, 8.3, 16.5](#)
- Greece has set up the **Hellenic Asset Protection scheme** which is a systemic and market-based solution for the reduction of non-performing loans (NPLs) from banks' balance sheets. It provides for the securitization of NPLs and the provision of state guarantees to the senior tranches of the securitizations. Hercules I (October 2019 - April 2021) reduced NPLs by 30 bn euros (40%), with the provision of state guarantees of 12 bn euros. Hercules has been prolonged for another 18 months (April 2021 - October 2022) and aims to further reduce NPLs of Greek banks by another 30 bn euros. All systemic banks will achieve single digit NPL ratios during 2022. [SDG 8.10](#)
- In 2021, the Government passed a new law with a view to ensuring the **Just Development Transition (JDT) of lignite areas** in Greece. This new legislative initiative, which contributes significantly to achieving the national goal of complete decarbonization of the country by 2028, specifies a wide spectrum of the measures and actions that: (i) facilitate the transformation of the productive model in lignite areas in Greece (Region of Western Macedonia, Municipalities of Megalopoli, Tripoli, Gortynia, Ithalia in Messinia, Regions of the North Aegean, the South Aegean and Crete) by 2028, in line with the revised EU targets within the context of «Fit for 55» package, aiming to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to at least 55% by 2030, and (ii) support the economic regeneration of the transition areas through decarbonisation and the attraction of investments of high added value. The law introduces a system of holistic governance for Just Transition through the establishment of: (i) a Special Agency for the JDT, which undertakes the central planning and programming of the JDT policies, the monitoring and evaluation of the implementation procedures of the projects, investments and JDT development projects, as well as the management and coordination of the utilisation of the available national or European funding sources, and (ii) a company called “Metavasi (Transition) A.E.” that will function as a Special Purpose Vehicle focusing on the upgrading and utilisation of the territories in the Decarbonisation Zones, while redesigning and highlighting the opportunities for business growth. The Just Transition Development Plan of lignite areas is built around five development pillars, including: clean energy, industry and trade,

smart agricultural production, sustainable tourism, technology and education. [SDGs 8.3, 8.2, 8.9, 7.2](#)

- The Government has initiated the programme “**Reconciliation of family and professional life**”, which aims to provide male and female beneficiaries with hosting and accommodation services to the infants, toddlers and children and persons with disabilities at public and private nurseries and child care facilities of integrated care, at kindergartens, creative occupation centers and creative occupation centers for children with disabilities. The programme intends to assist the beneficiaries who come from low-income families to keep their jobs on equal terms or enter the workforce, providing at the same time quality care and accommodation to their children, and ensuring equal access of the vulnerable groups (children and persons with disability) to quality social services. [SDGs 8.5, 5.4](#)
- The Government has adopted a comprehensive and long-term **Tourism Strategy** aiming to create a new model of sustainable, quality tourism, through the diversification of the tourism product and source markets. All initiatives are geared towards increasing Greece’s international travel share, mainly through extension of the tourism period, enrichment of the tourism product and improvement of competitiveness, within the framework of the sustainable tourism development model. The four pillars to stimulate tourism development and upgrade: (i) the coherent treatment of infrastructure and hyper-tourism issues that arise in some popular destinations, (ii) the creation of a crisis management mechanism in relation to the tourism sector, (iii) the digitization of services and (iv) skills development through education. [SDGs 8.9, 4.4, 11.4, 12.b](#)
- Key priority is the enhancement of authenticity and resilience of the tourism product as well as the upgrade of tourism establishments, by providing high-quality services of low ecological footprint. The initiation of **Destination Management Organizations** aims at the scientific and technical support of the local governments to plan and promote the total tourist product for each destination in the tourist market: attractions, culture, accessibility, facilities, services, products etc. Special-interest tourism plays a key role towards this direction. Actions related to gastronomy, diving, rock climbing and wellness tourism are already taking place. Support of domestic tourism is also a key priority, by boosting demand and extending the tourism season, via the implementation of the subsidised “Tourism for All” programme since 2020. [SDGs 8.9, 11.4, 12.b](#)
- The Government attributes particular importance to the implementation of development-oriented policies that enhance the competitiveness, innovation, entrepreneurship and sustainable growth of the **Greek shipping industry** and the **Greek maritime cluster**, and ensure the efficient operation of international shipping/maritime markets and the unrestricted provision of maritime transport services, through the adoption of a stable, integrated and coherent legislative framework, and the conclusion of bilateral agreements, Free Trade Agreements between the EU and third countries and multilateral negotiations. [SDG 8.3](#)
- In the context of the **National Rural Development Programme (RDP) 2014-2020**, Greece has put forward measures, which support investments in the processing, marketing and development of agricultural products (buildings, constructions, machinery, software, certification cost etc.). In addition, the RDP includes measures aimed at promoting the design and implementation of local integrated development strategies, with the participation of stakeholders in rural areas implemented by Local Action Groups - LEADER/CLLD (LEADER programme/Community-Led Local Development). The primary objective of those measures is to stimulate investments for the creation of Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in rural areas regarding agri-food sector, forestry products, tourism activities, other handicrafts sectors, leading to job creation, affecting women and vulnerable groups, and development of the local economy. [SDGs 8.3, 8.5, 9.2, 17.17](#)

- A 2021 law established the **Hellenic Auxiliary Pensions Defined Contribution Fund** (“TEKA”), which introduces the funded pension scheme to the public supplementary insurance. The reserves of the new fund are estimated to have an escalating positive effect on new domestic investment and consequently on employment by creating, through growth, new jobs. The new scheme is expected to bring future retirees a supplementary pension significantly higher than the benefit they would have received under the current NDC scheme. [SDG 8.3](#)
- Many business **subsidy programmes** are implemented throughout the country and in areas of high unemployment, aimed at hiring unemployed people, especially from vulnerable social groups, or first recruitment of young people (“First Stamp” programme), as well as supporting new entrepreneurs. At the same time, the Manpower Employment Organization (OAED), implements a pilot micro-finance programme and has updated the curricula of its 50 **Apprenticeship** Vocational Schools (“EPAS”) and 30 **Vocational** Training Institutes (“IEK”) that are attended by 10,000 students annually. [SDG 8.5, 8.6, 4.4, 4.a](#)
- New law provisions in 2019 intensify the financial and administrative sanctions against **undeclared work** (fines, compulsory re-inspections and registry of infringing enterprises). [SDGs 8.5, 8.8](#)
- An important law was passed in 2021 on the **protection of work** and the establishment of an independent **Labour Inspection Authority**, which ratified two **International Labour Organization (ILO) Conventions** (No 190 **Elimination of violence and harassment in the world of work** & No 187 **Promotional Framework for Occupational Safety and Health**), transposed the EU Directive on **work-life balance** for parents and carers, and included many provisions, among them:
  - (i) The **regulation** for the first time **of teleworking**, by ensuring utmost respect for working relationships, employer’s compliance with the rules on working hours, respect for the privacy of the teleworker, equipment cost coverage by the employer, prohibition on the use of cameras, a monitoring system of telework in compliance with the personal data protection law, the declaration of workers and their teleworking hours at the ERGANI Information System.
  - (ii) The establishment of the **electronic labour card** as the main working time calculator and working hour’s compliance monitoring means for workers and enterprises respectively. The card (a) is an innovative tool to monitor undeclared and under-declared work; (b) it guarantees compliance with the working hours of employees and payment of overtime work in accordance with the relevant provisions; (c) it contributes in avoiding unfair competition between law-abiding enterprises and those that apply “black” or under-declared labour market practices; and (d) it makes the inspections conducted by the Labour Inspectorate more effective and rational, and is the key to the fair implementation of reforms, such as the right to disconnect from teleworking, working time arrangement and equalization of overtime in industry and services. [SDGs 8.5, 8.8](#)
- The **minimum salary and wage** for full-time employment, for white and blue-collar workers throughout the country without any age discrimination, was **increased by 13%** since 2019 and a **further increase of 9.7 % is implemented in 2022**. [SDGs 8.5, 10.1, 10.4](#)
- New laws and provisions (2018-2021) regulate issues such as the conditions of entry and residence of third-country nationals for the purpose of highly qualified employment, or of intra-corporate transfer, and for the purposes of research, studies, training, voluntary service, pupil exchange schemes or educational projects and au pairing. They also establish a fast - track process for granting a residence permit to third country national students, and set out national long - term visas to third country nationals, either students, who participate in summer education courses, or employees (business executives), who participate in special courses provided by Greek universities.

In 2021 a law was passed which sets out a new category of national long - term visa and residence permit to third country nationals who enter Greece as **Digital Nomads**. [SDGs 8.8, 10.7, 4.3](#)

- New provisions were passed in 2020 and 2021 concerning the **method of calculating the social security contributions** for the main pension of **self-employed persons**, which attempt to address the problems of **social security avoidance and evasion**, such as the reduction in the amount of contributions. [SDG 8.5](#)
- With support from the Telecommunication Systems Research Institute (T.S.I.), a Greek Government-sponsored independent Research Institute, OAED implements a PLMP (**Passive Labour Market Policy**) **reform project** in cooperation with OECD, aiming at rationalizing and modernizing the benefits it provides, activating benefit-recipients in the labour market, and enhancing its institutional and administrative performance. [SDG 8.6](#)

<b>Best practice example</b>
<b>“New Development Law - Greece Strong Development” (SDGs 8.2, 8.3, 8.5, 8.9, 9.1, 9.5, 10, 7, 12, 2.4, 14.4)</b>
<p>In February 2022, the Government passed a new comprehensive law, entitled “<i>New Development Law - Greece Strong Development</i>”. The primary objective of this flagship legislative initiative is to promote and boost economic development by providing incentives to specific activities and sectors, in order to achieve a wide spectrum of thematic goals related to the SDGs, including: the green transition, the digital and technological transformation of companies, the creation of economies of scale, the support of innovative and sustainable investments and those seeking to introduce new technologies of "Industry 4.0", robotics and artificial intelligence, the strengthening of employment with qualified personnel, the support of new entrepreneurship, the strengthening of less-favoured areas of the country and regions included in the Fair Development Plan, the further development of the sustainable tourism, and the improvement of competitiveness in sectors of high added value. In addition, specific regulations have been introduced that accelerate all procedures regarding the assessment, control, verification and certification of investment plans to be integrated into the established state aid schemes. Particular emphasis is placed on the establishment of state aid schemes for investment projects, which may fall into one or more of the following categories: 1. Digital and Technological Business Transformation, 2. Green Transition - Environmental Business Upgrade, 3. New Business, 4. Fair Development Transition, 5. Research and Applied Innovation, 6. Agri-food Primary Production and Processing of Agricultural Products- Fisheries, 7. Manufacturing - Supply Chain, 8. Business Extroversion, 9. Support for Tourism Investments, 10. Alternative Forms of Tourism, 11. Large Investments, 12. European Value Chains, 13. Entrepreneurship 360o.</p>

#### **Forthcoming initiatives**

- Plan and implement actions and projects supported by the **National Strategy for Research and Innovation (2021-2027)**, paying particular attention to ecological, social, economic and sustainability criteria and factors to be considered in the relevant funding formats and selection procedures. [SDGs 8.2, 8.3, 9.5, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15](#)
- A **National Strategic Plan for Tourism Development 2021-2030**, under the title “National agreement on sustainable tourism 2021-2030”, is unfolding, structured around nine pillars: Product Development & Promotion, Accessibility & Connectivity, Private Infrastructure / Sustainable Management & Development, Public Infrastructure & Destination Management,

Collaborative Governance, Human Resources Training and Development, Regulatory & Legislative Framework, Crisis Management and Funding. Various projects are expected to be launched, beginning in 2022, such as the development of an Agri-Food, Gastronomy and Tourism Interconnection System, the Health & Wellness Tourism through thermal spring utilization, Mountain tourism and a research project on the sustainable development of mountain tourism, the Accessible tourism/accessible beaches programme, Diving and underwater tourism, and the Upgrade of tourism ports. [SDGs 8.9, 2.3, 15.9, 9.1](#)

- New tools are developed and will be implemented in 2022 to effectively measure and monitor **sustainable tourism development**, including: (i) operating a National Observatory for Sustainable Tourism, based on specific indicators and reliable data, (ii) establishing a Research and Monitoring Centre for Coastal and Maritime Tourism in the Eastern Mediterranean, and (iii) developing the National Tourism Satellite Account, providing a solid background for measuring tourism’s impact on national economy and employment. [SDGs 8.9, 12.b.](#)
- Complete the **digitalization of the Greek Shipping Registry** and its services, through IT projects, such as the Integrated Information System for Shipping and the full deployment of the Maritime Single Window. [SDG 8.3](#)
- Digitize procedures for the establishment and issuance of **Shipping Company Certificates** and create the appropriate legal framework for the operation of the electronic application of the e-charterparty, which is expected to reduce bureaucratic procedures and to facilitate professionals in the sector. [SDG 8.3](#)
- A number of initiatives aiming to strengthen social integration and provide training and employment opportunities to migrants and refugees have been approved and will be implemented in the coming period, as provided for by (i) the 2021 National Strategy for the Social Integration of Applicants for and Beneficiaries of International Protection (“**Development of intensive programmes for the facilitation of direct access to the labour market**”); (ii) the HELIOS programme (“**Pillar Employability**”); (iii) the RRF funded action “**Promote integration of the refugee population into the labor market**”; and (iv) the project “**Promotion of employment and entrepreneurship through training and internship of refugee women in productive sectors of the economy**”, as integrated in the framework of the operational program "Human Resources and Social Cohesion 2021-2027". [SDG 8.8](#)
- The **ratification of the 2014 ILO Protocol to the Forced Labour Convention** is highly prioritized and integrated in the National Action Plan against Racism and Intolerance. [SDG 8.7, 8.8](#)
- An **updated “Strategic Framework for Active Employment Policies”** is being prepared, which will allow for the planning of active employment policies. The strategic direction for the preparation of the new framework is based on the application of the principles of the European Pillar of Social Rights and the Porto Declaration on social issues (2021). [SDG 8.5](#)
- Based on the 2020 EU Council’s Recommendation to the Member States as regards the adoption of the “Youth Guarantee” Program, an **update of the National Youth Guarantee Action Plan is expected**. [SDG 8.6](#)
- Implementation of a project aimed at creating a **Credit Expansion Observatory**, which shall collect detailed data on the liquidity provided by banks to individuals and legal entities, in order to better design and implement targeted public policies that aim to increase access to finance. It shall monitor market liquidity, independently, as well as in relation to credit expansion, in the context of supporting the economy and making the most of the funding tools to meet liquidity needs of individuals and businesses. The project shall also include the design, development and

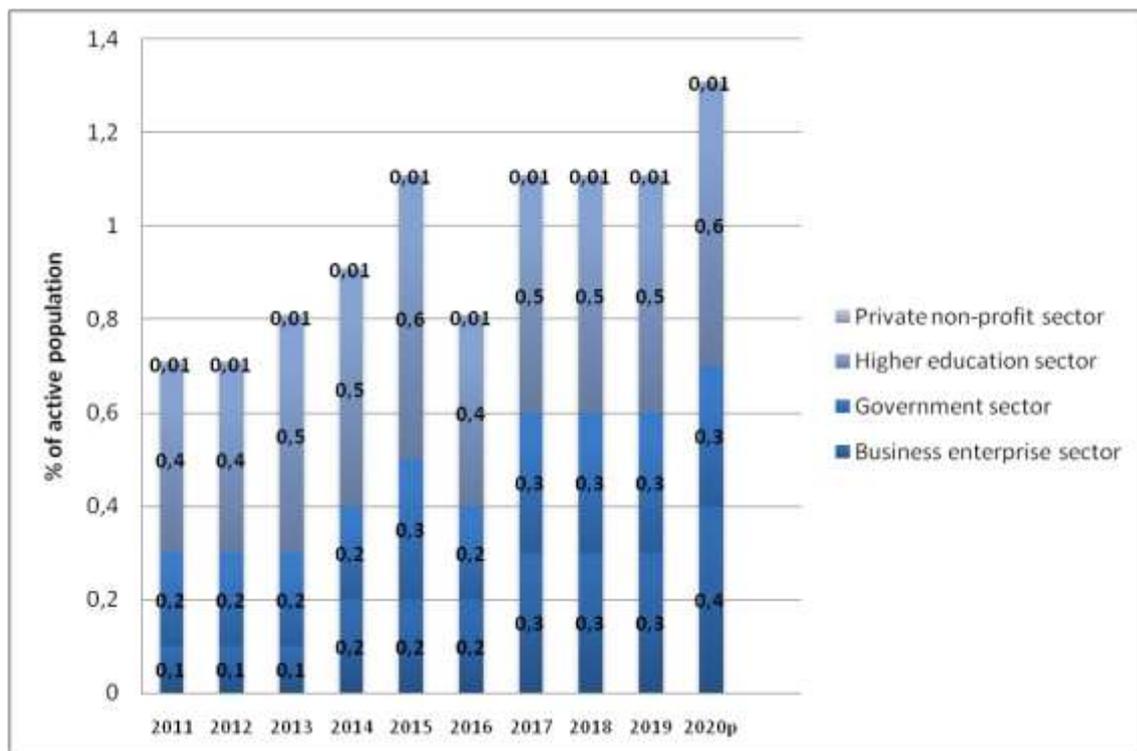
operationalisation of a data collection IT system that shall function as a tool for monitoring credit expansion and improve the readiness of the State and its relevant policies. It should be completed by Q4 2024. [SDG 8.10](#)

- Creation of the **Central Credit Registry (CCR)**, an information system recording on a granular basis the payment history of each individual loan of the customers of all banks and financial institutions and the types of collateral provided. By increasing information regarding the credit history of potential debtors, the CCR will address the adverse selection problem faced by financial institutions when providing new loans to potential lenders, on which they have incomplete information. This, in turn, will impact positively on the quantity and quality of investment spending. Furthermore, the CCR will have beneficial effects on the degree of competition among financial institutions, resulting in lower cost of capital for Greek firms and individual customers. Moreover, by providing accurate and timely information on individual loans, the CCR will greatly facilitate the ability of investors to price risk in the secondary market for NPLs. The CCR will be hosted in the Bank of Greece, thus supporting its obligations and functions in supervising the financial sector and ensuring financial stability. All these should be concluded by Q4 2025. [SDG 8.1](#)
- Amendment, by the end of 2022, of the legal framework regarding the **Greek state aid framework** modernisation and the strengthening the institutional setup for state aid control in Greece. [SDG 8.3](#)

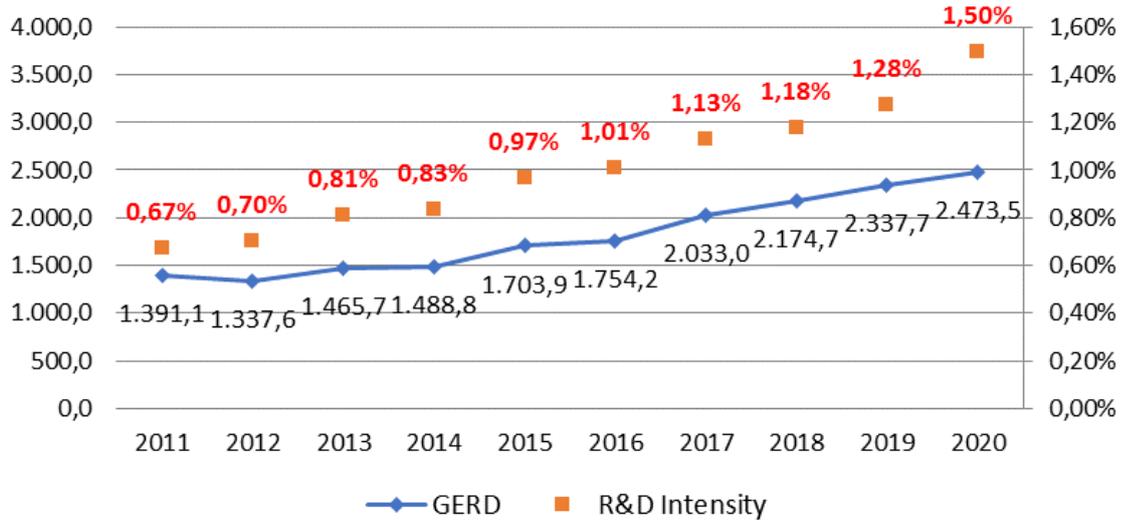
**SDG 9: Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation**



**R&D Personnel by Sector (% of Active Population)**

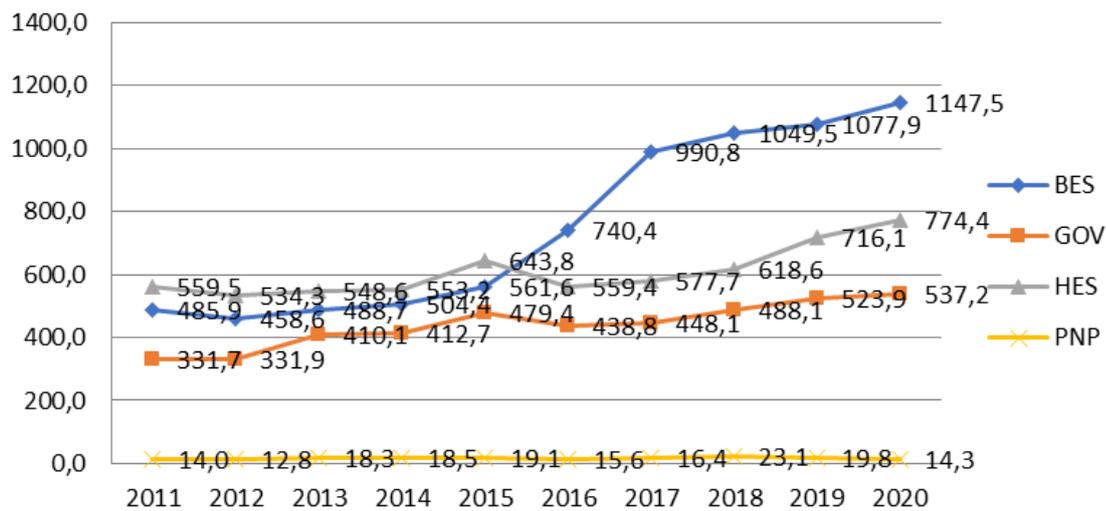


### GREECE: R&D expenditure and intensity



### R&D expenditure and Intensity

### GREECE: R-D expenditure by sector of performance



### R&D expenditure by sector of performance

#### Assessment of progress in relevant SDG indicators

- Continuing its upward trend of recent years, despite a decade of economic crisis, gross domestic expenditure on Research & Development (R&D) by sector in Greece reached 1.5 % of GDP in 2020, a proportion that is 15,3% higher than 2019, with the most performing sectors being the business enterprise sector and the higher education sector.
- R&D personnel in all sectors rose by 62,5% over the last decade. The main actor carrying out research in Greece is the higher education sector, while the share of the business sector is growing. The State is the main actor in the area of research, as universities and technological educational

institutes – constituting the major part of the higher education sector – are exclusively public, according to the Constitution.

### Key challenges

Building resilient infrastructure means, first of all, to focus on creating systems that can sustain, adapt, and emerge even stronger from system-wide shocks, including mainly those caused by climate change. Climate change causes disasters that are closely connected, interact with and feed into inequalities of income and opportunities. In recent years the substantial impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic have added to the expanding disaster risks, creating significant challenges for critical infrastructure such as hospitals, housing, energy, water, and transport. Many of these infrastructure networks have been in place for several decades and need replacement and upgrading. In this context and towards greening infrastructure, investments should be directed to renovation and energy efficiency projects implementation, development of new public infrastructure systems and logistics infrastructure. Connected to building resilient infrastructure is the need for development of smart infrastructure, throughout the country, via digitalization of procedures as well as promotion of interactive digital services and digital content, leading to an improved business environment and increased foreign investments.

The economic recession kept the industrial investments at their lowest levels. The Greek manufacturing industry needs to follow international developments, investing in modern technologies, advanced information systems and automation which, in turn, require restructuring of the current operating model as well as upskilling of human capital, besides capital investments. It furthermore calls for a long-term strategy to improve connectivity infrastructure, create collaborative platforms for technological innovation, and improve the regulatory framework. International competition in manufacturing requires reduction of production costs through leveraging advanced technologies, as well as development of innovative high quality products. R&D could help yet such expenditures are low in Greece as compared to other European countries. Greece has had an adverse business environment for decades. Over the past years, Greece has invested many resources in a challenging and ambitious reform to improve it. The reform has started to take shape but many challenges are still present. The structural problems of the public administration are reflected in the regulatory delivery, both operational and legislative, causing various impediments to the function of the state towards entrepreneurship and consequently investments and job creation.

### Main policy initiatives and measures

- Enhancing the sustainability and resilience of the whole logistics sector and providing reliable, effective and fully integrated logistics services lie at the core of the priorities of the Greek Government. It is within this context that Greece has adopted a **National Logistics Strategy**, supported by an Action Plan that charts the resources needed to achieve its vision and medium-term objectives. The **Action Plan for Logistics**, which is currently under revision, includes the following actions: (i) assessment of the environmental impact and publication of the output, promoting in this way the monitoring and reporting of the environmental performance of logistics operations, logistics providers and commercial companies; (ii) development of city logistics services, which aims at promoting environmentally friendly practices and sustainable City Logistics in the field of Urban Transportation and Distribution; and (iii) renewal of the road haulers' truck fleet, aiming at the exploration of alternative funding options by the Greek State for the purchase of new technology trucks. [SDGs 9.1, 9.4, 9.5, 8.2, 8.3, 11.2, 11.6, 13](#)
- In 2021, the Government adopted, by a ministerial decision, the **Digital Transformation Book (2020-2025)**, which introduces the new National Digital Strategy. The Digital Transformation Book outlines the main guidelines, procedures, principal governance model, basic implementing means and key

strategic pillars on which the whole digital transformation of the economy, society and public administration is based. It describes, in detail, a great number of horizontal, sectoral and short and long-term projects, as well as interventions and actions - with a focus on the technological infrastructure of the State, including the areas of education, training and digital skills development -, which aim to contribute significantly to the effective and integrated implementation of the new National Digital Strategy 2020-2025. **SDGs 9.1, 9.4, 9.5, 4.4, 4.7, 8.3**

- Greece remains committed to the objectives of the **European Gigabit Society** and has already drawn up a plan for the promotion of broadband, which is constantly updated. At the same time, the Government designs, evaluates and implements all required actions based on the country's peculiarities. Two policy initiatives that pertain to Greece's geography and are running successfully, include the: (i) **Rural Broadband internet**, a national initiative, with the objective of developing and operating high-speed public broadband infrastructure in "white" rural and island areas of the country, and (ii) development of a network of **submarine cables connected to the Greek islands**. As high-speed connections are vital for the development of the local economy (tourism, telemedicine, remote education, e-government services), the development of modern underwater fibre cables for island interconnection will address a significant barrier to the availability of high-speed broadband services to end-users, both fixed and mobile. **SDGs 9.1, 9.4, 8.3, 11**
  
- Greece has entered into force in 2021 primary and secondary legislation for the introduction of **super-deduction for tax purposes of qualifying SME expenses for green economy and digitisation investments**. The reform, which is fully in line with EU State aid rules, consists of tax incentives for super-deduction of expenses to strengthen investment by small and medium-sized enterprises, in equipment related to climate change adaptation, the promotion of circular economy, and digitalisation (the full implementation of the tax incentives of the reform shall be completed by 31 December 2024). **SDGs 9.4, 13.2**
  
- In 2021, the Government initiated a **Strategic Plan and National Map for the Implementation of Building Information Modeling (BIM)**, which seeks to enhance the digitalization of the construction sector and the use of BIM in public construction projects. This initiative plays an instrumental role in improving the quality of the public estate and the sustainable competitiveness of industry. **SDG 9.4**
  
- For Greece, the investment in science, research, technology and innovation is a key national strategic priority for a sustainable development model that is socially, financially and environmentally sustainable, and is based upon highly skilled workforce and novel, innovative ideas. Based on the key objectives and thematic priorities of the National Research and Innovation Strategy for Smart Specialisation adopted in 2015, a number of innovative interventions and programmes covering all the economic, social and environmental aspects of sustainable development have been financed during the programming period 2014-2020, under the coordination of the General Secretariat for Research and Innovation of the Ministry of Development and Investments. Currently, the Government is in the process of planning the new **National Strategy for Research and Innovation (2021-2027)**, which places particular emphasis on the following priority areas: Agri-food Chain - Life Sciences, Health, Medicines - Digital Technologies - Sustainable Energy - Environment and Circular Economy - Transport & Supply Chain - Materials, Constructions & Industry - Tourism, Culture and Creative Industries. **SDGs 8.2, 8.3, 9.5, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15**
  
- In 2021, the Government initiated a **National Strategy for Industry**. The actions of the Strategy under development will contribute to the development and transition to green and digital development, to productive and industrial transformation, and to the design of financial and other

support tools. Additionally, the National Strategy aims to strengthen the growth potential of the industry and to increase its footprint in the Greek economy and society. The strategy is based on five (5) key productivity pillars which it recognizes as the key characteristics of a successful economy. These are: Innovative Ideas, People, Infrastructure, Business Environment and Areas, on which the main pillars of the Industrial Strategy were built in order to be in line with the country's vision for a complete overhaul of the domestic economy. [SDGs 9.2, 9.3, 9.4, 9.5, 7.2, 7.3, 8.2, 8.3, 12.2, 12.5, 13.2](#)

- **Business environment’s simplification** and upgrading in quality and safety is another core priority of the Greek Government, which is substantially supported by the national Recovery and Resilience Plan (RRP). This policy consists of both legislative and implementation measures, addressing: (i) simplification of licensing procedures for economic activities; (ii) new institutional framework for the inspection of economic activities and products; and (iii) legislative initiative for the simplification of licensing procedures for starting new businesses. [SDG 9.3](#)

Best practice examples
<p><b>“Smart Bridges” investment under the RRP (SDGs 9.1, 11.2)</b></p> <p>Most of the country's bridges were built in the 1950s and 1980s and are now theoretically nearing the end of their operational life. Small design loads combined with the uncontrolled passage of increasingly heavy vehicles and extreme environmental effects due to climate change are factors that have further contributed to the reduction of bridge strength and make many of them “quasi-safe” to operate. It is therefore clear that the safe use of bridges requires an immediate assessment of their structural and operational adequacy, mainly in terms of their mobile operating loads, based on modern procedures and methodologies of immediate evaluation (Smart Assessment Procedures or "SAP"). The aim of the project is the intelligent provision of preventive maintenance services of bridges in various regions of the country. This information will be recorded and processed by specialized engineers in order to improve the safety level of the bridges and prevent future accidents. The project should be equipped with special load measuring systems and sensors / optical fibers that will measure the displacement of the bridges in real time with modern and accepted technological methods. This information will be recorded and processed with special algorithms that calculate the strength of the bridges.</p>
<p><b>“Flood mitigation projects” investment under the RRP (SDGs 9.1, 6.5)</b></p> <p>The project encompasses a set of multi-purpose investments aiming at limiting flooding risks, providing water for irrigation purposes in drought areas during the summer and enhancing surface water management efficiency in several areas in Greece. The total cost of the project is € 130.7 M and it has been initiated during 2021 and will be completed by the second quarter of 2025. Furthermore, it is expected to deliver positive environmental impact, including climate change adaptation benefits, as for the time being, irrigation water in the areas of interest is yielded from groundwater bodies, with intense drilling leading to salinization and lowering of the aquifer, putting water resources under significant stress. Through the optimization of surface waters’ management and water abstraction, the project will contribute to better control of underground waters resulting in water resources sustainability. In addition, taking into account that more than half of the annual precipitation occurs in winter, while during summer precipitation is quite negligible, better water management will build long term climate resilience.</p>

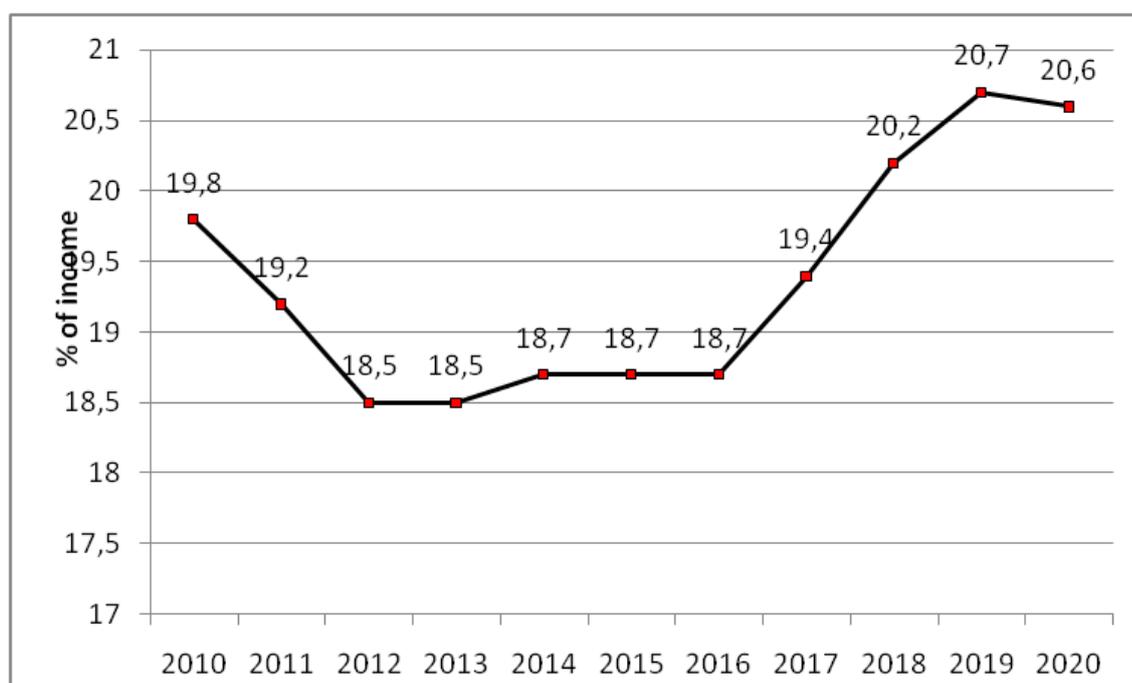
## Forthcoming initiatives

- Completion of a wide range of innovative and **sustainable aviation infrastructure, motorway and railway projects** across the entire territory of Greece, which increase the connectivity and security of the whole transport system, contributing to the citizens' quality of life, environmental protection (electromobility) and the national economy. **SDGs 9.1, 9.4, 11.2, 11.6**
- **Investments in public infrastructure** (airports, ports, rail network, public transport), which contribute to mobility and improve the competitiveness of the tourism sector, in terms of sustainability and digitalization, creating a sustainable and competitive framework for development. **SDGs 9.1, 9.4, 11.2, 11.6, 8.9**
- Improving the **institutional framework for the development and operation of Business Parks** and **fostering the creation and development of new, green and innovative business parks** by providing financial support for: (i) the establishment of new facilities; (ii) the expansion of existing industrial parks to meet the needs of adapting to the strategy of Industry 4.0; and (iii) the conversion of informal industrial complexes into technologically smart, environmentally sustainable and innovative industrial parks. **SDG 9.2**
- Support for the **acceleration of investments in smart manufacturing**, by providing financial support to very small, small and medium enterprises of the Greek industrial ecosystem, for improving their technological infrastructure and upgrading their productivity equipment through the use of modern smart technologies. **SDG 9.2**
- **Elaboration of an Action Plan for the strengthening of the Supply Chain.** The main goal is to transform the country into a center of assembly, final processing and packaging so that the supply chain will have a positive impact on the growth and GDP of the country. **SDG 9.1**
- Full implementation, by 31 December 2024, of the reform regarding **super-deduction for tax purposes of qualifying small and medium-sized enterprise (SMEs) expenses for green economy and digitisation investments.** **SDGs 9.4, 13.2**

## SDG 10: Reduce inequality within and among countries



Income share of the bottom 40% of the Population - % of Income



### Assessment of progress in relevant SDG indicators

- The ratio of total income received by the 20 % of the population with the highest income to that received by the 20 % of the population with the lowest income, has shown a downward trend since 2018 reaching 5,23 in 2020, lower than at the beginning of the economic crisis (2010).
- In 2018 the income share of the bottom 40% of the population exceeded the rate of 2010 (19,8%) and remains above 20%.
- First-instance decisions to asylum applications have, lately, been significantly accelerated in order to handle the backlog and rose from 876 in the first 5 years (2011-16) to 9.771 between 2017-2020. There are still pending cases, which tend to be gradually covered unless there is significant increase in incoming applications.

## Key challenges

With a view to reducing inequality, Greece adopts policies and measures to enhance the capacity of its social state to promote social inclusion. As regards disability, a lack of policies on independent living, employability and early childhood intervention calls for action in order to solve accessibility and infrastructure problems for the physically impaired, to avoid institutionalization, delays in service delivery, bureaucracy and complex procedures, to shape attitudes, to overcome stereotypes and barriers towards inclusiveness and to advance independent living. Another challenging field is child protection and development where disparities in quality and quantity of nursery care services, belated diagnosis of learning disorders and a heavy and obsolete institutional care undermine children's rights and prospects, making it a top priority for the country. In addition, regarding Roma, Greece focuses on tackling their multi-level social exclusion and discrimination and promote coexistence and participation. The measures focus in the limited access to education, employment and health care, the poor living conditions and discrimination. Regarding the relatively low diversity awareness, Greece seeks to promote diversity within organizations and eliminate gender, ethnicity and sexual orientation inequalities, especially in the job market. This is deemed necessary, together with active inclusion policies where needed, particularly as the country has been receiving successive waves of mass immigration for almost a decade, developing a risk to expand the poor and socially excluded strata in pandemic-affected conditions.

## Main policy initiatives and measures

- Greece has taken initiatives, which seek to successfully address the “accessibility gap” brought about by the remoteness and insularity faced by the Greek island inhabitants. In this regard, measures have been put forward with a view to continue to implement the **Transport Equivalent for all island residents and freights**, which is a rebate mechanism to treat islander's transport costs inequality, improving mobility and better island accessibility. As the majority of products and services have to be transported to the islands, prices are considerably higher, adding to the cost of living in insular territories. The reduced freight costs as well as the lower commuting and travel expenses for the local residents are expected to stimulate growth and job creation in these regions with greater social inclusion and environmental sustainability. [SDGs 10.3, 8.3](#)
- The Strategy for social inclusion and the fight against poverty and the first-time National Plan for the protection of Children's Rights (2021) are commitments to reduce child poverty, to guarantee that every child has access to free health services, education, childcare, housing and adequate food, to apply guardianship to unaccompanied minors refugees, to simplify adoption procedures, to ensure independent living and avoid deinstitutionalization for people with disabilities, to provide a safety net against deep poverty by the constitutionally guaranteed social solidarity income, to provide decent housing for vulnerable groups and for persons aged 67 years and over with low or no income.
- In the period 2019-2020, amendments on the provisions of the **Code of Greek Citizenship** were introduced provided for a more objective, transparent and faster acquisition of Greek citizenship by those who fulfill the legal requirements, by restructuring the procedure of naturalization, introducing practices of public access to information, such as (i) an online platform, (ii) the recording and publication of the procedures, (iii) the digital monitoring of all the cases, (iv) the publication of a digital guide and (iv) an online “bank” of topics concerning the naturalization of alien citizens of non-Greek origin. [SDGs 10.7, 10.2, 16.6, 16.10](#)
- Facilitating safe, organized, and regular migration and developing efficient migration policies is the principal objective of the Greek Ministry of **Migration and Asylum** (MoMA), which was reorganized by a presidential decree in 2020, so as to improve the coordination and interconnection of services

and promote the coherence and synergy of the policies pursued. At the same time, the implementation of new IT tools facilitates the management of applications for resident permits and other such processes and services. Apart from the internal institutional and organizational restructuring, it should be noted that Greece is giving due importance to the transnational cooperation for an orderly and safe migration, by implementing bilateral agreements with major countries of origin of migrants. [SDG 10](#).

- A 2019 law provides the opportunity to **all beneficiaries of international protection to participate in programs of social integration** that are being organized by the competent authorities. [SDG 10](#)
- In order to support **unaccompanied children an innovative project of mentorship** is designed and implemented. The mentors act as role -models for unaccompanied children by providing individualized guidance in every step of their journey; including reception, accommodation, education, ensuring children's smooth transition to adulthood as well as their integration into the labour market. The project is implemented for the first time in Greece and led by former unaccompanied children, who reside in Greece and faced similar difficulties and challenges in the past. [SDGs 10.2, 4.1, 4.7, 8.5](#)
- The access of **vulnerable social groups to employment programmes** was facilitated in 2021 by provisions such as the inclusion of women who are victims of gender-based violence and domestic violence in the list of these groups, a subsidy increase, and a simplification of the participation criteria concerning the hiring of persons with disabilities, former prisoners, former drug addicts, and young offenders or youth in social peril, including women facing increased labour-market accessibility obstacles, victims of trafficking and transsexual people. [SDG 10.2, 8.5](#)
- Provisions, adopted in 2019, reform in a substantial way the legal framework concerning the community-based services for persons with disabilities. As regards the availability of the supported homes, and within the scope of deinstitutionalization, Public Legal Entities and non-profit organizations certified to provide social care services, may now establish **Supported Living Homes for Persons with Disabilities**. [SDG 10.2, 1, 11](#)
- The 2020 law on **insurance reform** and the **digitalization of the National Social Security Fund** ("e-EFKA") contributes to a fairer and more effective social security system, in line with the requirements of the modern digital era, through the integration of the system and the digitization of the pension award process, cultivating insurance consciousness and consolidating feelings of security and trust in employees and pensioners. The country's insurance system becomes accessible to all citizens without discrimination and exclusion, and provides for the weak, restoring insurance justice to all those who contribute for many years of work to the social security system. [SDGs 10.4, 16.10](#)
- The **National Action Plan (NAP) for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2020)** is implemented horizontally in accordance with the United Nations guidelines and the particular remarks from the country's examination in the 22nd session of the UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. The Committee made recommendations, indicating the need to incorporate the rights model into legislation and practice, the obligation to develop a clear national strategy and action plan and the revision of the terms of reference for persons with disabilities in legislation. Responding to them, the NAP comprises six Pillars and thirty Objectives, which are further broken down into projects and actions with a clear timeline and specific actors, covering a wide range of policy areas. This is a dynamic text that will be constantly enriched, updated and specialized, based on the results of an ongoing consultation. [SDG 10.2, 4.5, 8.5, 11.2, 11.7](#)

- The **National Deinstitutionalization Strategy and the Action Plan for its implementation** describes the social welfare reforms that aim in particular at promoting and developing a solid legal and economic framework, which also addresses the needs of children with disabilities, adults with disabilities and the elderly. Deinstitutionalization and the prevention of institutionalization **include the Personal Assistant, the development of accommodation structures** for people with disabilities, the development of a **pilot program of professional foster care for children with disabilities**, the development of a **short reception unit for people with disabilities**, the establishment of a **mobile support unit for families with disabilities**, the development of **creative employment centers and the creation of day care centers for the disabled**. [SDG 10.2, 8.5, 11.2, 11.7, 4.5](#)
  
- There are several benefits for persons with disabilities from different public bodies with different conditions and procedures each time. In most cases the procedure provides for the submission of documents (such as the disability certification document). Therefore, it is not easy for people with disabilities to know all these procedures in order to be able to apply. The **Disability Card** will integrate all benefits for the disabled from all institutions. Beneficiaries will be able to enjoy these rights and benefits upon presentation of the Card, without having to demonstrate their disability certification each time. [SDG 10.2, 4.5, 8.5, 11.2, 11.7](#)
  
- There are **9 financial aid schemes for persons with disabilities**, complementing the provisions of the social security funds, which cover all types of disabilities. Eligibility is subject to certain preconditions that concern mainly the disability rate and the employment and insurance status. In addition, other programmes are implemented every year, such as a **camping programme** for Persons with Disabilities, as well as a programme of **free or reduced travel ticket** with public transport and long distance buses for Persons with Disabilities is implemented. [SDG 10.2, 11.2, 11.7](#)
  
- The new **National Roma Strategy and Action Plan 2021-2030** is the result of an in-depth study and long participatory process, involving all relevant ministries and stakeholders, as well as Roma representatives. It has been set under public consultation with the civil society and relevant stakeholders at national, regional and local level. The overall strategy and action plan sets measurable indicators to be complemented by a monitoring mechanism, so as to enable the continuous evaluation of the achievements or setbacks and the necessary adjustments of the actions. It comprises **4 pillars** (i-Prevention and fight against Roma poverty and social exclusion; ii-Enhancing equal access of Roma to basic services and goods [education, employment, health, social care and housing]; iii- Preventing and combating stereotypes and discrimination against Roma; iv-Promoting the active participation of Roma in social, economic and political life) and a total of **27 Thematic Measures**. Particular emphasis is placed on Roma empowerment, especially of Roma youth and women for their professional, social and personal development and enhancement of civic competence and engagement in the local communities. Specific actions are foreseen to promote **active participation of Roma in social, economic and political life**. The issue is also addressed within the Roma Platform actions of the National Contact Point for Social Inclusion of Roma, working closely with Roma and non-Roma communities in order to create a culture of dialogue and develop capacities, synergies and cooperation at local level, enhancing Roma participation and involvement in all aspects of social life. [SDGs 10.2, 10.3 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 11, 16, 16.7](#)
  
- **Roma Branches established in Community Centers of municipalities** hosting significant rates of Roma, provide reception, support and interconnection services at local level, as well as individualized support to Roma in all fields of social integration (access to primary healthcare, school enrolment and attendance, renewing of unemployment cards and receiving Minimum Guarantee Income). Roma are offered counseling and psychological support, primary health care services and targeted actions for education, tackling school dropout and promoting literacy, as well as actions to promote their employment integration and social inclusion. The **Roma mediators** play a key role in

the smooth operation of the Roma branches of the Community Centers acting as a bond between the local Roma communities and the Centers. Today 62 Roma Branches operate in Municipalities throughout Greece, while their contribution to the social inclusion of Roma at local and regional level is considered particularly important. [SDGs 10.2, 10.3, 16.b](#)

- Aiming at reducing inequalities, the first-time **National Strategy for LGBTQ+ Equality** (2021) is based on the principle of equality, on the prohibition of sexual orientation and gender identity discrimination and on enhancement of social inclusion. LGBTQ+ people face significant problems daily in almost every aspect of the public sphere, among others when visiting the health services, contacting the police and all public administration, adapting to working environments and going to school. Most of their reported difficulties are based on either stereotypical discrimination or lack of institutional provisions. Consulting closely with their representatives, the Government deemed it important to treat the systemic malfunctions that demote them to second-class citizens and ensure protection of their rights while building LGBTQ+ inclusive societies. [SDGs 10.2, 10.3, 16.1, 16.3, 16.9](#)

<b>Best practice examples</b>
<b>Personal Assistant for People with Disabilities (SDGs 10.2, 5.4)</b>
<p><b>The Personal Assistant for People with Disabilities</b> is a particularly important service for the promotion of deinstitutionalization and independent living, as well as for the avoidance of the marginalization of persons with disabilities. This service is established for the first time in Greece in 2021 and will begin in 2022 implemented on a pilot in selected areas of the country. It involves training and registration of professional helpers who will assist the disabled to achieve independent living while at the same time they will offer responsibility relief to their families. Traditional carers, mainly women, will be able to participate too. The pilot programme will be implemented in two phases, each one for 1.000 beneficiaries, and its roll-out will be planned after a necessary evaluation.</p>
<b>Social Mediation and Preventive Security Training for Police Personnel (SDGs 10.2, 10.3, 16.7, 16.b)</b>
<p>The programme began in 2020 and is targeted to areas of the country hosting significant rates of <b>Roma</b> populations, in the regions of Attica, Central Macedonia, Thessaly and Crete. The core of the intervention involves the police personnel who come in direct contact with the Roma communities within their daily tasks. Planned activities include: (a) Field study in order to identify the specific special needs of intervention in matters of preventive security and specific target to investigate the attitudes / perceptions of the local Roma communities regarding the police and vice versa, (b) <b>Training of front-line police personnel on issues of social mediation and preventive security</b>, with the active participation of experienced <b>Roma social mediators</b> and with the aim of promoting appropriate preventive mediation tools, (c) Pilot test of trained police officers for the purposes of preventive mediation and practical use of related tools during the execution of daily police work. The action is expected to contribute to the enhancement of social dialogue and the proactive promotion of Roma social inclusion by enhancing mutual awareness and understanding among local Roma and non- Roma communities and the civil protection services, with a special focus on combating stereotypes and discrimination against Roma and improving Roma relations with public services.</p>

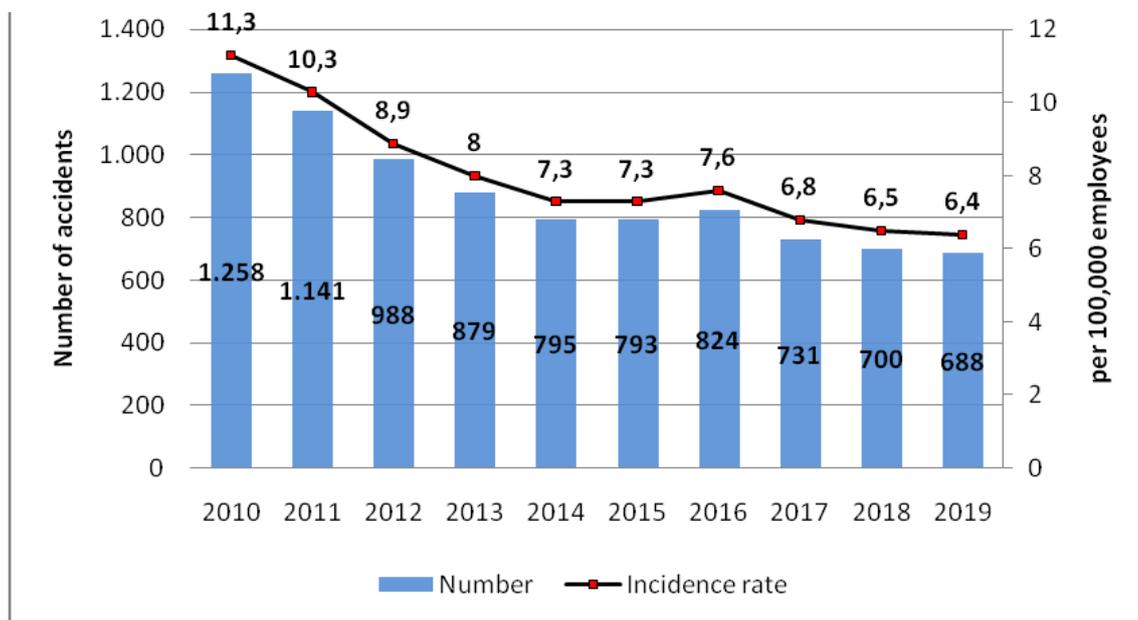
## Forthcoming initiatives

- A new **codification of national migration legislation** is underway and expected to be finalized by the end of 2022 and a new revision of the regulatory framework regarding migration for employment and migration for investments is under consideration. Also, further progress on the use of IT tools for the submission of applications for residence permits and the full digitalization of the migration archives is planned. [SDGs 10.7, 8.8](#)
- The **Migrant Integration Centers** were established by law in 2016 and operate as branches of the municipal Community Centers, providing a wide range of services to third-country nationals. So far 10 such centers are in operation, and their increase to 32 is under consideration. [SDG 10.2](#)
- The **Ministry of Migration and Asylum** in collaboration with the European Social Fund (ESF) and the Hellenic Agency for Local Development and Local Government, has designed the project “**Enhancing intercultural mediation services in municipal Community Centers and Migrant Integration Centers**”. The project is co-financed by the ESF through eight (8) Regional Operation Programmes (Eastern Macedonia and Thrace, Attica, Western Greece, Epirus, Thessaly, Central Macedonia, Crete, and Central Greece) and is being implemented by the Hellenic Agency for Local Development and Local Government. The first 34 Intercultural Mediators attended a specialized training programme and have started providing intercultural mediation services at 32 municipalities. The project will run until August 2023. [SDGs 10.2, 17.17](#)
- A Technical Support programme funded by the European Commission's Directorate-General for Structural Reform Support (DG REFORM) will run in 2022 for the **establishment of a permanent procedure for the integration of third country nationals in the labor market**. The aim is to find ways to connect immigrants, asylum seekers and refugees with the labor market, by matching their educational and professional skills with available jobs, and it is expected to address the following tasks: (i) planning a database in order to register the skills and qualifications of immigrants, asylum seekers and refugees; (ii) mapping of immigrants and refugees' skills and education background; (iii) organizing campaigns so as to inform about the new initiative; (iv) better understanding of the potential migrant and refugee capacity; e) outreaching in companies and employers to scan the labour market and workforce needs; f) matching skills and qualifications with available job opportunities. [SDG 10.2](#)
- The "**Diversity awareness**" project is funded by the RRP and included in the “GREECE 2.0” recovery plan, with the objectives of developing a concrete mechanism that can monitor the progress and assess on an annual basis the data related to equality and discriminations, enhancing the role of the **Equality Observatory**, creating a working group that will review best practices and standardised methodologies, raising employees' awareness of discriminated groups and avoiding discrimination in the way they approach and communicate with these groups, integrating a culture of openness and adaptability to diversity, and encouraging organizations to recruit and utilize executives belonging to discriminated groups. The project starts in 2022 and the goal is to train 1,600,000 employees by the end of 2024, with priority given to those employed in front office positions and managerial roles. The budget is around 47 million euros. [SDG 10.2](#)

SDG 11: Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable



Number and incidence rate of road accidents



Percentage of people living in overcrowded household by income situation in relation to the risk of poverty threshold

Year			
	Below 60% of median equivalised income	Above 60% of median equivalised income	Total
2010	34.7	23.2	25.5
2011	35.8	23.2	25.9
2012	39.4	22.7	26.5
2013	42	22.9	27.3
2014	43.1	22.9	27.4
2015	42	24.3	28.1
2016	42.2	25.0	28.7
2017	43.7	25.3	29.0
2018	44.2	25.7	29.2
2019	45.7	25.0	28.7
2020	43.9	25.8	29.0

#### Assessment of progress in relevant SDG indicators

- Between 2010 and 2020, the total percentage of people living in overcrowded households by income situation in relation to the risk of poverty threshold shows an upward trend, mainly due to the economic crisis and the deep recession. More specifically, in 2020 the total population living in overcrowded households reached 29.0%, well above the EU average of 17,8%, while the corresponding percentages for the non-poor and poor population amounted to 25.8% and 43.9%, respectively.

- The total percentage of people living in households suffering from noise presents a reduction from 23.2% in 2010 to 20.1% in 2020.
- The impressive decrease in the number of people killed in road accidents continues for the last decade in Greece, reaching its lowest level in 2019, at almost half.
- In the last decade, the reduction in use of private vehicles and fuel consumption heating due to the economic crisis in parallel with the use of alternative fuels for vehicles and the waste management, had a significant impact on the reduction of the air pollution by particulates. In this way the annual trend of PM 10 and PM 2,5 concentrations continue at steady state without significant variations, after the sharp increase in 2013.
- Recycling rate of municipal waste is increasing over the last years, reaching 21% of total waste generated in 2019. This moderate progress has been achieved due to new policies and regulations aiming at increasing waste recycling and introducing extended producer responsibility schemes. There is still much to be done so that the upward trend continues.

### Key challenges

Urbanization poses great challenges for Greek cities, such as environmental degradation, air and noise pollution, heat island effects, habitat fragmentation, loss of ecosystem services, pressures on urban security and energy poverty. Sustainable mobility within cities requires focusing on the promotion of alternative means of transport like walking, bicycling and public transportation instead of the use of private vehicles and the construction of additional road infrastructure. Other parameters affecting the cities' sustainability and citizens' quality of life, especially during the past decade, are the economic crisis, the migration flows and climate change. Moreover, the current health crisis caused by the Covid-19 pandemic has dramatically impacted people as well as city routines.

Additionally, in the new era of climate crisis, growing urban areas are expected to relate to bigger scale disasters and stress. Investing in prevention, adaptation and recovery from shocks and stresses through institutional reforms and medium- to long-term resilience policy planning and implementation remains a challenge. On the other hand, environmental and spatial/urban legislation in Greece is traditionally characterized by complexity and ambiguities, increasing the administrative burden on citizens and businesses. This is why there is a need for regulatory modernization, simplification and codification. New local and urban plans will promote sustainable economic activity and the protection of the environment.

### Main policy initiatives and measures

- Within the continuing programme for energy renovation of residential buildings, a special sub-programme is being implemented aiming to help people from the lower economic strata adapt their dwellings to climate change conditions through a range of improvements including -inter alia- replacement of household windows/doors, installation/upgrading of thermal insulation and heating/cooling system upgrade. The programme is designed to protect the financially weak by demarcating a budget of 100 million euros for energy poor households, setting a higher subsidy rate of 75% and providing a state guarantee for up to 80% of a bank loan they may ask to get in order to be able to cover their private contribution. [SDG 11.1](#)
- The Government in collaboration with UNHCR and NGOs currently active in the field related to children protection and rights launched a Mechanism to rapidly identify **unaccompanied children who are homeless or living in insecure conditions** and provide safe and secure accommodation and support. In a second phase the unaccompanied children are transferred to long-term accommodation, based on a formal assessment of the child's needs, background and options

- available in Greece. The Mechanism also includes a 24/7 telephone hotline for identifying and tracing children in need. [SDGs 11.1, 10.2, 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.5](#)
- The Government has designed and implemented a new policy aimed at enhancing the capacity of **long-term accommodation for unaccompanied minors**. To that end the increase of accommodation places in hostels and semi-autonomous living apartments reaches 62% since November 2019 and a total of 2,242 places. In 2022, 450 **new** hosting positions will be created for unaccompanied children). [SDGs 11.1, 10.2, 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.5](#)
  - Infrastructure improvement in Roma settlements & Temporary relocation. With regard to the issue of housing - improving living conditions, the Government has intensified the efforts to raise awareness and activate local authorities, in order to promote relevant relocation interventions or improvement of living conditions in Roma communities according to local needs. The improvement of living conditions concerns personal-hygiene and environmental infrastructure and facilities, such as public baths and areas for the cleaning of clothing and other related interventions. Pursuant to the current legislation, the Committee for Temporary Relocation of Special Social Groups, set up at the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs, examines Municipalities' requests for relocation of Roma communities to properly organized premises in order to ensure decent living conditions. In this context, a **pilot social housing temporary relocation of 56 Roma families** (approx. 370 persons) from the Pelekas settlement in the Municipality of Katerini has been initiated. The project with a budget of 5,000,000.00 €, is co-financed by the Financial Mechanism of the European Economic Area (EEA Grants Programme 2014-2021 "Inclusion and Empowerment of Roma"). It includes installation of basic housing equipment, (e.g. household appliances, refrigerators, cookers, washing machines, air-conditioners, solar panels, etc.), regular consultation sessions with Roma families on the status of the housing and infrastructure development and support, as well as complementary activities supporting the physical relocation of the 56 families to the newly constructed housing units. Complementary social services include the establishment and staffing of a **Study Center for primary school pupils**, the organization of cultural, athletic and other social activities, decided upon after **consultations with the beneficiaries** on their current needs. [SDG 11.1, 11.6, 11.7, 10.2, 6.1, 6.2, 4.1, 4.5, 4.6, 17.17](#)
  - In order to secure affordable transportation for all, tickets in public and private (intercity) transport are subsidized for social groups such as students of all educational levels, persons with disabilities, citizens aged 65 and over and the unemployed. [SDG 11.2](#)
  - The expansion of existing or construction of new metro lines in Athens and Thessaloniki, which is underway, will improve accessibility, reduce traffic problems in several densely populated suburbs connected to the above metropolitan areas, as well as increase safety and quality of services to the passengers. Moreover, a "road safety upgrade investment" within the RRP framework will contribute to the restoration of the road network as it includes interventions to approximately 7000 points on the national or regional road network or at the pavements throughout the territory. [SDGs 11.2, 3.6](#)
  - The Government passed in 2020 a new law on the **modernization of the Spatial and Urban Planning legislation**, which promotes transparency of data and information, in combination with a rational, coordinated and integrated spatial and urban planning system. In this regard, the full digitization of the Greek territory in terms of land-uses, protection status, type of industrial and other activities allowed, facilitates the planning and authorization of new investments across the country, while ensuring the protection and management of the natural environment in a more sustainable and effective way against urban sprawl and other pressures from economic activities, in line with the national climate change adaptation and mitigation objectives. [SDGs 11.3, 11.5, 11.6, 11.7, 11.a, 11.b, 14, 15](#)
  - Greece places particular emphasis on spatial planning through the elaboration and implementation of an integrated **National Spatial Strategy** that constitutes the 'spatial depiction' of the principles of

sustainable development, balancing economic and social activities to ensure protection of the natural environment, thus linking all SDGs in actual terms. The National Spatial Strategy aims at safeguarding economic and social cohesion, amending geographical imbalances and spatial inequalities, ensuring sustainable management of natural and cultural resources as well as promoting coherence and complementarity of activities (e.g. residential areas, production areas and free space in off-plan areas) in time and space, at all levels, i.e. local, regional and national. The principles of the National Spatial Strategy, are therefore, fully taken into account in the elaboration of the following plans, at five different levels: (i) the **Special Spatial Planning Frameworks**, which are sector-specific, at the national level; (ii) the **Regional Spatial Planning Frameworks**, which cover the totality of the Greek administrative and geographic regions, at the regional level; and (iii) the **Maritime Spatial Frameworks** for the marine areas of the country to be soon developed, also at the regional level. Spatial planning at the local level corresponds to urban planning, which is carried out through the (iv) **Local Urban Plans** and **Special Urban Plans**, regulating the sustainable spatial development and organization of the territorial area of one or more Municipal units; and the (v) **City plans** for the specification and implementation of the provisions of the Local Urban Plans at city or settlement level regarding land-uses, building regulations, allocation of open or public spaces as opposed to built up areas etc. In this context, five Special Spatial Planning Frameworks and nine out of the twelve Regional Spatial Planning Frameworks have been approved, completed or updated, aiming to reconcile nature protection with economic development, and the rest are underway. [SDGs 11, 17.14](#)

- With the aim to **complete the urban planning of the country by 2026** to reach a full coverage of the Greek territory from the current 20% coverage, most of the necessary technical specifications have already been issued (i.e. **Local Urban Plans, Special Urban Plans** for decommissioned lignite producing sites in line with the objective of a full delignitisation of the energy mix by 2028, building co-efficient reception zones etc.), while the remaining Technical Specifications are expected in the coming months (for settlements' boundaries, special local plans and the existing road network in off-plan areas). All above mentioned studies that aim to integrate the planning system in Greece and promote the digitalization of the Greek territory with urban plans for the 75-80% of the Greek territory by 2025, form an important **part of the National Recovery and Resilience Plan**. [SDGs 11.3, 11.6, 11.7, 11.a, 11.b](#)
- In order to promote urban accessibility, new legislation was passed in 2020 and 2021, making “**Urban Accessibility Plans**” **compulsory** for all large and medium-sized municipalities. The specifications and technical instructions have already been issued, providing the necessary framework for the preparation, examination, characterization, monitoring and supervision of the above plans. Local authorities are expected to make the necessary assignments in 2022 in order to complete the development of the plans by the end of 2023, as required by law. [SDGs 11.3, 11.7](#)
- The Government attributes great importance to the promotion of **sustainable urban mobility at local and regional level**, which serves the needs of citizens for better quality of life and safe mobility and contributes significantly to sustainable transport of goods into the urban and suburban fabric. In this regard, in 2021, the Government decided to establish by law a comprehensive framework regarding the uniform preparation, examination, monitoring and supervision of **Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans** (SUMP). According to this legislative initiative, all regional authorities and municipalities of more than 30,000 inhabitants are required to prepare a SUMP. [SDGs 11.2, 11.3, 11.6, 11.7, 3.6, 7.3, 9.1, 13.2](#)
- As railways are the backbone of sustainable transport, efforts are being made to upgrade existing infrastructure and construct new one. The new Tithorea-Lianokladi-Domokos double track high speed line, 106 km long, was completed in 2018, the new double railway line in Kiato–Diakopto–Egio section, 71 Km long, was completed in 2020, and six more such railway projects all over the country are under construction, to be completed in 2023. In addition, the construction of a new

metro line (4) has begun in Athens (30 km long, with 36 stations), and the extension of metro line 3 will be completed in 2022, reaching a total number of 27 stations. The new metro line in Thessaloniki is expected to be ready for operation in 2023. [SDGs 11.2, 9.1](#)

- For the purpose of protecting and safeguarding the cultural and natural environment, Greece has launched the **Archeological Cadastre**. This is an Integrated Information System for the systematic recording, documentation, digitization and management of archeological, administrative and geospatial data related to the country's immovable monuments and sites, including underwater antiquities. The Cadastre provides the foundation on which a monitoring system for the impact of climate change on cultural heritage is to be built, so as to mitigate the various risks that threaten cultural heritage. [SDGs 11.4, 13.1](#)
- The Government has introduced new provisions in the Road Traffic Code aimed at covering the proper use of **micro mobility vehicles**, called Personal Light Electric Vehicles. In addition, in order to boost "active human-powered mobility", provisions that promote alternative forms of movement (pedestrian and bicycle) including traffic signals, as well as new road signs for cyclists have been included in the Road Traffic Code. Furthermore, with a view to enhance the safety of alternative modes of transport, a new framework is planned for violations of the Traffic Code with severe sanctions, especially for the protection of vulnerable road users, such as cyclists. [SDGs 11.2, 11.6](#)
- The Government has put forward measures and actions, which promote the establishment, operation and exploitation of **airports on water bodies**. Hydroplanes can be the versatile, alternative choice for the transport of people and goods, considering the insular character of Greece and in particular the transport and transit needs of the remote islands of the country that seasonally are lacking connection with the mainland. [SDGs 11.2, 11.a](#)
- "**Xenokrates**" is the code name for Greece's **National Comprehensive Emergency Plan**. It assigns responsibilities, sets forth lines of authority and organizational relationships, and outlines how actions will be coordinated. This basic plan is complemented by several hazard-specific annexes, which address unique response details. Until 2019, only Wildfire, Fixed Site Hazardous Materials Incident and Mass Fatalities Incidents had been developed. Since July 2019, the Greek Civil Protection agency has developed annexes for Earthquakes, Volcanic Eruptions, Floods, Winter Storms and Hazardous Materials Transportation Accidents, substantially expanding the country's response and short-term recovery capabilities. Each annex was developed using risk management principles to assign priorities and resources, thus ensuring unity of effort among all levels of government and all elements of the community. [SDGs 11.5, 11.b, 13.1](#)
- The **AEGIS National Program for Civil Protection** is a € 1.71 billion program, co-funded by the European Investment Bank, the European Union Recovery and Resilience Facility, and the 2021-2027 National Strategic Reference Framework. Its purpose is radically upgrading the country's disaster risk management capabilities. AEGIS funding is geared towards four main pillars. The first is an improvement of existing infrastructures, facilities, and equipment. The second pillar involves the procurement of public works equipment and early warning systems, including weather stations, weather radar systems, river gages, seismometers, as well as data analytics solutions based on artificial intelligence and machine learning. The third pillar encompasses the procurement of a wide range of fixed-wing aircraft and helicopters for a variety of missions, such as personnel transport, aeromedical evacuation, and airborne warning and control. It also includes the procurement of mobile Emergency Operations Centers, GPS-based fleet management systems and communications systems. The last pillar is specific to disaster response resources and includes the upgrade of existing and procurement of new firefighting aircraft, fire/rescue vehicles, police vehicles, Bailey-type bridges, PPE, and field hospitals. The Armed Forces contribute with personnel, assets, and

infrastructure to disaster and emergency relief, both domestically, as well as within the framework of the RESCUE programme [SDGs 11.5, 11.b, 13.1](#)

- RescEU is a new European reserve of resources (the ‘**rescEU reserve**’) which includes a fleet of firefighting airplanes and helicopters, medical evacuation airplanes, and a stockpile of medical equipment and field hospitals that can respond to health emergencies, and chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear incidents. Greece has been one of the strongest advocates in favor of rescEU and one of the first European countries to participate in the reserve. Because of the growing risk of wildland fires across Europe, a rescEU transition fleet of firefighting aircraft was co-funded by the European Commission, with Greece being one of the first six countries to participate in the rescEU transition fleet. In addition, Greece has offered to host additional rescEU wildland firefighting capabilities in the future. In addition, the European Commission created a strategic rescEU medical reserve and distribution mechanism under the umbrella of the EU Civil Protection Mechanism. The reserve enables the swift delivery of medical equipment such as ventilators and personal protective equipment. Greece is one of 9 EU Member States to currently host this strategic stockpile. [SDGs 11.5, 11.b, 13.1](#)

<b>Best practice examples</b>
<b>The Antonis Tritsis Programme (SDGs 11.2, 11.3, 11.4, 11.6, 11.7, 11.b, 3, 4, 6, 7, 9, 12, 14, 17).</b>
Greece has initiated an innovative and comprehensive programme called Antonis Tritsis that aims to promote and implement an integrated strategic plan supporting sustainable development and social solidarity at local and regional level. The Programme is launched by the Ministry of the Interior and implemented by the local and regional authorities. It intends to strengthen sustainable urban investment in urban areas across the country through the promotion of the three dimensions of sustainable development. All the Calls of the Programme are based on a coherent legal framework, in line with relevant EU legislation, and aim to achieve, in an integrated and balanced manner, the UN Sustainable Development Goals. It includes actions for social protection and cohesion, schemes to improve water and wastewater, waste management, road safety and climate resilience, smart city schemes, flood protection, earthquake protection in schools and improving public health measures against Covid-19. In addition, the Antonis Tritsis Programme includes, among others, plans to invest in exploitation of geothermal fields, renewable energy sources, smart distribution, storage, and energy consumption systems. The new sustainable urban investment initiative will scale up priority investment including urban regeneration and increase renewable energy use to improve the quality of life of local residents and attractiveness for business and tourism.
<b>Housing and work for the homeless(SDGs 11, 10, 1, 3, 8)</b>
The “Housing and work for the homeless” is a housing-first inspired programme for persons and families experiencing homelessness. It has been implemented since 2015. During the period 2018-2020, 410 households joined the program and the total number of beneficiaries is 630, among which single parent and Roma families and a total of 160 children. The program has been reformed in 2020 aiming to act as a permanent housing and reintegration policy for the homeless. It is repeated every two years with a total budget of 10 million euros (state budget funding) and today it provides the following services for about 600 households: (i) Rent subsidy up to 250 euros per month to one person households and 350 euros for multi-person households for a period of 24 months, (ii) One-off allowance of 1.000 and up to 1.300 euros for household equipment, (iii) One-off allowance of 1.000 and up to 1.300 euros for household bills, (iv) Counseling and social support, (v) Work subsidy (full minimum wage covering) for a period of 12 months, (vi) Non wage

subsidy for another –consequent- period of 12 months, (vii) Subsidy for training and working skills building and (viii) Linkage with complementary social services and allowances during the program (especially GMI) and after exiting the program (housing allowance). In the forthcoming period (2022-2024), 556 households will enter the program with a total number of beneficiaries estimated at 883 persons.

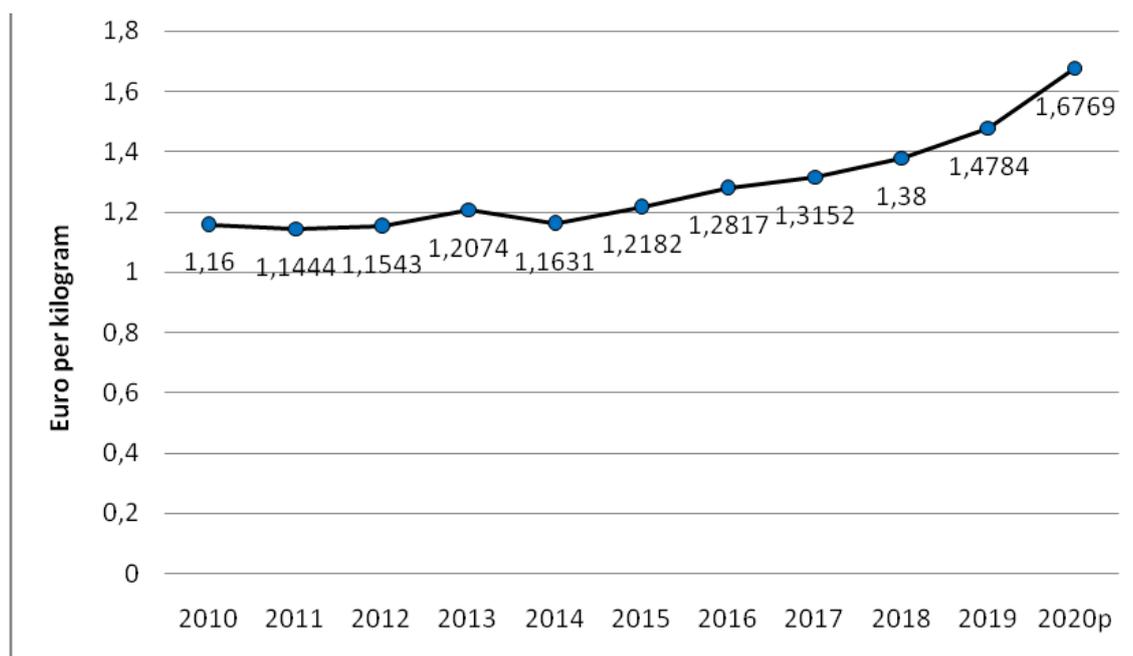
### Forthcoming initiatives

- The “**Social Housing for the most Vulnerable Groups**” programme is scheduled to be funded by the Resilience and Recovery Fund. The program will cover the renovation costs for 100 houses of very low income households in the Municipalities of Athens and Thessaloniki, as well as the cost of professionals with technical expertise to support the implementation. The legal framework is to be enacted, setting the terms and conditions e.g. eligibility criteria for beneficiaries, duration of entitlement, accompanying services, requirements for home owners etc. The objective of the program is to act as a pilot project towards the development of a social housing policy for vulnerable groups, aiming to reduce homelessness in large urban areas by building up networks between private homeowners and local social services. **SDG 11.1**
- Put forward measures and actions which promote further the implementation of the **National Spatial Strategy**. In particular, the completion of the **Local Urban Plans** and the **Special Urban Plans** as incorporated in the context of the National Recovery and Resilience Plan, will promote an **integrated planning system** in the country and the digitalization of the Greek territory. **SDGs 11.3, 11.6, 11.7, 11.a, 11.b, 17.14.**
- The obligatory **implementation of the Urban Accessibility Plans** for all large and medium-sized municipalities by the end of 2023 will provide universal access to safe, inclusive and accessible, green and public spaces, in particular for older persons and persons with disabilities. **SDGs 11.3, 11**
- Promote and implement the **Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans (SUMPs)** at local and regional level. **SDGs 11.2, 11.3, 11.6, 11.7, 3.6, 7.3, 9.1, 13.2**
- Renewal of the **public transport fleet** in Athens and Thessaloniki, promoting the gradual transition to electromobility. **SDGs 11.2, 11.6**
- Complete a number of **sustainable railway projects** across the country. **SDGs 11.2, 9.1**
- Establish and operate new **airports on water bodies**. **SDGs 11.2, 11.a**
- Improvement of the existing and enforcement with new infrastructure regarding Civil Protection Authorities. Upgrade the existing firefighting aerial means, vessels and motor vehicles, along with the provision of new contemporary ones. Early warning system’s upgrade with the procurement of new equipment and its interconnection with AI. **SDG 11.5**

## SDG 12: Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns



Resource productivity and domestic material Consumption (DMC)



### Assessment of progress in relevant SDG indicators

- The resource productivity and domestic material consumption, in euros per kilogram, has generally shown an increasing trend since 2010 to date, mainly due to the introduction and the implementation of a framework of tools and incentives for the adoption of sustainable practices, based on advanced technological capacity, resource efficiency and reduced waste.
- The generation of waste excluding major mineral wastes by hazardousness, in kg per capita, is generally increasing for the hazardous and decreasing for the non-hazardous, from 2010 to 2018.
- The use of circular material has been increasing in recent years mainly due to the implementation of the National Strategy for the Circular Economy, which is in line with the European Strategy and introduces a framework of tools and incentives for the sustainable management of resources, the development of cyclical entrepreneurship and the promotion of cyclical consumption.

### Key challenges

The promotion of sustainable consumption and production patterns are a persisting issue for European Union (EU) countries. This is the reason why an extensive range of policies on sustainable consumption

and production including energy and resource-efficient economy, circular economy, waste prevention and recycling have been proposed at the EU level and to a great extent have already been adopted at the national level. In Greece, in specific cases like that of the single-use plastics, the relevant legal framework was enacted well before official deadlines. Nevertheless, the poor waste management and weak circular economy remain systemic issues. Greece brings to landfill a significant part of its municipal waste, versus a much smaller EU average, but aims at improving reuse and recycling, in line with circular economy principles. The country is required to accelerate its pace and carry out significant investments and reforms in order to meet its post-2020 targets. Concerning circularity of the economy, the circular material use rate remains also below the EU average and the newly adopted action plan should be implemented immediately and consistently. Finally, the promotion of a more sustainable lifestyle of citizens requires to reorient communication and education efforts towards enhancement of smarter consumption focusing on increasing awareness of the environmental effects of the production and consumption choices.

### Main policy initiatives and measures

- In 2021, the Government adopted a law (transposing EU Directives), establishing an **integrated framework for waste management**, and promoting the implementation of the principles of circular economy in Greece. In the context of this legislative initiative, and in line with the approved **National Waste Management Plan 2020-2030** and the new **National Waste Prevention Programme 2021-2030**, waste hierarchy is promoted in practice, i.e. waste prevention, reuse and recycling (to reach 55% in 2025 and 60% in 2030 including biowaste), while, in parallel, measures for the reduction of landfilling have been adopted. Several reform measures support the ambitious targets set for increasing recycling and reducing landfilling, such as the implementation of the "**Pay As You Throw**" scheme, the application of the landfill-fee from January 2022, the expansion of the extended producer responsibility schemes with new categories of products (i.e. pesticides' packaging, furniture, mattresses, waste from greenhouses, fishing gear, smoking products) and the promotion of the separate collection of waste. Particular focus is given to **food waste**, where measures are adopted and incentives are provided for encouraging food donation and redistribution in order to reduce food losses along the whole production and supply chain, by 2030, and reduce by 30% food waste per capita in relation to food waste produced in 2022 at retail and consumer level. In addition, the new legislative framework supports the implementation of innovative approaches for further promoting recycling and re-use by sorting at source, active citizens' engagement and awareness-raising towards more sustainable consumption patterns, at the local/municipal level, through the establishment of the "**Green Points**" and the "**Reuse Centers**". These new units/facilities aim to minimize waste production by enabling any interested entity or person to either dispose waste for recycling or products for re-use, giving a practical example of how to apply the principles of circular economy in everyday life, while also simplifying related administrative procedures. Finally, priority is given to the expansion and enhancement of the interoperability of the various digital platforms and registries, in order to facilitate data collection and the monitoring of waste management and tracing of waste. [SDG 12.3, 12.4, 12.5, 11.6](#)
- With regard to **plastic pollution**, Greece has incorporated in its national **legislation**, in October 2020, the **EU Single Use Plastics Directive**, much earlier than the date of entry into force of the Directive (July 2021) due to the importance attached to the **reduction of plastic waste** generated at source, and to the promotion of more sustainable and reusable materials. The law aims to prevent and reduce plastic pollution, especially in the sea, and to promote the transition to a circular economy with innovative and sustainable business models, products and materials. The implementation of the law is expected to have a considerably positive outcome on urgently addressing plastic marine litter that negatively impacts marine ecosystems and important economic activities in Greece, such as tourism and fishing. The law is guided by the principles and

objectives of the 2030 Agenda and its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), having a direct contribution to the achievement of SDGs 12 and 14. Certain measures and targets at national level are set, in line with the overall objectives of the EU's waste policy, and Greece is committed to reduce the consumption of the most environmentally damaging single use plastic products, in particular single-use plastic beverage and food containers, at least by 30% by 2024, and at least by 60% by 2026 compared to 2022, and to promote more sustainable materials and alternatives. [SDG 12.4, 12.5, 14, 11.6](#)

- Under the coordination of the Ministry of Environment and Energy, Greece elaborated and, after an extensive public consultation, adopted, in November 2021, a new **National Circular Economy Action Plan** with a corresponding Roadmap, anchored at the 2018 National Circular Economy Strategy. The Action Plan, already approved by the Council of Ministers and about to be adopted by a legislative act, supports the shift towards a circular sustainable development model and ensures that the regulatory framework is streamlined and fit for this purpose, and that new opportunities from the transition are maximized. The new Plan includes a set of concrete actions to be implemented over the period **2021 – 2025** through increased cross-sectoral arrangements, and is building on recent national legislation. The opinion of the National Council for Circular Economy (a board of involved national professional producers' associations) and of the Interministerial Committee for Circular Economy have been taken into account in drafting the new Circular Economy Action Plan, ensuring a whole-of-government and a whole-of-society approach. The Plan includes an analysis of the key entities in charge for the implementation of each one of the actions foreseen; it encompasses production, consumption, waste management as well as horizontal issues related to governance and administration; it focuses on products and services with a high circularity potential such as electronics and ICTs , batteries and vehicles, packaging, plastics, textiles, construction and buildings, food waste, and water use. The Plan is also coupled with an operational part where provisions for the monitoring of its implementation are analyzed as well as with a presentation of the matching funding sources for its timely delivery. [SDGs 12.5, 12.1, 12.2, 12.4, 12.6](#)
- In 2021, the Government issued the **National Plan for the promotion of Green Public Procurement (GPP)**, for a three-year period, **2021-2023**. This National Plan aims at establishing and implementing a minimum level of green criteria in public procurement of products, services and projects, promoting green business practices and “greening” the public sector. It also aims at gradually increasing GPP in certain sectors of goods, services and projects and widely integrating the concept of life-cycle cost estimation in public procurement of products. In parallel, its implementation will support awareness raising and a new culture in procurement policy, by promoting the environmental and cost benefits from GPPs. [SDG 12.7](#)
- The Government has adopted measures and actions aimed at encouraging and facilitating the reduction of wastes and the **recycling in yachting and ports**. [SDG 12.5](#).
- The Government has put forward actions, which contribute to the **digital transformation of all the driving license procedures**, regarding the driver's license renewal, duplication, and replacement - «going from paper to paperless». [SDG 12.5](#).
- In the context of the European Project “LIFE PROWhiBIT”, Greece puts forward actions aimed at preventing, detecting and disrupting **environmental waste crime** by introducing smart Information technology (IT) systems along with the implementation of respective environmental legislation and standards. [SDG 12.4, 12.5](#)
- Concerning waste management, the National Plan “ANTIPAS”, to phase down the **use of dental amalgam**, was adopted in 2021 and started to be implemented. Furthermore, an Integrated Waste Management Framework has been established and a Joint Ministerial Decision is expected soon,

which will define precisely the specific measures and conditions for the management of medical waste. [SDG 12.4, 12.5](#)

<b>Best practice example</b>
<b>LIFE IP project “Circular economy implementation in Greece” (“CEI-Greece”) (SDG 12.5, 12.3, 12.4, 12.8)</b>
The integrated LIFE IP project “CEI-Greece”, with the Ministry of the Environment and Energy as its coordinating partner and a wide multi-stakeholder consortium, aims to make a decisive contribution to the implementation of the National Waste Management Plan 2020-2030, the National Waste Prevention Programme 2021-2030 and the National Circular Economy Strategy. Project actions include the implementation of pilot projects of separate waste collection and pay-as-you-throw systems, the organization and operation of separate collection and re-use centers, the development and operation of circular economy systems, capacity building through dedicated thematic seminars tailored to the needs of all stakeholders and distance training, awareness raising, information and dissemination of project results through the organization of regional information days and conferences, and, finally, the mobilization of financial resources. With regard to improving awareness, the project foresees, <i>inter alia</i> , a food waste prevention forum (SDG 12.3), with ultimate aim to establish a National Voluntary Agreement, as well as a national Circular Economy repository. The project’s implementation was launched in November 2019 and is expected to be completed by 2027.

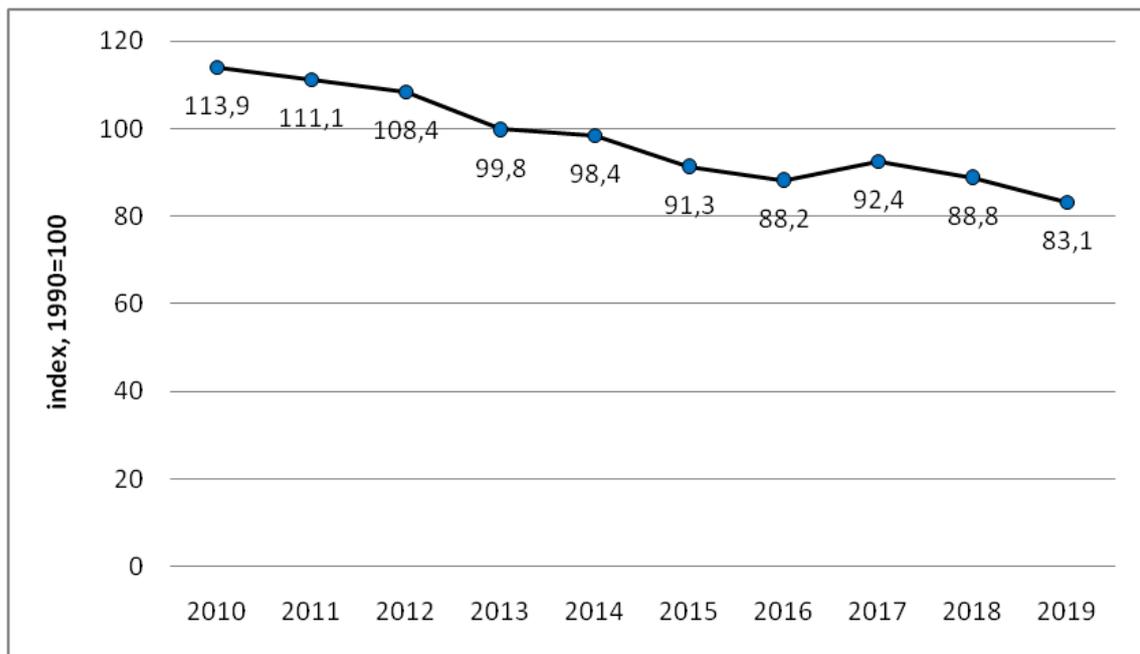
#### Forthcoming initiatives

- New measures will be adopted for the **reduction of food waste** by 30% until 2030, in addition to innovative approaches for the promotion of recycling and re-use at source, as with the establishment of **Green Points** and **Reuse Centers** at the local level, and the expansion and enhancement of the interoperability of the various digital platforms and registries, in order to facilitate data collection and the monitoring of waste management and tracing of waste. In this regard, new cooperative actions are to be developed between the competent line Ministries and services with a view to effectively reducing food waste, including in the fresh fruit sector. [SDGs 12.3, 12.4, 12.5, 11.6](#)
- A platform with guidelines for cities to adopt and follow circular economy principles in all their functions and work-cycle will be developed, with the view to assist the implementation of the **National Circular Economy Action Plan** at the local level. This **Guide to Circular Cities** will aim to close down material loops in the urban context, minimize waste production and reduce resource extraction, lower emissions, protect and enhance biodiversity and reduce social inequities in line with the SDGs (linking SDG 11 to SDG 12). The Guide will aim to assist cities to assess, prioritize and catalyze different circular actions extended beyond the economic sphere that can be applied to different city assets, engaging all local stakeholders, covering areas such as wastemanagement, water resources and water demand, energy requirements, housing, urban mobility, re-use of consumers’ goods, circularity in local businesses etc. [SDGs 12.5, 12.1, 12.2, 12.4, 12.6](#)

**SDG 13: Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts**



**Greenhouse gas emissions - index, 1990=100**



**Index of greenhouse gas emission intensity of energy consumption**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Greenhouse gas emissions intensity of energy consumption (Index, 2000=100)</b>
<b>2010</b>	<b>94.7</b>
<b>2011</b>	<b>96.3</b>
<b>2012</b>	<b>93.4</b>
<b>2013</b>	<b>93.3</b>
<b>2014</b>	<b>89.5</b>
<b>2015</b>	<b>85.2</b>
<b>2016</b>	<b>81.6</b>
<b>2017</b>	<b>83.0</b>
<b>2018</b>	<b>81.4</b>
<b>2019</b>	<b>74.9</b>

#### **Assessment of progress in relevant SDG indicators**

- Greenhouse gas emissions' trend shows a decrease over the period 2010-2019. This development is mainly due to the economic downturn, but also to the impact of mitigation actions like increasing Renewable Energy Sources (RES) share, energy efficiency and improving public transport.
- Greenhouse gas emission intensity of energy consumption index presents a significant reduction throughout the period between 2010-2019, highlighting among others, the achievement of an energy mix of lower emissions and the more efficient use of energy.

## Key challenges

One of the greatest challenges that needs to be addressed urgently is action in order to combat climate change and its impacts. Particularly in Greece, climate change has led to more frequent and severe weather phenomena, such as floods, extreme heat and intense snowfalls. According to recent data, during 2021 more than 1,3 million acres were burnt as a result of devastating forest wildfires across the country, while an equally large area (1,5 million acres) was burnt during the period of the last 8 years (2013-2020). According to scientific evidence, these devastating wildfires were a consequence of drought and heat for a long period, not only in Greece but throughout the Mediterranean. Extreme high temperatures were observed during summer 2021, being the highest ever recorded. Exacerbating its effect, during autumn 2021 and winter 2021-2022 floods and intense snowfalls were recorded in areas that had been previously devastated by the summer 2021 wildfires, such as Northern Evia and Attica. Therefore, contributing to control of climate change and mitigating its results constitutes a pressing national challenge. Actions that would strengthen resilience and adaptive capacity to climate-related hazards and natural disasters, should be prioritized and reinforced. Accountability and a clear distribution of the roles and responsibilities of all the authorities involved, including necessary means and adequate and qualified staff are key components. One must also acknowledge the growing importance of technology in Disaster Management and Disaster Risk Reduction. Finally, awareness raising regarding climate change among citizens is a key-challenge and relative actions involving the educational system are at the forefront.

## Main policy initiatives and measures

- The first **National Energy and Climate Plan (NECP)** of Greece was adopted in 2019. It is a strategic plan comprising a detailed roadmap for achieving concrete Energy and Climate Goals by 2030. Through the 2019 NECP, Greece has set ambitious targets such as: (i) reduce total Greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, excluding those from Land Use, Land Use Change and Forestry by 56% from 2005 levels (42% from 1990 levels); (ii) reduce non-European Union (EU) Emissions trading system (ETS) emissions by 36% from 2005 levels, more than twice the reduction required by EU legislation; (iii) raise the share of renewables in gross final energy consumption to at least 35% (61-64% of electricity final consumption to be from renewables); and (iv) achieve 38% improvement of energy efficiency. The main pillars of the NECP are: (i) the significant reduction of greenhouse gas emission and phasing out the lignite power plants by 2028; (ii) the increase of the share of RES in the gross final energy consumption; and (iii) the improvement of energy efficiency in all sectors of economy. The NECP is currently **under revision** with an implementation period up to 2030, in order to be consistent with the new ambitious emission reduction targets set by the European Climate Law and the National Climate Law. A planned analysis of synergies between mitigation and adaptation policies and measures is expected to feed into the update, addressing, *inter alia*, how climate change may affect energy supply, how proposed measures can increase resilience of the energy system, and an assessment of co-benefits such as for thermal management of buildings. [SDGs 13.2, 7.2, 7.3](#)
- The **National Long-term Strategy for 2050**, to meet the Paris Agreement commitments and the Energy Union objectives, has been in place since 2020, for the evaluation of alternatives and sustainable transition paths to a climate-neutral economy by 2050. The analysis of solutions and indicative pathways aims to assess the possibilities for the transformation of the energy system at national level. All the scenarios are analyzed under the provision of full implementation of the National Energy and Climate Plan and the achievement of the relevant targets by 2030. [SDGs 13.2, 7.2, 7.3](#)
- The first **National Climate Law of Greece** is soon to be finalized after an extensive public consultation. The scope of the Climate Law is to create a coherent framework for improving the

adaptation and climate resilience of Greece and ensuring the climate neutrality of the country by 2050. Measures and policies will be adopted to strengthen climate change adaptation at the lowest possible cost. Intermediate targets will be set for the reduction of net anthropogenic greenhouse gas emissions by at least 55% and 80%, for 2030 and 2040, respectively, compared to 1990 levels, setting top-down quantified reduction for key sectors. Moreover, a carbon budget mechanism is foreseen for key sectors of the economy and there will be indicators for monitoring and evaluating the progress of the relevant objectives. Additional measures will be taken if needed. The establishment of a governance and participation system for climate action is also anticipated. The time span of the Law's implementation stretches up to 2050. [SDG 13.2](#)

- The National Adaptation Strategy (NAS) endorsed in 2016 is delivered through 13 **Regional Adaptation Action Plans (RAAPs)**. Each RAAP examines the potential measures/actions included in the NAS based on the particular regional circumstances, priorities and needs and includes specific adaptation actions per sector. Drafts of the 13 RAAPs have been concluded. It is expected that the majority of the RAAPs will have been endorsed by mid-2022. The RAAPs contribute towards strengthening the climate resilience and adaptive capacity of the 13 Greek Regions. [SDG 13.1, 13.2](#)
- The Government has adopted a number of **tax-related actions and measures**, which promote and support the transition to a greener economy, including those related to personal income tax and corporate income tax. [SDGs 13.2, 8.3](#)
- The Hellenic Civil Aviation Authority's Environmental Protection Sector has devised and submitted to the International Civil Aviation Organization a **National Action Plan for Reducing CO2 Emissions produced by aviation activity** (State Action plan on CO2 Emissions Reduction), which includes a number of applied and planned policies for the next three years. [SDG 13.2](#)
- In order to promote environmental protection and mainstream the sustainability concepts in the armed forces, in line with the respective national and EU legislation, as well as the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) Standardization Agreements (STANAGs), the **Ministry of Defense** adopted in 2020 an official **Environmental - Energy and Adjustment-to-Climate-Change Policy**, in which a wide range of fundamental environmental principles and priorities of the SDGs are fully integrated and highlighted. [SDGs 13.2, 13.3, 7.2, 7.3, 7.β, 12.2, 12.4, 12.5, 12.8, 14.1, 15.1, 15.2](#)
- Greece's first **National Risk Assessment and National Disaster Risk Management Plan** were completed in 2021. An identification and analysis of the challenges related to disaster risk management was followed by a multi-hazard National Disaster Risk Management Plan, with time-bound goals and targets, investment priorities and potential funding mechanisms. [SDG 13.1](#)
- Greece's **112 Emergency Communications Service** was launched in January 2020 and has vastly improved emergency communications in the country. This new service brings together a unified, multi agency public safety answering capability with a nation-wide, integrated public alert and warning system. In the last two years, incoming communication capabilities have expanded from just phone calls to also include text messages (SMS), emails, fax and eCall communications. Network-based location is provided for both landline and cellular calls, whereas Advanced Mobile Location & Emergency Location Service (AML/ELS) was activated in 2021. The integrated public alert and warning system GR-Integrated Public Alert and Warning System (IPAWS) is a comprehensive and coordinated system that can be used by Civil Protection Greece to deliver effective life-saving information to the public. Alert messages are delivered through multiple communications pathways with a view to reaching as many people as possible to save lives and protect property. Since it was launched, GR-IPAWS has been used to issue about 200 alerts for wildland and urban fires, earthquakes, tsunamis, Mediterranean hurricanes and Covid-19. [SDG 13.3, 11.5, 11.b](#)

<p><b>Best practice examples</b></p>
<p><b>1. National Adaptation Strategy (NAS) – LIFE-IP “AdaptInGR” (SDGs 13.1, 13.3, 17.17)</b></p>
<p>The integrated LIFE IP project “AdaptInGR - Boosting the implementation of adaptation policy across Greece”, with the Ministry of the Environment and Energy as its coordinating partner and a wide multi-stakeholder consortium for its implementation, aims to catalyse the implementation of the National Adaptation Strategy and of the 13 Regional Adaptation Action Plans (RAAPs). It also aims to build capacity for coordinating, prioritising, monitoring and mainstreaming adaptation policy actions, including by developing pilot projects in priority sectors for selected regions and municipalities. It has produced open climate projection geographic information system (GIS) data and maps and has launched a series of regional workshops for key regional adaptation stakeholders to raise human and institutional capacities for adaptation. It has also developed educational material for primary and secondary school teachers and started implementing a series of regional training seminars for teachers, as well as a series of regional public informative events (info-days), in order to improve education and awareness-raising for adaptation. Furthermore, it is undertaking a thorough adaptation analysis of the most climate vulnerable sectors (water, biodiversity, agriculture etc) and has started building a national adaptation monitoring and evaluation mechanism to further support integration of adaptation into sectoral national policies, strategies and planning. Moreover, the project aims to support cooperation with countries from the Balkans and the wider Mediterranean area especially with regard to developing compatible approaches for climate projections, assessments as well as on the monitoring and assessment of policies’ implementation. The project started in 2019 and is expected to be completed in 2026.</p>
<p><b>2. Greek initiative on the protection of cultural and natural heritage from the impacts of climate change (SDGs 13.1, 13.2, 11.4, 17.16, 17.17)</b></p>
<p>Cultural and natural heritage is increasingly vulnerable to the adverse social and environmental effects of climate change. Greece has been at the forefront of the ongoing endeavor to protect natural and cultural heritage from adverse climate change impacts, as asserted by the Greek Prime Minister’s statement at the Climate Action Summit in New York (September 2019). Greece, one of the first countries to ratify the Paris Agreement and repository of a wealth of cultural heritage from antiquity to modern times, deeply concerned about the serious threat that climate change poses to cultural and natural heritage, has taken the initiative to organize an International Scientific Conference, in Athens (Zappeion, 21-22 June 2019) with a view to raise awareness on this alarming matter. The Conference that gathered more than 300 world-renowned scientists and state representatives from over 40 countries, aimed at promoting an international framework in order to strengthen cultural and natural heritage resilience to climate risks. The Conference’s unanimously adopted Conclusions were subsequently circulated as an official document of the United Nations (UN) General Assembly. They also formed the basis of the <b><i>Greek proposal “Addressing climate change impacts on cultural and natural heritage”</i></b>, which was launched, with the supporting partnership of United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), at the UN Climate Action Summit (September 2019), in New York. The UN Secretary General, Mr. António Guterres, has included in his Climate Action Summit Report the Greek proposal as one among the ambitious ones. In the context of this proposal Greece invites the UN member states to support the protection of cultural and natural heritage from the impact of climate change by mainstreaming this initiative into</p>

climate change policies and processes, in line with the related Paris Agreement objectives and commitments, and the SDGs, and taking into account relevant policies and recommendations by UNESCO. The scope of the initiative is to accelerate global action, before the damage to our common heritage becomes irreversible, and assess the relevant mitigation and adaptation/resilience issues and good practices in the fields of climate change and cultural heritage, including impacts on small island states. So far, more than 100 UN member states and many Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO) and organizations have expressed their support to this initiative. As the next steps of the initiative included the formation of a follow-up committee, a Flexible Mechanism (FM) has been set up with the participation of Greece, UNESCO, United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the World Meteorological Organization (WMO). Moreover, for the implementation of the Initiative and in order to support the work of the Flexible Mechanism, a Coordination Unit (CU) has been established, by decision of the Greek Prime Minister, in early 2021. The CU located in the Academy of Athens, aims, *inter alia*, at raising awareness, facilitating and enhancing the efforts of the supporting States in a coordinated manner and bridging scientific knowledge and climate adaptation tools.

### Forthcoming initiatives

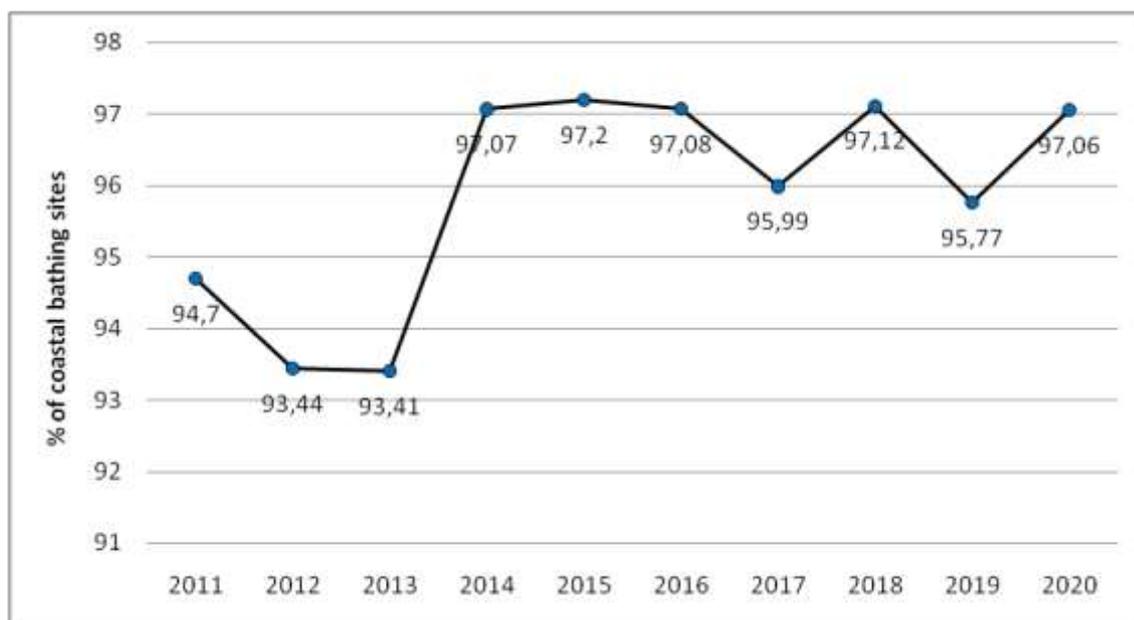
- The first **Climate law** of Greece will soon be voted on and it will provide a coherent framework for improving the adaptation and climate resilience of Greece and ensuring the climate neutrality of the country by 2050. Measures and policies will be adopted to enhance climate change adaptation, intermediate targets will be set for the reduction of net anthropogenic greenhouse gas emissions, a carbon budget mechanism is foreseen for key sectors of the economy, and there will be indicators for monitoring and evaluating the progress of the relevant objectives. The establishment of a governance and participation system for climate action is also anticipated. The time span of the law's implementation stretches up to 2050. **SDG 13.2**
- In order to be consistent with the new ambitious emission reduction targets set by the European Climate Law and the National Climate Law, **the Revision of the National Energy and Climate Plan (NECP) is anticipated**, with an implementation period up to 2030. A planned analysis of synergies between mitigation and adaptation policies and measures is expected to feed into the update, addressing, *inter alia*, how climate change may affect energy supply, how proposed measures can increase resilience of the energy system, and an assessment of co-benefits such as for thermal management of buildings. **SDGs 13.2, 7.2, 7.3**
- Develop the **National Action Plan for Cultural Heritage and Climate Change (NAPCHCC)**, to be fully implemented by 2050, with the setting of interim targets to be achieved every 5 years. The NAPCHCC will be the National Adaptation Strategy for Cultural Heritage and will be incorporated into the National Adaptation Strategy for Climate Change. **SDGs 13.1, 13.2**
- Implement the proposal submitted by Greece to the EU Recovery and Resilience Fund entitled **"Tackling the threats of climate change to the long-term viability of cultural sites of tourist and economic significance"**. **SDGs 13.1, 13.2, 11.4**
- Implement a series of EU legislative proposals adopted within the context of the **European Green Deal and the 'Fit for 55 package'**, which set, among other things, quantified goals regarding the share of sustainable aviation fuel with the conventional air fuel, and specific targets for supply of electricity to stationary aircraft. **SDGs 13.1, 13.2, 7.1**

- Integrate the core dimensions of sustainable finance and the key aspects of sustainability and green transition in the design of the **Greek Capital Market Development Strategy**, which is currently under development. [SDG 13.2](#).
- Implementation of a **reapproved technical support scheme according to Regulation (EU) 2021/240 (TSI Regulation) for green taxation**. Deliverables of this project are expected to include -an up-to-date diagnostic report describing and assessing policies and legislation, a comparative analysis and best practice examples from other EU and non EU countries, recommendations on the mix of different measures towards a green taxation, including incentives and subsidies to support those affected by the changes and alleviate energy poverty, a better understanding and evaluation of the state-of-play in terms of policies, legislation as well as the socio-economic context, proposal of an impact assessment methodology and an outline of a raising awareness strategy. [SDGs 13.2, 7.1](#)
- Greece is considering and has requested technical support, by the European Commission DG REFORM and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), on the flagship project "**Bridging the climate financing gap with public policy instruments**", which aims, *inter alia*, to support EU Member States in reviewing regulatory policies to channel financing towards climate mitigation and adaptation, in line with the goals of the European Green Deal. The project is expected to start running by Q2 2022. [SDG 13.2](#)
- Further elaboration of Greece's 112 **Emergency Communications Service** using a new digital system of Civil Protection and Artificial Technology. [SDG 13.3](#)

SDG 14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development



Bathing sites with excellent water quality by locality



Assessment of progress in relevant SDG indicators

- The Surface in km<sup>2</sup> of marine sites designated under Natura 2000, presents a sharp increase in 2016 and continues at almost the same level from then to 2020. The total marine area currently included in the Natura 2000 network covers approximately 19,6 % of national territorial waters, an important increase compared to the 6.12% of territorial waters that were originally designated.
- The proportion of coastal bathing sites with excellent water quality is in the range of 97% of total reported bathing waters since 2014, making Greece one of the top three countries in Europe for the excellent quality of its bathing waters. The establishment of the Bathing Water Identity Register, a network collecting data from approximately 1,400 coasts across the country, has helped to improve quality.

## Key challenges

The protection of coasts and marine waters faces complex and multifaceted problems as the marine and coastal environment is under severe pressure from both land and ocean-based pollution sources. For Greece, a marine and insular country, investment in marine biodiversity and ecosystems is essential, as marine areas suffer from limited protection and overfishing. An effective response to this adverse situation requires legal and technical actions to conserve coastal communities and marine natural resources and align with the EU Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) by eliminating illegal fishing and overfishing, responding to the issue of invasive alien species, reducing the unwanted catches, restoring stocks and promoting an economically viable and competitive fishing and fish processing industry, as well as sustainable aquaculture. Furthermore, the promotion of the Blue Economy, through developing offshore renewable energy, preserving biodiversity at the coastal areas and decarbonizing maritime transport is essential to achieving the objectives of the European Green Deal, while it contributes to a green and inclusive recovery from the pandemic.

Strengthening the protection and management of the country's biodiversity remains also a challenge. Towards this, the completion of the new Maritime Spatial Planning, along with the early implementation of the Integrated Maritime Policy in the Insular Territory, will contribute to sustainable development in marine areas and coastal zones, via the organization of human activities, while protecting the marine environment and biodiversity. Additional challenges are the mapping and demarcation of all protected marine areas in the country as well as the drawing up of the relevant management plans, in line with the European Biodiversity Strategy.

## Main policy initiatives and measures

- The legal framework for the **Maritime Spatial Planning** in Greece has been set up by a 2018 law, transposing the relevant EU Directive, and providing the scope, objectives, procedure and structure of Maritime Spatial Planning as the tool to achieve the sustainable development of marine life, of maritime areas and the sustainable use of marine resources, in line with UNCLOS. It consists of a **National Maritime Spatial Planning Strategy (NMSPS)** and **Maritime Spatial Plans**. By a 2020 law on the Modernization of Spatial and Urban Planning Legislation, the Maritime Spatial Plans have been included functionally in the regional level of the Spatial Planning System in Greece and were renamed to "Maritime Spatial Frameworks". The 2020 Law also includes significant amendments on the previous framework, such as the decoupling of land coastal zone planning from maritime spatial planning. The NMSPS determines the strategic directions towards sustainable development, it is harmonized with the EU Marine Strategy Framework Directive aiming at achieving good environmental status (GES) of the marine environment, and indicates the priorities for the elaboration of Maritime Spatial Frameworks. Moreover, it sets goals focusing on the promotion of the **Blue Economy** and integrates the political framework and the current legislation introduced by the EU Green Deal, taking into account the New EU Strategy on Adaptation to Climate Change.

The Ministry of Environment and Energy is the competent authority for the implementation of maritime spatial planning in Greece, and for the achievement of the objectives of MSP, it cooperates with the Ministry of Maritime Affairs and Insular Policy, which is responsible for the Integrated Maritime Policy in the *insular territory* of Greece, with emphasis on small islands and islands facing multiple challenges. The first draft version of the NMSPS has been completed; it is now open to an online public consultation and is expected to be enacted in July 2022. Within the context of cross-border cooperation, strengthening existing regional partnerships, Greece participates in the transnational project MSP-MED "Towards the operational implementation of MSP in our common Mediterranean Sea" and in the transboundary INTERREG V-A Greece - Cyprus 2014-2020 Project THAL-CHOR 2: "Cross-Border Cooperation for Maritime Spatial Planning implementation". **SDG 14, all targets.**

- Greece is firmly committed to the protection, conservation and restoration of its marine ecosystems. In order to safe-proof marine ecosystems, Greece has already (since 2018) expanded marine protected areas of the NATURA 2000 network, in its territorial waters, to **19.6%**, overshooting SDG 14.5 by a safe double margin. In order to further safeguard its rich marine biodiversity and explore possibilities to **expand the coverage of marine protected areas** in line with the collective EU target of 30% of land and sea areas under legal protection (EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030), the Ministry of Environment and Energy has launched a call for tender for the project "Mapping of marine habitats" within the framework of the Operational Programme "Transport Infrastructure, Environment and Sustainable Development". The project which is crucial for enriching our knowledge in this field, has an estimated budget of EUR 15 million, and it entails the **mapping of habitats in all the marine protected areas of the NATURA 2000 network**.

Other initiatives in this field include the participation of Greece in a transnational initiative of the Berne Convention for the Protection of the Caretta caretta sea turtle, the formulation of National Action Plans in the framework of the integrated LIFE IP NATURA project "Integrated actions for the conservation and management of Natura 2000 sites, species, habitats and ecosystems in Greece", for marine species (Cetaceans: Tursiops truncatus, Phocaena phocaena), for Caretta caretta and for Monachus monachus seal. **SDGs 14.2, 14.5**

- Greece is taking **initiatives to address the issue of invasive alien species in the marine environment (and on land)**. A Joint Ministerial Decision was published in 2021 under the title "Measures for the implementation of EU Regulation on the prevention and management of the importation and spread of invasive alien species", and a co-financed project titled "Compilation of a list of invasive species and organization of a methodology for the assessment of their risk" is being implemented since February 2021. It includes proposals for the management and continuous monitoring of the most dangerous invasive species for marine biodiversity. The project has been included in the Operational Programme "Transport Infrastructure, Environment and Sustainable Development 2014-2020". Due to the significant interaction of Invasive Alien Species with Fisheries, the General Directorate of Fisheries of the Ministry of Rural Development and Food already implements actions within the Operational Program "Fisheries and Maritime 2014-2020", which are implemented in parallel and in collaboration with the actions implemented by the Ministry of Environment and Energy, and aimed at tackling the effects of the most harmful alien species on fisheries. **SDGs 14.2, 14.4, 15.8**
- In 2021, the Government passed a major law reform, which lays the foundation for the elaboration of a **National Strategy for Integrated Maritime Policy with regard to insular territories** and the development of an 'insular dimension' in EU policies. By merging maritime economy with insularity, the Ministry of Maritime Affairs and Insular Policy seeks to adopt a comprehensive and coherent action plan with the view to address the specific features and the highly diversified island economic and social space, setting innovative and far-reaching sustainable development policies and objectives related to ports and maritime transport, critical infrastructure and water resources management, island production patterns, employment and investment in the blue economy, as well as maritime surveillance and maritime safety. **SDGs 14.2, 8.3, 9.4**
- Greece attributes particular importance to the integrated implementation of the **EU Common Fisheries Policy (CFP)**, in the context of the **Fisheries and Maritime Operational Programme 2014-2020**, co-financed by the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund. The CFP, which applies the precautionary and ecosystem-based approach to fisheries management, aims at the sustainable exploitation of marine biological resources, in order to restore and maintain fish stocks at levels higher than those that enable continuous maximum sustainable yield. Its ultimate goal is to ensure that fisheries and aquaculture activities contribute to the creation of long-term evergreen and sustainable environmental conditions, which are essential for economic and social development. It also aims to increase productivity, towards a reasonable standard of living for the fishing industry,

to stabilize markets, as well as to ensure the availability of fishery resources. It is within this context that Greece promotes the adoption of a comprehensive framework of regulatory and policy measures, which contribute, inter alia, to:

- (i) The gradual elimination of discards, through the implementation of targeted management plans, and the reduction of unwanted catches.
- (ii) The rational management of fish stocks and the protection of the marine environment, in line with EU environmental legislation, taking into account the socio-economic consequences in the sector, such as e.g. special measures for the protection of sensitive fish species.
- (iii) Ensuring the conditions for the creation of an economically viable and competitive fisheries and the fish processing industry.
- (iv) Adjusting the fishing capacity of fishing vessels and their fishing opportunities to achieve economically viable fishing fleets without overexploiting the marine biological resources.
- (v) Promoting the development of sustainable aquaculture, which supports the security and safety of food resources and employment, ensuring a decent standard of living for those dependent on fishing activities, promoting inshore fishing activities, taking into account its socio-economic aspects, and enacting a ban on fishing activities for specific gears and specific areas (Posidonia meadows).
- (vi) Implementing of the National Action Plan for Small-scale Fisheries, as reflected in the text "SSF facing the goals and principles of the CFP - Sailing towards 2020", the "Multiannual National Strategic Plan for the development of aquaculture in Greece, 2014-2020", and the National Action Plan for a "System of control, inspection and enforcement of compliance with the rules of the CFP". **SDGs 14.2, 14.4, 14.5, 14.6, 14.b, 14.c**

Best practice examples
<b>“Fish for Litter” and “Adopt a beach” examples of initiatives from stakeholders and private entities (SDGs 14.1, 14.2, 14.4)</b>
<p><b>1. Enaleia (port level initiative):</b> Enaleia is a non-profit social enterprise tackling two directly related problems for the marine environment: the reduction of fish stocks and plastic marine pollution. It entails teaching sustainable fishing practices that preserve local fish populations and, at the same time, remove the mounds of plastic that pollute the world’s seas, adapting the fishing industry to a green future for sustainable marine ecosystems. In this context, the Mediterranean CleanUp project aims to clean the seas, protect the marine environment, empower local fishing communities and integrate the collected marine plastic litter into the circular economy, reassuring that they will not reenter the sea. Enaleia’s work builds on a strong network that includes all relevant stakeholders to tackle marine pollution and overfishing problems, from local fishermen to recycling/upcycling partners. It operates at port level by: (i) appointing a port manager at each site responsible to collect the amounts of marine plastic bycatches that each fishing boat brings to the port, (ii) sorting marine litter according to type, (iii) storing litter in special containers placed at each operational location, and (iv) channeling the biggest portion of the collected plastic for recycling or upcycling into new products through the network's certified manufacturing partners, integrating it into the circular economy.</p>

Enaleia is operating in several ports in Greece and Italy, collaborating with hundreds of fishermen. Through Enaleia's activities: more than 180,000 Kg of plastic have been removed from the sea; more than 20,000 Kg of used nets have been collected to prevent sea pollution, which were used to create more than 260,000 pairs of socks; more than 400 fishing boats participate in the action of cleaning the sea from plastic; extra income was created for more than 1,300 professional fisherman; 270 seaside professional fishermen have been trained in sustainable fishing techniques while 114 unemployed people were trained in professional fishing.. Enaleia's founder has been awarded as one of the UN Environment Program's (UNEP) seven Young Champions of the Earth for 2020.

### **Project PARALIES (Beaches)**

Project PARALIES, launched in summer 2021, is an initiative aiming at cleaning marine litter and protecting the ecosystem of beaches against waste pollution. It focuses on mobilizing private companies with an increased environmental and social sensitivity to take part in the project by adopting a beach for the entire summer period. The project had been running from 5.6.2021 (World Environment Day) until the weekend after 17.9.2021 (World Cleanup Day). Over this period, eight popular beaches in the Attica Region were adopted by seven Greek companies, including two of the largest companies in the energy sector.

In the context of the project, specific actions were performed at beach level on a daily basis, by specially trained personnel for the purposes of the project, including: (i) daily clean-up of the beaches to prevent the accumulation of new entry waste as well as the clean-up of the 'historical pollution' of marine litter already accumulated on the beach, (ii) application of a separate collection scheme for the recyclable waste generated by visitors, on site, and (iii) awareness raising and information of visitors on the impacts of waste disposed intentionally or accidentally, at the beach, on the coastal and marine ecosystems.

During the first year of its implementation, 1.68 tn of plastic, 0.54 tn of paper, 0.44 tn of aluminum and 0.99 tn of glass were separately collected and channeled to recycling facilities, while 2.96 tn of mixed waste were collected and directed to safe final management. Regarding non-recyclable waste, 670 Kg of marine litter were collected in total, corresponding to 118,851 pieces, the majority of which consist of cigarette butts (44,680 pieces), plastic fragments of size less than 2.5 cm (48,820 pieces) and plastic straws (14,766 pieces). The project's implementation, which will be expanded to more beaches in 2022, has so far contributed to the prevention of additional waste entering the coastal and marine environment of the adopted beaches, while the collection of marine litter substantially assisted the remediation of the beaches and the removal of accumulated pollutants over previous years. Its awareness raising component has a multiplying positive impact towards the change of consumption and behavioral patterns of the citizens with regard to waste prevention and recycling.

### **Forthcoming initiatives**

- The Government has concluded with the drafting and public consultations of the **National Maritime Spatial Planning Strategy** (NMSPS) with the view to ensure the sustainability of marine areas and resources which is expected to be endorsed within 2022. [SDG 14 \(all targets\)](#)
- A call for tender has been launched for the project "**Mapping of marine habitats**" within the framework of the Operational Programme "Transport Infrastructure, Environment and Sustainable

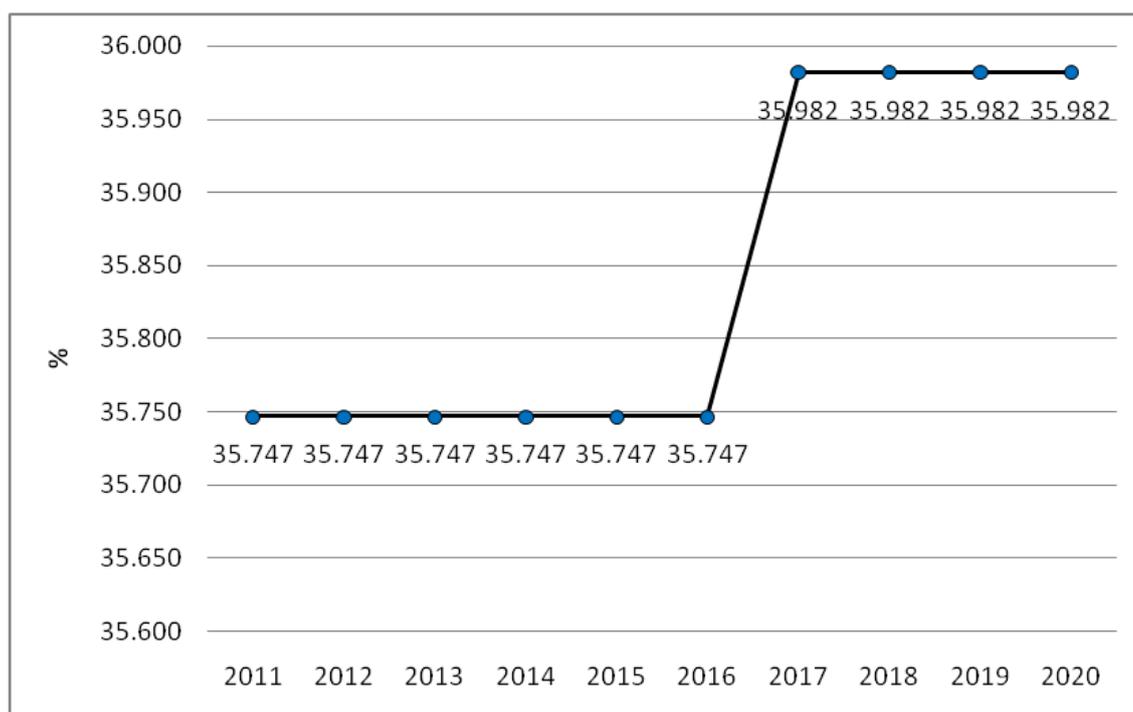
Development". The project, which is crucial for enriching our knowledge in this field, has an estimated budget of EUR 15 million, and it entails the mapping of habitats in all the marine protected areas of the NATURA 2000 network. [SDGs 14.2, 14.5](#)

- A specific plan is underway aiming at tackling the effects of the most harmful **alien species on fisheries**. [SDGs 14.2, 14.4, 15.8](#)
- Implementation of the "**Multiannual National Strategic Plan for the development of aquaculture in Greece, 2021-2030**", establishment of new **Multiannual Plans**, including **specific conservation and protection objectives** and measures based on the ecosystemic approach, to address specific fisheries problems, and implementation of the **National Action Plan for Small-scale Fisheries**, as reflected in the text "SSF in Greece: A pillar of development under the Common Fisheries Policy with a horizon of 2030", prepared in 2021. [SDGs 14.2, 14.4, 14.5, 14.6](#)

**SDG 15: Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, halt and reverse land degradation, and halt biodiversity loss**



**Surface of terrestrial sites designated under Natura 2000**



**Assessment of progress in relevant SDG indicators**

- The surface of terrestrial sites designated under Natura 2000, has increased in the last decade, as a result of the consistent transposition and application of the relevant European Union (EU) law and its constant monitoring and updating at national level.

**Key challenges**

The ongoing loss of biodiversity and forest areas is intensified. The regular occurrence of devastating wildfires in Greece, renders the need for halting deforestation and combating desertification even more pressing. Some of the actions that need to be completed in order to strengthen the protection and management of the country's natural environment and biodiversity include the development of a

national reforestation plan, the enhancement of mitigation capabilities, as well as of the coping capacity of the disaster response mechanism, the completion of the long-standing nationwide project of forest maps ratification and the development of initiatives to safeguard Greece's mountains.

The law on biodiversity and the National Biodiversity Strategy are sound and comprehensive but neither has yet been adequately implemented. According to reports on the conservation status of habitats and species covered by the Habitats Directive of the European Commission, a relatively small number of the Mediterranean habitat types and species show a good conservation status. The country is striving to keep up with the implementation of the EU Regulation on invasive alien species and enhances its efforts to establish surveillance systems and official controls to prevent the introduction and further expansion of these species.

### **Main policy initiatives and measures**

- In 2020, the Government adopted a new **law on the modernization of the environmental legislation**, allowing for the practical implementation of green growth objectives and aiming at simplifying environmental licensing procedures, ensuring enhanced natural protection, incorporating EU standards for NATURA 2000 protected areas, promoting environmentally friendly waste management and strengthening forest protection. A new entity, the **Natural Environment and Climate Change Agency (NECCA)** of Greece, was established, which is supervised by the Ministry of Environment and Energy and is responsible, *inter alia*, for coordinating and supervising the management bodies of the several protected areas of the country, through a multi-stakeholder consultative approach, ensuring a more effective conservation status. This new governance scheme will strengthen biodiversity protection and conservation in Greece, as NECCA will have improved access to financial resources, improved scientific and administrative capacities for implementation of management plans and for research and filling-in data gaps as well as a greater potential for substantial cooperation with local communities and partners and with international agencies. It will also enable a more efficient interaction and cooperation between management bodies and, thus, possibilities for experience and knowledge sharing. In parallel, the same law determines and clarifies the protection status within NATURA 2000 sites, dividing them in zones, in which land-uses and allowed activities are determined in line with the level of protection required and the special characteristics of each distinctive area. This will allow for more effective protection as well as for economic development of the network's areas, based on the principles of sustainable development. [SDGs 15.9, 15.1, 15.5](#)
- In order to complete the management plans for protected areas, the project "**Development of Special Environmental Studies and Management Plans for Natura 2000 sites**" is implemented. The legislative framework on biodiversity in Greece sets out the requirements for the demarcation of protected areas and the definition of land-uses as well as allowed activities within them. In order for the required Presidential Decree to be issued for each protected area, it is necessary that a **Special Environmental Study (SES)** is prepared for each site defining conservation terms. As of December 2021, the first batch of SESs, those for the NATURA 2000 sites of Crete, Peloponissos and Evros, have been completed and put under public consultation. Moreover, Greece aims to **reformulate the National Biodiversity Strategy and its Action Plan (NBSAP) in 2022** as soon as the post-2020 global biodiversity framework (GBF) is adopted at international level. The updated NBSAP is envisaged to last until 2030 in order to be aligned with the EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030 and the new GBF. [SDGs 15.1, 15.5](#)
- Conservation status assessment is an essential tool for setting species and habitat conservation objectives, priorities and measures as well as for strengthening and updating the planning of national nature protection policies. In order to assess the conservation status of the protected terrestrial and marine species and habitat types of national and EU interest, through field work monitoring, a call for tender has been launched for the Project "**Supervision and evaluation of the**

**conservation status of protected species and habitats in Greece**”, within the framework of the Operational Programme “Transport Infrastructure, Environment and Sustainable Development 2014-2020”. The monitoring program is implemented: (i) in areas beyond the competence of the existing Management Bodies of Protected Areas of the NATURA 2000 network sites, as well as (ii) in areas beyond the NATURA 2000 network. [SDGs 15.1, 15.5](#)

- The development of a **National Reforestation Plan** for the country is a key priority. The Plan is incorporated in the National Recovery and Resilience Plan and will constitute a coordinated framework with localised spatial actions and projects to strengthen the national forest balance with multiple and measurable environmental and social benefits, which will contribute to climate change mitigation and adaptation, and biodiversity protection. The National Reforestation Plan aims at: (i) contributing to the EU Forest Strategy, (ii) restoring forest ecosystems and halt biodiversity loss, (iii) regulating carbon gas emissions, (iv) protecting human infrastructure from natural disasters, and (v) promoting jobs creation and employment. The Plan also includes policies related to alternative energy supplies, frugal use of timber and promotion of food production in forests. More than 20 million trees are expected to be planted throughout the country by 2026, the Plan’s completion year, with emphasis on the affected areas of the devastating forest fires of summer 2021. A pilot project was launched in 2021 and the main project will start in 2022. [SDG 15.2](#)
- The **ratification of forest maps** is a basic infrastructure tool useful not only for Forest Services but also for the national economy, as the digitization of space (forest areas in particular) facilitates the planning and authorization of new investments across the country, while ensuring the protection and management of forest areas in a more sustainable and effective way against pressures such as urban sprawl and forest fire. Forest maps represent the areas where forest law applies, ensuring transparency. Main benefits from this project include ensuring the preservation of forest land as a natural and social resource as well as creating a reliable cadastral system and protecting public property. Moreover, real estate transactions are more secure, promoting social confidence between the state and citizens, and the environmental information is widely spread to the public and can be retrieved using web-based applications. The ratification procedure started in 2017, and forest maps for 55% of the country were uploaded for public consultation and were ratified. At the same time, the maps for the rest of the country were produced. As provided by a law adopted in 2020, maps for the whole country were revised and, along with newly produced ones, were put to public consultation. By the end of July 2022, ratification of the 99% of the publicly presented forest maps will be completed and approximately 90% of the country should have ratified forest maps. [SDG 15.2](#)
- In the framework of the country’s obligations under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Kyoto Protocol, Greece is required to calculate and report the emissions and removals of CO<sub>2</sub> and other greenhouse gases from various categories of land, including Forest Lands, and for various actions, like Afforestation, Reforestation and Deforestation. To implement this, an Inventory and Monitoring System of the country's forests and forest areas is required. This can be established through the installation of a permanent network of sampling points in all forest areas which will measure the necessary data for the calculation of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions / removals from aboveground and underground biomass. The **“System of inventory and monitoring of forests and forest areas to meet the country's obligations and formulate a strategy for their adaptation to climate change and its mitigation”** will be implemented by ten sub-projects through the Operational Programme “Transport Infrastructure, Environment and Sustainable Development 2014-2020”. The starting year of the tender process was 2021 and the implementation period is until 2023, with provisions for extension. [SDGs 15.2, 13.1](#)
- Greece has adopted an integrated legislative and policy framework regarding sustainable use of water resources and protection of water against **pollution by nitrates of agricultural origin**, and

the determination of **geographical boundaries of high-productivity agricultural lands**. The primary objective of this framework is: (i) to update the existing code of good agricultural practice for the protection of waters against pollution by nitrates of agricultural origin, and (ii) to lay the foundation for the adoption of policies and measures aimed at protecting and preserving high productivity rural land by defining its geographical boundaries and improving existing legislation in order to avoid its loss and degradation, in line with the relevant obligations agreed at national, European and international level. **SDGs 15.1, 2.3, 2.4**

- Within the framework of the **National Rural Development Programme (RDP) 2014-2020**, Greece has initiated a number of actions and measures, which contribute substantially to: (i) the afforestation and creation of forest areas; (ii) the prevention and rehabilitation of forest damage due to forest fires, natural disasters and catastrophic events (construction - restoration of fire protection roads, construction of water supply points, forest management actions, mountain anti-corrosion and anti-flood works); and (iii) the conservation and protection of the wild bird fauna, whose habitat is closely connected with the agricultural land. **SDGs 15.1, 15.2**
- The management of the **construction of public works** is done in an **environmentally friendly way**, based on the conclusions of the environmental impact studies. For every project, technical solutions are selected such as: tunnels constructed with cut & cover or underground excavation instead of big trenches, bridges instead of large embankments, technical transits for the fauna of the area, most notably the area of protection of the wolf in Sterea Ellada, construction of flood preventing works to protect both the railway project as well as the surrounding area, restoration works of the affected areas (sound barriers protecting the urban environment from noise, urban renewal after the project completion, urban planning arrangements, and planting works to restore the areas neighboring to the projects). During the construction stage, special attention is attributed so that the project contractors take all the necessary measures in order to protect the environment and prevent pollution, such as: the disposal or borrowing of materials is carried out in areas where the environmental licenses foreseen by the applicable legislation have been obtained. These areas are restored after the completion of the project. Steps are taken to prevent contamination of the soil and groundwater (recycling of lubricants and rubber), and measures are adopted to prevent the disruption of the neighboring urban areas (minimization of dust and sound pollution). **SDG 15.9**

<b>Best practice examples</b>
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<b>1. The LIFE-IP 4 NATURA project (SDGs 15.1, 15.2, 15.4, 15.5)</b>
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<p>The LIFE-IP 4 NATURA project “Integrated actions for the conservation and management of Natura 2000 sites, species, habitats and ecosystems in Greece”, is the most important nature conservation project over the past decades in the country. It constitutes the first centrally coordinated initiative to implement the Greek Prioritized Action Framework (PAF) on a national, regional and local scale and aims to substantially enhance Greece’s nature conservation framework while ensuring compliance with the EU nature legislation. That is why the project’s framework cohesively integrates actions covering all aspects of nature protection: policy, economy, society and science. With a consortium of twelve partners coordinated by the Ministry of Environment and Energy, the project’s main objectives include: the implementation of 10 Action Plans for habitats and species of Community interest listed in the Birds and Habitats EU Directives, the pilot implementation of Management Plans in Natura 2000 sites and the fine-scale mapping and assessment of ecosystems and their services at national level. Its successful implementation will result in a substantial improvement of habitats’ and species’ favorable conservation status in the country by creating new protection and management tools and</p>
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promoting the opportunities arising from the harmonious coexistence between man and nature. The project started in 2018 and is expected to be completed in 2025.

## 2. “Untrodden Mountains” initiative (SDG 15.4)

Through the “Untrodden Mountains” initiative, a special protection status for mountain areas of particular natural and cultural importance for the country is created, by their designation as strictly protected areas, where man-made interventions such as road construction and any type of building activity are prohibited, so as to prevent an important threat to biodiversity, which is the ecosystems’ fragmentation. The first six areas to be included in the initiative are: White Mountains (Lefka Ori) in the island of Crete, Saos mountain in the island of Samothrace, Smolikas and Tymfi mountains in Epirus, Taygetos mountain in the Peloponnese and Hatz mountain in Thessaly. A legislative adoption of the initiative is under way. At the same time, data for another 55 pristine mountain areas are collected for the initiative’s expansion. Regarding mount Olympus, the highest mountain in Greece, which is of particular natural, cultural and historic value for the country and globally, a legal framework for its designation as a National Park and the definition of protection zones, land-uses, conditions and permitted activities has already been adopted.

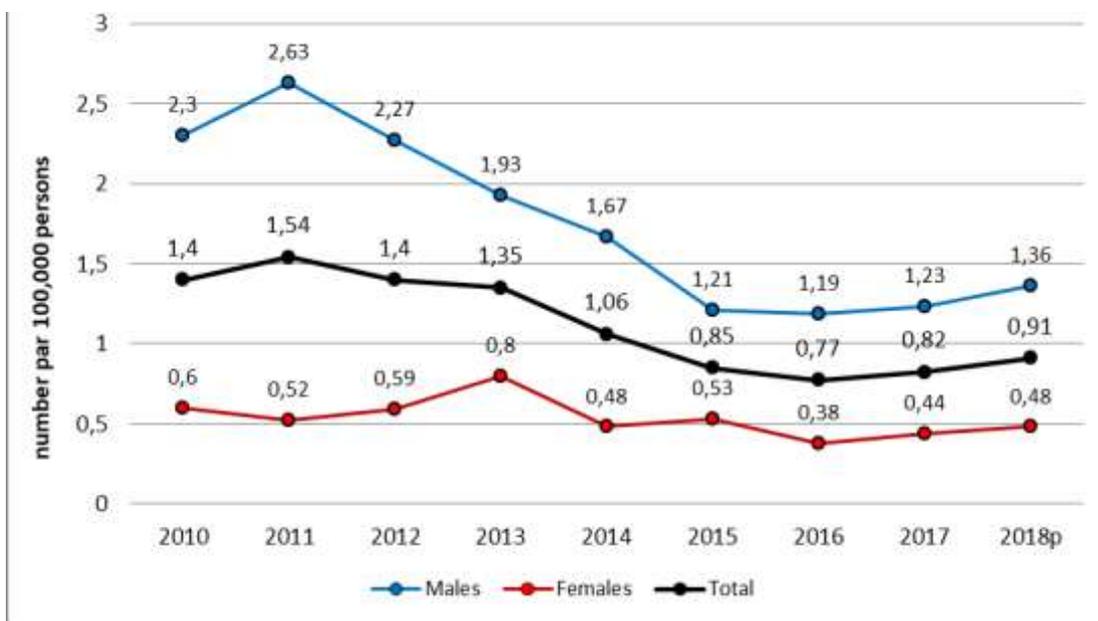
### Forthcoming initiatives

- Aiming at the conservation and restoration of terrestrial ecosystems and the protection of biodiversity and natural habitats, the project “**Development of Special Environmental Studies and Management Plans for Natura 2000 sites**” will be unfolded and a reformulation of the **National Biodiversity Strategy** and its Action Plan is anticipated. [SDGs 15.1, 15.5](#)
- The development of a **National Reforestation Plan** will constitute a coordinated framework of actions and projects aiming to restore the forest ecosystems and halt biodiversity loss. In particular, the restoration of 16,500 hectares of degraded forest ecosystems all over Greece will be concluded by Q2 2023. [SDG 15.2](#)
- The forthcoming **revision of the Forest Maps** for all the areas of the country will ensure the protection and management of forest areas in a more sustainable and effective way against pressures such as urban sprawl and forest fire. [SDG 15.2](#)
- The materialization of the “**Untrodden Mountains**” initiative will provide for a special protection status for mountain areas of particular natural and cultural importance, by their designation as strictly protected areas. [SDG 15.4](#)
- The complete implementation of measures and actions included in the **National Rural Development Programme (RDP) 2014-2020**, covering the transitional period 2021-2022, will contribute to the fight against forest and biodiversity loss. [SDG 15.1, 15.2, 15.a, 15.b](#)
- The **wildland firefighting capabilities** will be substantially strengthened by establishing a new unit of 500 forest firefighting commandos by Q2 2022, as well the enhancement of firefighting vehicles, airplanes and helicopters. [SDG 15.2](#)

**SDG 16: Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels**



**Standardised death rate due to homicide by sex- number per 100,000 persons**



**Assessment of progress in relevant SDG indicators**

- Since 2010 the homicide rates are declining, and in 2019 the country fell below the EU average among the safer ones in Europe.
- Government total expenditure in law courts, returned to its pre-crisis level in 2018 and remains above 61 euros per inhabitant, though it is noteworthy that significant investments are underway.
- According to the international Perception of Corruption Index of Transparency International, Greece is steadily improving its place, having moved up 22 places since 2011 (80th) and 9 places since 2018, being currently at the 58th place (2021) in the list of 180 countries.

**Key challenges**

Over the last three years Greece has launched a wide range of initiatives, from policies to action plans, innovative methods and tools, in order to address key challenges in crucial areas. Among these is the improvement of the accountability mechanisms within each public administration body and promotion of collaboration and transparency between various state institutions and stakeholders for the enrichment of democratic consultation and decision-making processes. In addition, a single

Independent Authority - the National Transparency Authority - was established and several relevant initiatives were undertaken aiming at the detection and prevention of corruption and the promotion of public accountability. In the area of human rights, the sufficient protection of children constitutes one of the most persisting challenges for Greece as lack of substantial care, efficient and friendly services and a comprehensive plan for their well-being lead to children's rights violations, frequent institutionalization and exposure to risk.

Furthermore, the justice system constitutes a major systemic challenge for Greece, since it is associated with significant costs and delays mainly attributed to rigid procedures, lack of specialized courts and inadequate use of Information and Communication Technologies. Citizens and investors face considerable hurdles when dealing with litigation, despite the occasional deployment of various simplification measures. Legislation is fragmented and critical statistical data is missing, while excessive legal production at European Union (EU) level imposes an extra burden to administration which sometimes results in unfavorable court rulings and penalty payments. Also, new or persisting forms of delinquency, such as the radicalization of groups opposing the implemented Covid-19 policies, the increase in cases of gender and domestic violence, youth violence and sports hooliganism constitute important issues to address.

### **Main policy initiatives and measures**

- In line with the UN Security Council Resolutions on Women, Peace and Security (WPS), Greece adopted in 2021, under the coordination of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, its first **National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security (NAPWPS) (2020-2024)**. The NAPWPS puts forward a wide spectrum of actions and measures under the following pillars and priority areas: (i) prevention of armed conflict and of any form of gender-based, sexual and domestic violence, sexual exploitation and abuse, (ii) gender-equal representation, participation and leadership in decision-making, (iii) protection of women and girls from gender-based, sexual and domestic violence, including sexual exploitation and abuse, and from other violations of international humanitarian law and international human rights law, (iv) relief and recovery of the survivors of gender-based, sexual and domestic violence, and (v) promotion of the United Nations Agenda on Women, Peace and Security (WPS) at bilateral, regional, multilateral level. In order to enhance policy coherence, the NAPWPS is fully aligned with the National Action Plan on Gender Equality, which has been renewed for the period 2021-2025. [SDGs 5.1, 5.2, 5.3, 5.5, 16.1, 16.2, 16.3, 17.14](#)
- In 2021, the Government adopted a number of legislative initiatives on matters, such as: (i) the modernization of the recruitment system in the public sector and the strengthening of the Supreme Council for Personnel Selection (ASEP); (ii) the internal audit system of the public sector; and (iii) the institutional framework of teleworking and provisions for the human resources of the public sector, that clearly aim directly at building more **effective, accountable and inclusive institutions**.[SDG 16.6](#)
- A 2018 law and its 2020 amendment reformed the institutional **framework for fostering and adoption** and implemented important innovations concerning - among others - the creation of the digital National Registries of Minors, Prospective Foster Parents and Prospective Adoptive Parents, and the digital interconnection between them. The aim of the reform was to ensure that all children coming under state responsibility have equal access to a family and home, foster or adoptive.
- Greece has developed, in line with EU secondary legislation, a new comprehensive legal framework on the protection of natural persons, regarding: (i) the **processing of personal data** and the **free movement of such data**, and (ii) the **processing of personal data by competent authorities** for the purposes of the prevention, investigation, detection or prosecution of criminal offenses or the execution of criminal penalties, and on the free movement of such data. This new legal framework

also improves the regulatory regime governing the establishment and functioning of the Personal Data Protection Authority, which is a constitutionally guaranteed independent public Authority assigned with the task to supervise the implementation of the whole regulatory measures concerning the protection of individuals from the processing of personal data, as well as the exercise of other relevant responsibilities. [SDG 16.3, 16.6](#)

- Ensuring the right to public access to information and protecting fundamental freedoms is a key priority of the Government firmly adhered to the legislation and the operation of public administration in Greece. Constitutional provisions (art. 5.1, 5a), ratification of international conventions (United Nations Economic Commission for Europe Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters, Aarhus Convention), and national legislation, including the transposition of EU directives (law 4727/2020 on digital governance), shape the recent operating framework of a **Digital Governance rooted in the principles of transparency, equality, protection of personal data and accessibility**, which provides for a unified digital portal of public administration as the central point of entry and reference for information and digital services and includes the most frequent or important citizen's transactions with the state. The law also states that all public sector websites should offer free and unrestricted access sites to citizens for the purpose of informing about public policies, actions or programs that are designed and implemented. A special emphasis is put on accessibility so that people with disabilities, as well as the inhabitants of insular and mountainous regions, are able to communicate digitally with public sector authorities and make use of the benefits of digital services for local development. [SDG 16.10](#)
- Policy initiatives on digital governance, established by law, include the: (i) **Digital Accessibility**, regulating the accessibility requirements of the websites and mobile applications of public sector bodies; (ii) **Open Data**: extending the principles of open availability and re-usability of documents, information and data that are either in the possession of public bodies, or funded by public resources; (iii) **Digital Transparency** – The Clarity (Diavgeia) Programme, regulating the functioning and legal obligations of the Transparency (Diavgeia) Programme, which obliges all government institutions to upload their acts and decisions on the Internet, otherwise they are not valid; (iv) creation of the **National Register of Procedures** that aims at recording, mapping and modeling the administrative procedures of the State in a transparent way, while there can be no deviation from any competent public authority in the implementation of the registered procedures; and v) establishment of the **Register of Greek Public Administration Websites** that is fully accessible to the public authorities and legal and natural entities via the Unified Digital Portal of Public Administration (GOV.GR). [SDGs 16.6, 16.10](#)
- Throughout the period 2018-2021, Greece successfully implemented its National Anti-Corruption Action Plan (NACAP) with the country steadily improving its global ranking in the CPI Index of Transparency International. In 2019, Greece radically restructured the domestic anti-corruption framework. According to the provisions of the Executive State law, five audit entities and a coordination anti-corruption body merged into a single, independent **National Transparency Authority (NTA)** with the mandate to detect, prevent and raise awareness against corruption as well as promote transparency and public accountability. In the **corruption detection pillar**, NTA prioritized the standardization of the Audit process and launched an integrated complaints-management system parallel to the introduction of innovative risk-based audit tools to modernize the audit framework and enhance the effectiveness of investigations. Coordination at the national level has also improved with the establishment of the National Coordination Audit Body, a collective body bringing together every inspection, audit and anti-corruption agency operating at the national level. In the **corruption prevention pillar**, NTA is currently implementing the National Integrity System, a key structural reform that, apart from regulatory interventions, in key policy

areas (lobbying, conflicts of interest etc.), includes a) a network of Integrity Advisors b) codes of professional conduct and codes of Ethics to promote the values of integrity and ethical behavior across public administration and c) capacity building through training and raising awareness initiatives. In addition, the Internal Control System, includes the establishment of internal audit units in Ministries, local government entities, universities, hospitals and independent authorities. At the same time, a series of **awareness-raising** initiatives targeting primary and secondary education students was launched. For this purpose, disseminated relevant educational material on integrity and ethics was developed through a technical assistance project with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. [SDGs 16.5, 16.6, 16.7](#)

- In 2021, Greece entered into force primary and secondary legislation for the modification of the Income Tax Code and the introduction of tax incentives to increase **electronic transactions and tax compliance**. The reform consists of measures such as the reduction of the taxable amount up to 5.000 euros for making payments for certain types of expenditures with electronic means, and tax incentives for paying with electronic means services received from doctors, dentists, veterinarians etc. [SDGs 16.6](#)
- The Government has adopted a coherent and integrated legal framework for a robust and resilient financial system, strengthening the rules transposing the Fifth Anti-Money Laundering Directive (EU) 2018/843 and amending accordingly the **national anti-money laundering/countering the financing of terrorism**, (AML/CFT) by introducing in 2020 a new legislative initiative. The new provisions target the further expansion of the scope of obliged entities, indicatively, financial institutions, accountants, tax advisers, providers engaged in exchange services between virtual currencies and fiat currencies, custodian wallet providers, persons trading or acting as intermediaries in the trade of works of art. All along the new rules, the use of digital mechanisms for the registration of providers and also beneficial owners of companies is encouraged. The cooperation between the competent authorities is strengthened and the access to registries and information is enhanced. Restrictions on the anonymity of prepaid cards and custodian wallet services are introduced. In these efforts, protection of personal data and increased cybersecurity safeguards are fundamental. Specific criteria and safeguards regarding the transactions with third countries characterized as high risk from the European Union are determined, so as to facilitate the transaction monitoring performed by the obligated entities. In addition, in order to prevent and tackle effectively money laundering and the related financing of organized crime and terrorism, Greece proceeded, in the context of transposing Directive (EU) 2018/1673, to the adoption of a coherent legal framework aimed at **combating money laundering by criminal law**. [SDGs 16.4, 16.5, 16.6](#)
- Greece has developed a comprehensive **Anti-crime Policy Program** for the period 2020-2024, based on a number of targeted and measurable objectives, which seek to enhance crime prevention and effectively address serious and organized crime at national, regional and local level. This Program is complemented and supported by the **Strategic and Operational Program of the Anti-Crime Policy of the Hellenic Police** (2021-2025). In addition, the Financial Police Division (FPD) of the Ministry of Citizen Protection is responsible for preparing special annual Operational Action Plans, guided by the objectives and priorities of the Strategic and Operational Program of the Anti-Crime Policy of the Hellenic Police. These Action Plans include objectives and actions with quantitative measurable indicators, with special emphasis on combating tax evasion. [SDGs 16.4, 16.5, 16.2, 3.5, 5.2, 8.7](#)
- Complying with European Commission's recommendations, Greece appointed a **focal point** for monitoring the application of the **EU Charter of Fundamental Rights**. Its purpose is to ease the flow of information and the diffusion of best practices on the Charter and to coordinate capacity

building efforts in the country. The initiative was welcomed by organizations working in the field.  
**SDG 16.10**

- Greece re-established the **National Council against Racism and Intolerance** in an effort to tackle racism and discrimination (on grounds of “race”, ethnic/national origin, colour, citizenship, religion, language, disability, sexual orientation and gender identity), xenophobia, antisemitism and intolerance. In December 2020 this unique body adopted the National Action Plan against Racism and Intolerance and has been monitoring ever since the progress made towards the achievement of the defined goals and outcomes. **SDGs 16.1, 16.2, 16.3, 5, 10.7**
- Greece has elaborated and presented a **Guide on the rights of victims of racist crimes**, including definitions, victims’ rights, a manual on racist crimes and a list of organizations dedicated to supporting victims. The Guide was compiled pursuant to the EU project «Developing a comprehensive strategy against racism, intolerance and hate crime» that is funded by the “Rights, Equality, Citizenship 2014-2020 Programme” and implemented by the Ministry of Justice in cooperation with the Hellenic Parliament. **SDGs 16.1, 16.2, 16.3, 5.1, 5.2, 10.7**
- Important principles governing children’s wellbeing were addressed in the **National Action Plan for Children’s Rights 2021-2023**, a horizontal strategy already being implemented. Amongst the provisions defined therein, special emphasis is given to facilitating children’s access to justice (“Child-Friendly justice”). In view of the above, the Ministry of Justice participated in a broad consultative process, organized by the Council of Europe with the purpose of forming a new Strategy for the Rights of the Child. The consultation involved national governments, international organizations, civil society organizations and, last but not least, 220 children from 10 member states. **SDG 16.2**
- **Abolishment of protective custody of unaccompanied minors** deprived of safe or known accommodation, by adopting new legislation (Law 4760/2020). **SDG 16b**
- The framework of operation of the **Migrant and Refugee Integration Councils (SEMP)** is provided for by a 2018 law. A SEMP can be found by a Municipality Council’s decision, and it consists of eleven (11) members (appointed by the Municipality Council), who may be municipality counselors and representatives of organizations for migrant and refugee issues or immigrants and refugees who are permanent residents of the specific municipality. It serves as a counseling body on migration and refugee issues, supports the integration of third-country nationals in the local community and conducts activities that enable civic participation. **SDG 16.7**
- Greece has created a central information system consisting of individual applications (subsystems) to support the **operational functions of the civil and criminal courts**. The project’s objective is to accelerate justice delivery and improve the quality of services offered by the judicial system to citizens, professionals and public entities. Key features of the project include: the electronic deposition of documents, online case tracking, online applications for issuing certificates and interoperability options between courts and various national and international authorities, including the Ministry of Justice. **SDGs 16.3, 16.6**
- In 2020, the **Office of Collection and Edit of Judicial Data (JustStat)** was established with a view to increasing the effectiveness and efficiency of justice. The main objective of this independent Office is the systematic collection of statistics concerning both traditional and alternative dispute resolution procedures. JustStat will be supported by an integrated information system that will enable prompt decision-making and justice optimization through the collection, processing and provision of reliable data. **SDGs 16.3, 16.6**

- Greece has adopted a number of legislative measures aimed at accelerating the **judgment of pending cases** regarding debt settlement, ensuring the **reasonable duration of civil litigation**, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, and promoting the **digitization of civil justice**. In addition, Greece has proceeded, over the last years, to the **reform of the main codes of legislation**, including the Penal Code and the Code of Criminal Procedure, with the intention of resolving significant interpretative difficulties and problems encountered in the administration of justice, thus increasing the citizens' trust in the state and applying correctly the legal rules. **SDGs 16.3, 16.6.**
- After being reinstated by a new law in 2019, **Mediation in Civil and Commercial Disputes** seems to constitute a culture change in resolving disputes that aims towards expediting legal proceedings and offering a rather fast-track enforceable title to the counterparties. It is worth noting that the number of Mediators appointed by the Central Committee had reached 1.893 in the first and second quarters of 2021, showing an impressive increase of 2.266% compared to the first and second quarters of 2020. **SDG 16.3**
- In 2020, the **National Crisis and Hazards Management Mechanism** was established by law, with the aim to restructure the **General Secretariat for Civil Protection** (a.k.a. Civil Protection Greece), upgrade the civil protection volunteering system and reorganize the Fire Service. New structures were created, including the Hazard Mitigation Fund, the Center for Crisis Management Studies, and the Civil Protection Science Board. It should be noted that the Civil Protection Greece was instrumental in the early response to the Covid-19 crisis and remains a key player in the ongoing multilateral response. **SDGs 16.6, 3.3, 6.3, 11.5, 11.b, 13.1, 13.2, 13.3, 15.2, 15.b**
- In 2021, the **Ministry for Climate Crisis and Civil Protection** was established by law, with the aim to upgrade disaster risk management and connect climate change adaptation and prevention with disaster risk reduction, giving renewed impetus to hazard and disaster management. **SDGs 16.6, 6.3, 11.5, 11.b, 13.1, 13.2, 13.3, 15.2, 15.b**

### Best practice examples

#### 1. Independent Office for Minor Victims (House of the Child) (SDGs 16.3, 16.6, 16.a)

After many years of discussions, a novelty for the Greek legal system was put into operation, namely the Independent Office for Minor Victims (Houses of the Child), located in Athens. The main purpose of these specialized Houses is to facilitate the judicial examination of children who were victims of sexual violence and abuse and sexual violence. This is considered as the optimal - and common - practice in Europe and worldwide, because it gives the opportunity to the minor victims to be examined in specifically designed, child-friendly areas, by expert scientists. Furthermore, special video recording systems are in place that allow children to give a single testimony to the authorities. In this way, the discovery of the truth is ensured without re-traumatizing the victims.

#### 2. Setting up rules for influence activities (SDGs 16.6, 16.7)

Two distinct legislative initiatives ensure and increase integrity, transparency and accountability in the exercise of influence activities, for the first time. The first one addresses several aspects of the communication and cooperation between the state institutions and representatives of **interest groups** (stakeholders). Exercising influence is internationally recognized as an act of participation in the decision making process. A new form of democratic consultation is preceded, where the public and private sector comply with the relevant European Regulation. The new law settles the basis for transparency and accountability on behalf of the interest groups which are

assigned to a **Transparency Register** - publicly accessible via the digital government platform “gov.gr” - and are subject to scrutiny. As far as the second legislative initiative is concerned, the Greek Government establishes a solid framework for the function of civil society organizations and the protection of voluntary work. All **civil society organizations** are registered to a **Public Database** where they are able to receive grants from various funding sources up to 50.000 euro on an annual basis and at the same time they can apply for a Special Register having access to no-limit government grants. Moreover, tax incentives provided to civil society organizations along with the protection of volunteers rights lay down the necessary conditions for the enrichment of democratic consultation and decision-making process.

### Forthcoming initiatives

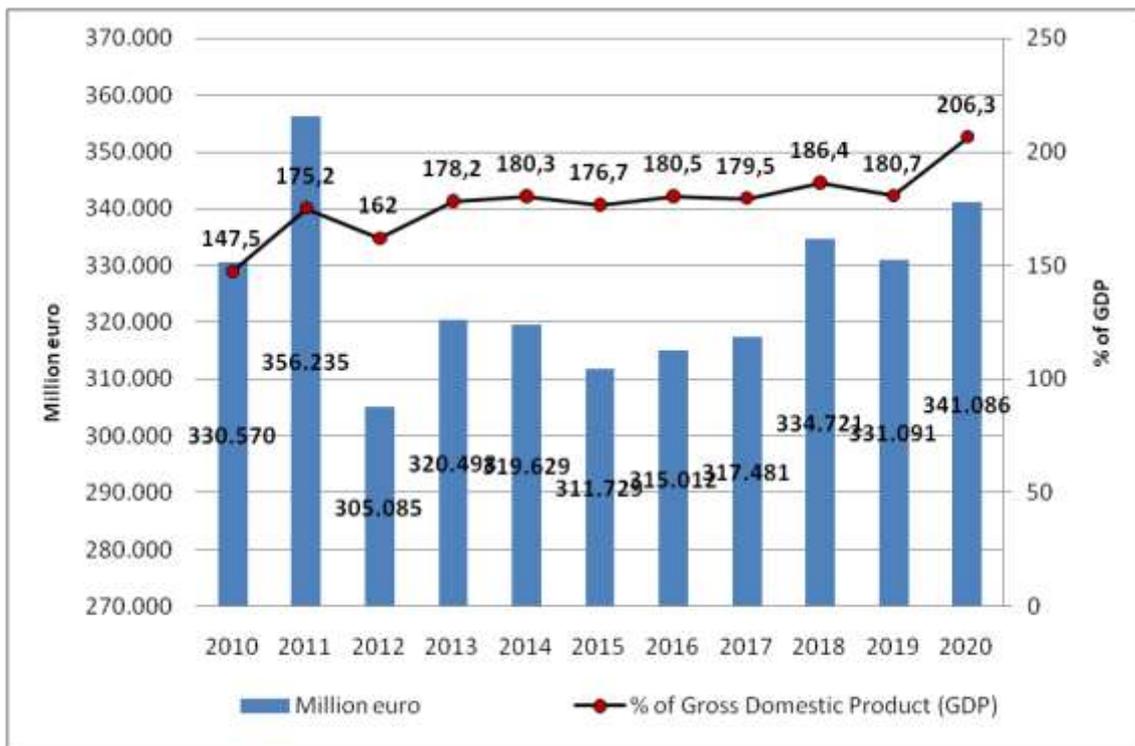
- The **first National Plan against Child Sexual Abuse** (2022) aims to safeguard the health and dignity of children-victims of an underreported crime. It identifies critical systemic failures and presents measures to prevent, locate, report, treat and take to justice incidents of sexual abuse and exploitation of children. Special care is foreseen for the victims through a child-friendly justice approach, institutional obstacles are set to prevent predators from working with children in all possible sectors and essential protocol revision is put forward in order to ensure timely response that does not cause further victimization and risks. The overall threefold aim of the Plan is to a) minimize the incidents, b) maximize reporting, working towards the protection of children from all forms of violence and c) raise awareness on the crime’s prevalence and specifics. **SDGs 16.2, 16.3, 16.6, 5.2**
- Based on the findings of the external evaluation and the lessons learnt, Greece designed the National Anti-Corruption Action Plan (NACAP) 2022-2025 in consultation with major stakeholders from public and private sector as well as with civil society organizations and non-governmental organizations. The new Action Plan sets clear strategic objectives, incorporates international best practices and builds synergies across public administration, prioritizing targeted interventions in high-risk areas prone to fraud and corruption i.e. health, public finances, investments etc. In February 2022, the NACAP 2022-2025 was officially approved by the Council of Ministers in line with international recommendations as a structural part of the National Strategy against Corruption. **SDGs 16.5, 16.6, 16.7**
- Implementation of two key actions included in the Annual Action Plan of the Ministry of Interior for 2022 that aim to strengthen and enhance **multilevel governance**. The first refers to a forthcoming law that will redistribute responsibilities vertically among the three tiers of government (national, regional, local). Consultation of the central government with the unions of the regions and municipalities will take place and the findings of experts and independent studies will also be taken into account. The second action refers to an attempt at rationalizing, i.e., making more efficient and coordinated, the framework of responsibilities across the three tiers of government. A thorough analysis and a detailed mapping of the current allocation of competencies in each sector of policy will take place, leading to a respective amendment of the legal framework by Q3 2022. **SDGs 16.6, 17.17**
- Preparation and implementation of key laws, regarding: (i) the reform of the institutional framework of the **National School of Judges** adopted in 2021, focusing on the organization and operation of the School, and the selection, education and training of future and acting judicial officers by the end of 2022; (ii) the amendment of the institutional framework governing the Companies for the **Protection of Minors and Children's Homes and the Services of Juvenile Supervisors** of the Ministry of Justice (2022); (iii) the adoption of the new Code of Organization and **Functioning of Courts and Judicial Officers** (2022); and (iv) the strengthening of the institutional framework governing the **assets’ declaration** (2022). **SDGs 16.3, 16.6**

- Transposition of EU legislation on: (i) combating **terrorism**, (ii) combating **fraud and counterfeiting of non-cash means of payment**, and (iii) the **protection of persons who report breaches** of European law (2022). [SDGs 16.3, 16.4, 16.5, 16.6](#)
- The approval of the National Anti Corruption Action Plan (NACAP) 2022-2025 by the Council of Ministers once a year and the adoption of a Steering Committee responsible for the design, evaluation and monitoring of the actions, according to the provisions of a newly adopted Law, implies a strong political commitment which ensures transparent procedures. For the current year, the NACAP is expected to be published soon and will include a list of 129 actions. [SDGs 16.5, 16.6, 16.7](#)
- Launch of interdisciplinary **seminars**, that will take place in December 2022, initiated by the Ministry of Justice in cooperation with the National School of Judges, on the **child-friendly justice** and the **rights of children that are victims of criminal acts**, based on the respective guidelines issued by the Council of Europe and the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights. [SDGs 16.1, 16.2, 16.3](#)
- Within 2022, a number of actions and measures are to be adopted with a view to support the implementation of: (i) the **National Action Plan for the protection of Children’s Rights (2021-2023)**, including important priorities on child-friendly justice and (ii) the **National Action Plan against Racism and Intolerance (2020-2023)**. [SDGs 16.2, 16.3, 16.6, 10.2, 5.1, 5.2](#)
- Combat illicit trafficking in firearms through common European actions of Europol’s EMPACT - FIREARMS priorities during 2022. [SDG 16.4](#)
- Under the Anti-money Laundering reform, the contract award for the platform that will collect the statistical data held by national competent authorities (i.e. judicial, supervisory and law enforcement) is expected to take place in Q3 2022. [SDGs 16.4, 16.5, 16.06](#)

**SDG 17: Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development**



**General government gross debt**



**Official development assistance as share of gross national income - % of gross national income (GNI)**

Year	O.D.A.
2010	0.17
2011	0.15
2012	0.13
2013	0.10
2014	0.11
2015	0.12
2016	0.19
2017	0.16
2018 <sup>b</sup>	0.13
2019	0.18
2020	0.18

*b: break*

**Assessment of progress in relevant SDG indicators**

- Following a decade of fiscal crisis coupled with the recent Covid-19 pandemic, the general Government gross debt reached the level of 200% of the country's GDP.
- The EU, its 27 member countries and major financial institutions (Team Europe) are global leader donors yet the official development assistance from Greece is at the lower side of the spectrum as a result of the country's 12-year economic downturn.

## Key challenges

In today's critical times, both globally and especially for Europe, which is facing the war in Ukraine and a growing humanitarian and refugee crisis as a result thereof, Greece has to respond to the Ukrainian refugee crisis, through additional financial commitments in order to be able to continue its support of much-needed resources to concurring humanitarian crises in, inter alia, Afghanistan, Yemen, Haiti, the Sahel, Ethiopia, Myanmar and the Horn of Africa. Furthermore, the impact of conflict in Ukraine is especially severe on food security, energy, natural and socioeconomic environment in many parts of Africa and the Middle East, and the needs for humanitarian assistance are expected to escalate in the coming months.

For Greece, addressing effectively the critical challenges associated with the achievement of the SDGs, including sustainable and resilient recovery from the enormous social and economic effects of the pandemic crisis, climate change, depletion of natural resources, green and digital transition, social inequalities, and sustainable and inclusive growth, requires coherent, coordinated, cross-sectoral and forward-looking public policies on sustainable development to be adopted and implemented at international, national and local levels. Moreover there is a need and opportunity for synergies and cooperation among all levels of interested parties and the government in order to deepen the SDGs in the whole of society and promote accountability and efficiency and for development of tools, processes and mechanisms that ensure the integrated and continuous incorporation of high-quality, reliable, disaggregated and quantified evidence and data in the whole policy cycle.

## Main policy initiatives and measures

- Greece has been a member of the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) since 1999. Total **Official Development Assistance** (ODA) of Greece (bilateral and multilateral ODA) in 2020 amounted to 325,44 million USD reaching 0,18% of Gross National Income. In order for ODA to have an impact, Greece focuses on areas where it has competence and experience. [SDG 17.2. 10.b](#)
- At international level, it is worth pointing out that Greece has donated over 4 million doses of COVID-19 vaccines, through bilateral agreements, to Albania, Armenia, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Egypt, Gabon, Ghana, Iran, Jordan, Kenya, Libya, North Macedonia, Rwanda, Tunisia, Ukraine, and Vietnam. The vaccines delivered, serve as an example of solidarity of Greece to its partner countries and of commitment to share resources to fight the COVID-19 pandemic. Moreover, via the European Union COVAX mechanism, Greece offered almost 6 million doses of COVID-19 vaccines, 4,3 millions of which were immediately donated to Djibouti, Ethiopia, Indonesia, Kenya, Laos, Nigeria, Pakistan and Syria, thus contributing to the full vaccination of approximately 17% of the combined population of these countries. [SDG 17.16, 17.9, 3.8, 3.b, 16.6](#)
- In accordance with the "Executive State" law adopted in August 2019, the General Secretariat of Coordination of the Presidency of the Government has been entrusted, *inter alia*, with the task of ensuring the **effective coherence and coordination** of the whole Government work, including all public policies and legislative initiatives that are inextricably linked to the SDGs, along with developing and proposing horizontal and cross-sectoral public policies. [SDGs 17.14](#)
- Over the last two years, Greece has established, within the Presidency of the Government, monitoring mechanisms, tools and processes that foster the integration of **reliable data and high-quality quantified evidence** in the whole policy cycle, including the planning, design, formulation, implementation and evaluation of public policies and reform measures closely associated with the SDGs (i.e. Annual Action Plans of the ministries, Regulatory Impact Assessments accompanying legislative proposals, policies and programmes against the COVID-19 pandemic). [SDGs 17.18, 17.19, 16.6, 16.7](#)

- The Government is currently implementing a **green budgeting, performance budgeting and spending review reform**, which is expected to increase and enhance transparency, coherence, resilience, efficiency and inclusiveness in public financial management. The adoption of a performance and green budgeting approach for all central administration units contributes also significantly to the effective and efficient implementation and monitoring of many horizontal and cross-cutting policies of the State and the General Government entities, thereby promoting public accountability and policy coherence for sustainable development. [SDGs 17.14, 16.6](#)
- Greece has established by law a comprehensive framework for the elaboration and preparation of **Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans (SUMPs)** at local and regional level, based on the basic principles of sustainable urban mobility. The primary objective of SUMPs is to ensure a better quality of life in cities and to make urban mobility cleaner and more sustainable, reducing traffic-related air and noise pollution, congestion and accidents. A key element of a SUMP is, apart from the citizen's participation, the cooperation and engagement of local authorities and stakeholders, such as decentralized administrations, transport providers, representatives of traffic policing services, chambers, commercial and professional associations, representatives of the educational community, bodies with the statutory purpose of promoting issues of persons with disabilities, that are directly affected by the SUMP preparation or are interested in it. The engagement takes the form of a participation agreement signed by representatives of the abovementioned groups. [SDGs 17.16, 17.17, 11.2, 7.3, 9.1, 13.2](#)
- In January 2022, a Memorandum of Cooperation was signed between the Ministry of Environment and Energy and 21 candidate Municipalities for the European Mission "100 Climate Neutral Cities until 2030 – by and for the citizens". The aim of this Climate-Neutral & Smart Cities Pact ('**Cities Pact**') is to speed up the cities' transition to climate neutrality and digital transformation by 2030, since climate mitigation is heavily dependent on urban action. At the same time the purpose is to commit all parties to contribute to an integrated climate action and resilience strategy with a view to the EU Green Deal, the Paris Agreement commitments, the EU Climate law, and the Sustainable Development Goals (especially the SDG's 11 and 13) in the cities, with a view to make them inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable. [SDGs 17, 11, 13](#)
- The **Planning of the National Strategy for Research and Innovation**, covering both the programming periods 2014-2020 and 2021-2027, has been elaborated and specified through the entrepreneurial discovery process (EDP) run by the **Innovation Platforms** of the General Secretariat for Research and Innovation (GSRI). In each priority sector, there is a corresponding Innovation Platform, which is the enlarged consultation body, where many representatives of the quadruple propeller participate at national level. Each Platform is coordinated and led by a small Advisory Group consisting of prominent scientists in the field of research and business as well as representatives of co-responsible Ministries and services and civil society. Regarding the process of operation of the Innovation Platforms, for each sector a basic text is formed by the participating bodies, which: (i) describes the current situation in each of the priority areas regarding the economy, research and technology as well as the policies for their promotion; (ii) highlights the trends and key challenges of each sector; (iii) contributes to the further specialization of each sector; and (iv) examines the possibility of harmonizing demand for research, innovation and technology with supply. [SDGs 17.17, 9.4, 12](#)
- In 2021, the Government adopted a new law entitled "**State support to businesses and nonprofit entities for damages from natural disasters**". In this regard, a secondary legislation has been implemented on state support funds for the regions affected by natural disasters, with the co-operation of regional authorities and directorates of the Ministries of (i) Infrastructure and Transport, (ii) Interior and (iii) Development and Investment. In the context of the inter-ministerial co-operation, a new legislative framework has been adopted which sets the provisions concerning the procedure and conditions for granting aid to businesses from the Regional Unit of Evia, in the

Region of Central Greece, that suffered considerable financial losses due to the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic that was also aggravated by the disastrous forest fires of summer 2021. [SDGs 17.17, 1.5.](#)

- The General Secretariat for the Aegean & Island Policy, the University of the Aegean and the Centre for Research and Technology-Hellas (CERTH) are developing a **circular economy model for Milos Island** to be used as an innovative example, which highlights the combination of economic and environmental interests of the local population and promotes the three dimensions of sustainable development. The same model is planned to be applied to other islands as well. [SDGs 17.17, 9.4, 12](#)
- To fulfill its mission and objectives, including addressing crimes of common interest and combating all forms of trafficking drugs, food and pesticides, the **Financial Police Division (FPD) of the Ministry of Citizen Protection is working closely**, through common actions and strategic partnerships, with a number of **authorities, institutions and services, at international and national level**, including: prosecution and investigation authorities, the National Transparency Authority, the General Secretariat of Tax Policy & Public Property, the Independent Authority for Public Revenue and Tax Offices, social security institutions, the Labour Inspection Body, the National Organization for Medicines, the Ministry of Development and Investments, the Ministry of Rural Development and Food, the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, the Anti-Money Laundering Authority, the Greek Ombudsman, foreign embassies in Greece, and European and International Organizations, such as European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Cooperation (EUROPOL), International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL), European Union Intellectual Property Office (EUIPO), European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF). [SDGs 17.16, 17.17, 16.4, 16.5, 16.2, 8.7, 3.5](#)
- A new law was passed in 2021 on “Model Tourism Destinations, Destination Management and Marketing Organizations, Thermal Springs and other provisions for the **promotion of tourism development**”, which provides for the establishment of **Destination Management and Marketing Organizations (DMMOs)**, creating a governance framework, which facilitates the effective cooperation between various actors, including the public and private sector, at geographical or thematic level. The role of DMMOs will be to assess all available data and ensure in specific destinations (countries, cities, regions) a balance between tourism development and preservation of the natural, cultural and human environment. The law also provides for the establishment of Observatories for Sustainable Tourism Development, on a central or local/regional level. These Observatories will make assessments of the situation in tourism and its impact and will suggest the necessary adjustments that will serve sustainable development. Furthermore, the Observatories will operate in accordance with the commitments and principles of the “Global Code of Ethics for Tourism” of the World Tourism Organization. [SDGs 17.17, 8.9, 9.1, 11.4, 12.b](#)
- Within the framework of the **FAROS Program**, which is funded by the “Rights, Equality and Citizenship Programme of the European Union” (REC 2014-2020), Greece puts forward actions aimed at protecting the LGBTQI+ community, combating intolerance and hate crimes, and ensuring inclusion and acceptance. Under the FAROS Program, a wide range of stakeholders, including the Center for the Family and Child, ORLANDO LGBTQI+, COLOUR YOUTH, Families of Rainbow, and the Ministry of Justice, concluded a Memorandum of Understanding, which seeks to enhance cooperation and coordination among the relevant entities and institutions involved in the assistance to victims of criminal acts. [SDGs 17.17, 5, 16.3.](#)
- The Government has established a specific **Working Group on the protection of victims of human trafficking**. This Working Group brings together a wide range of stakeholders including representatives of the police services, the Court of First Instance, judges, the Office of National Referee for the fight against Human Trafficking, and the National Center of Social Solidarity that supports the function of the National Mechanism for the Protection of Victims of Human Trafficking.

Its primary objective is to develop and implement a holistic approach to the protection of victims of human trafficking, ensuring the effective application of their fundamental rights. [SDGs 17.17, 16.2, 16.3](#)

- Greece has established a **National EuroVelo Coordination Center**, and its operation is based on a Memorandum of Cooperation signed by the Ministry of Infrastructure and Transport, the Ministry of Tourism, the Central Union of Municipalities (KEDE) and the “Cities for Cycling” Organization. The National EuroVelo Coordination Center’s goal is to carry out research and coordinate the necessary projects for the development of the European network of cycle routes, as well as to inform about the cycle routes and encourage their use. [SDGs 17.17, 11, 13](#)
- Recognizing the decisive importance of international cooperation and **multilateral partnerships on the issue of migration**, Greece is taking part systematically in numerous initiatives, consultations, negotiations and exchange of knowledge and expertise, both within the European Union (new pact on Migration and Asylum) and with all the major international organizations, such as the UN’s International Organization for Migration (IOM), the Intergovernmental Consultations on Migration, Asylum and Refugees (IGC), the Council of Europe, the Organization for Economic Cooperation & Development (OECD), and recently the International Center for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD), which Greece joined as a full member in 2021. [SDG 17.16](#)

Best practice example
<p><b>1. National Multi-stakeholder Initiative for the implementation of the new UNESCO 'Education for Sustainable Development: Towards achieving the SDGs' (ESD for 2030) framework (SDGs 17.17, 4.7, 12.8)</b></p>
<p>The Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs has formulated and submitted, in autumn 2021, a proposal for a National Multi-stakeholder Initiative to support the implementation of the new UNESCO “ESD for 2030” framework in Greece, that focuses on circular economy, supported, inter alia, by the Hellenic Ministry of Environment and Energy. The proposed title of the Initiative is “I defend my right to the environment, health, employment, I think and act BEFORE I recycle: Education for the circular economy”. It will aim to inform both the educational community (teachers, students) as well as the local community (through municipalities) on the right to a healthy environment, and on the linkages between recycling and circular economy in order to steer behavioral and cultural changes with regard to municipal waste production based on the waste hierarchy (e.g. reuse before recycling). The Initiative will run up to 2026 and its partners will include several Local Authorities, Universities, NGOs, Youth Organisations, the Centers of Environmental Education supervised by the Ministry of Education and the Hellenic Recycling Agency (EOAN) supervised by the Ministry of Environment and Energy.</p>

### Forthcoming initiatives

- Contribution of Greece to the implementation of actions, within the framework of the initiative **EuroMed Justice**, that promote the establishment of a permanent EuroMed network of contact points of participating EU Member States and South Partner Countries (SPCs), thus enhancing and increasing the cross-border and cross-regional judicial cooperation. [SDGs 17.16, 17, 17, 16.3, 16.6](#)
- Completion in 2022, by the Ministry of Finance, of two main actions associated with the implementation of a **green budgeting, performance budgeting and spending review reform** initiated by the Greek Government with a view to increasing transparency, coherence, resilience,

inclusiveness and efficiency in public financial management. The first action concerns the configuration of a basic methodology for green budget tagging and the classification of environmental friendly- aggravating - neutral funded policies, while the second relates to the pilot implementation of the green budgeting approach to selected programs of performance budgeting. **SDGs 17.14, 16.6.**

## 5. Means of Implementation

### 5.1 Key changes

- The Presidency of the Government (PoG) drafted and published in 2020 a new comprehensive and redesigned Manual and Template on **Regulatory Impact Assessment (RIA)**, which incorporates, for the first time, the SDGs, introducing them, in a coherent and balanced manner, into the regulatory policy and governance. In addition, the PoG is in the process of publishing in 2022 a new Manual and Template on Ex-post Evaluation of Legislation, which addresses, *inter alia*, the extent to which the existing legislation has contributed to the achievement of the SDGs.
- In 2021, the Government integrated, for the first time, sustainability and environmental footprint indicators in the process of drafting and implementing the State Budget, within the framework of a **green budgeting, performance budgeting and spending review reform**, which aims to increase and enhance transparency, coherence, resilience, inclusiveness and efficiency in public financial management.
- The Government attributes particular importance to strengthening and reinvigorating the overall **financing framework for sustainable development**, through ensuring the mobilization of adequate financial resources and the effective implementation of a wide spectrum of long-term national and EU funding programmes and instruments that promote, in an integrated and balanced manner, all dimensions of sustainable development.
- Over the last two years, Greece has established mechanisms, tools and processes that promote, in a balanced and coherent manner, the use of **robust, high-quality and quantified evidence and data** in the whole policy cycle, including the planning, design, formulation, implementation and evaluation of public policies inextricably linked to the SDGs.
- **At international level**, Greece continues to play, over the last years, an instrumental role in promoting actions and activities, based on the core principles of international law, which support the three dimensions of sustainable development and ensure the effective implementation of the 2030 Agenda, through the establishment of multilateral and bilateral partnership schemes, the adoption of comprehensive legal and policy instruments and the launch of a series of cooperative initiatives, in the context of international and regional organizations and fora, in the field of trade and investments, development cooperation, environmental protection and sustainable use of natural resources, cultural and natural heritage, peace, security, human rights, the rule of law and good governance.

### 5.2 Regulatory Governance: legislation and better regulation means

The law on “Executive State” adopted by the Greek Government in August 2019, attributes particular importance to the promotion of measures and actions that improve the quality of legislation and foster the adoption of an integrated approach to the entire law-making process. It is within this context that the Presidency of the Government drafted and published in 2020, as provided for by the aforementioned law, a new comprehensive and redesigned Manual and Template on **Regulatory Impact Assessment (RIA)**, introducing, for the first time, in a systematic manner, the SDGs into the regulatory policy and governance. The RIA accompanying the legislative proposals constitutes an integral part of the whole law-making procedure, from the stage of public consultation on a draft law to its formal introduction into the Hellenic Parliament for consideration and adoption.

In particular, the redesigned RIA template consists, *inter alia*, of the following modules: (i) the explanatory report of the proposed regulation provided for in the Greek Constitution, which must specifically document the necessity of the proposed legislation, (ii) reports issued by the Ministry of Finance, identifying the financial impact of the proposed legislation on the State Budget, (iii) the

report on the general consequences for certain policy areas, which analyses the effects of the regulation on benefits, costs and risks, (iv) the report on public consultation, which presents the process and the results of the consultation in the design of the regulation, (v) the legality report, (vi) a table of the amended and repealed provisions, and (vii) the implementation report.

The accompanying RIA ensures that the economic, social, environmental and institutional dimensions of the legislative proposals, including those related to the SDGs, have all been taken into account in the law-making process. RIA plays a pivotal role in the promotion, integration and evaluation of the SDGs in the legislative process, mainly through the “explanatory report”, which describes, in a coherent and thorough manner, the main scope and objectives of the proposed legislative initiatives. More specifically, RIA incorporates, for the first time, a distinctive index addressing the consistency and compatibility of the proposed regulatory measures with the three dimensions of sustainable development and the SDGs. The incorporation of the aforementioned index in RIAs contributes significantly to **mainstreaming all 17 SDGs into the Greek legislation** and further strengthening the transparency and accountability of the legislative process.

It is also worth pointing out that the Presidency of the Government is in the process of publishing a new comprehensive Manual and Template on **Ex-post Evaluation of Legislation**, which addresses, *inter alia*, the extent to which the existing legislation has contributed to the achievement of the SDGs. At the same time, the mainstreaming of the three dimensions of sustainable development, as reflected in the SDGs, in the regulatory governance and in particular in the better regulation tools is also promoted in the recurring “Better Regulation in Practice” training seminars in the National School of Public Administration designed and held since 2017 by the Better Regulation Office of the General Secretariat of Legal and Parliamentary Affairs of the Presidency of the Government. These seminars are attended by senior executive staff of the Ministries’ Better Regulation Units and the Ministers’ counselors.

### **5.3 State budget, key financial resources and instruments**

#### **Green budgeting, performance budgeting and spending review reforms**

The Greek Government and in particular the General Accounting Office (GAO) of the Ministry of Finance systematically proceeds with gradually developing performance budgeting, green budgeting and spending reviews, all considered significant public financial management tools. In this effort, GAO has a systematic cooperation with the European Commission and the OECD (i.e. technical assistance, seminars, conferences e.tc.).

In 2021, GAO submitted to the Greek Parliament a special performance budgeting edition (presentational approach). The edition presented the 2022 budget classified in policy sectors/programs, while also providing information in terms of the current administrative and economic classification. Each program was accompanied by performance information. In this context, environmental protection was also highlighted and actively supported by clearly defining relevant objectives, actions, goals and performance indicators, as part of the budget documentation. Spending reviews also support the aforementioned reforms by actively helping enhance efficiency of certain actions and especially actions related to environmental protection.

Those reforms contribute to effectively implementing and monitoring a number of horizontal and cross-cutting policies of the State and the rest of the General Government entities, while promoting efficiency, public accountability, transparency and policy coherence for sustainable development.

#### **Public Investments Programme**

The Public Investments Programme operates as the key development policy tool to the growth and productivity of the Greek economy, the restoration of fiscal balance, the improvement of business environment and the increase in employment and promoting actions that will strengthen and

support social cohesion. The Public Investments Programme finances the country's development policy, subsidizes the expansion of private and public capital of the economy and supports the modernization of the country on a long-term basis with multiplier effects on both production and employment. The main goal of the Public Investments Programme 2022 is the distribution of predetermined resources with the aim of achieving the maximum possible growth footprint for the Greek economy and society. The Public Investments Programme 2022 is set to be 11.6 billion euros in total, including an amount of 3.2 billion euros for the implementation of projects that will be funded by the Recovery and Resilience Fund (RRF) which is covered by the national part of PIB. Based on the MTFS (Medium Term Fiscal Strategy) 2022-2025, 21 billion euros are expected to be budgeted for the Public Investments Programme 2023-2025.

### **The New Investment Law**

The New Investment Incentives Law (4887/2022) constitutes a statutory framework for the establishment of Private Investments Aid Schemes for the regional and economic development of the country. The scope of the new investment law is to promote key incentives in order to achieve economies of scale, innovative investments, new entrepreneurship, boost employment with skilled staff, development of less developed areas of the country, further strengthening of tourism and improving competitiveness in high value-added sectors. The establishment of state aid canvas for investment projects includes digital and technological business transformation, green transition - environmental business upgrade, innovative business and new technologies of "Industry 4.0", robotics and artificial intelligence, fair development transition regime, research and applied innovation, agri-food-primary production and processing of agricultural products-fisheries and aquaculture, manufacturing-supply chain, business extroversion, support for tourism investments, alternative forms of tourism, large investments, european value chains and 360° entrepreneurship.

### **The New Strategic Investment Law**

Strategic Investments are designed and implemented by either the Government or individuals or through public-private partnership. Strategic Investments are of utmost importance for the national, regional or local economy because they can stimulate employment, boost economic growth and promote environmental sustainability under the principles of sustainable development, social equality and a cyclical economy. Strategic Investments offer licensing incentives, tax benefits, expenditure subsidies and special location regimes. In total, 45 environmental schemes have been carried out under the previous Investment Laws 3894/2010, 3986/2011 and 4608/2019 with a high-added value of 619 new permanent jobs.

The new Strategic Investment Framework 4864/2021 is aiming at improving the business environment, at simplifying the legal framework and implementation procedures for strategic investors and at accelerating the resilience, competitiveness, innovation and extroversion of the Greek economy. The new Strategic Investment Law 4864/2021 has been fulfilling the SDGs 8, 9, 10, 13, 14 and 17. According to the new Strategic Investment Law 4864/2021, strategic investments are divided into categories according to the amount of their budget, to the new permanent jobs being created, to the incentives granted and to the type of economic activity. In particular, the investments are divided into: Strategic Investments 1 over 40 million euros, Strategic Investments 2 over 20 million euros, Emblematic Investments, Strategic Investments for Rapid Licensing over 10 million euros and Automatically Incorporated Strategic Investments over 10 million euros.

### **Public Private Partnerships**

Public Private Partnerships (PPPs) are long term contracts between private and public sector entities aiming at implementing projects, delivering services and developing the economy. The law 3389/2005 on Public Private Partnerships (PPPs) lays the foundations for the wide provision of services and the undertaking of public benefit construction work, in collaboration with and co-

funded by the private sector. This law is designed to facilitate public-private partnerships through the strengthening and acceleration of PPP ripeness processes and the creation of a market-friendly regulatory environment.

PPP projects in Greece have significant comparative advantages compared to other project models as the project is repaid over time, significant leverage of private capital is made, while a predetermined time and cost of implementation of a project is ensured. In the European PPP market, Greece ranks 7th place. With the approval by the Interministerial Committee, PPP projects now amount to 3.21 billion euros for 21 projects in total heading forward in the main sectors of transport, education, health, and the environment.

In Greece, an affordability cap (or ceiling) has been set, in order to define the limit on the overall long-term firm liabilities of all PPPs. Currently, the informal cap at official level is the 10% of the nationally-sourced portion of the Public Investment Budget (estimated around EUR 1 million euros for 2022), which is estimated to remain stable for the period 2023-2025.

### **The Hellenic Development Bank**

Hellenic Development Bank (HDB) was established in 2019 as a National Promotional Institution (NPI) to provide an equal playing field for SMEs through the efficient allocation of funds, bridging existing gaps in the business environment, attracting alternative funding sources, improving the overall business environment and, assisting the economy in growing and the businesses in becoming digital, innovative and extrovert. The main vision of HDB is to foster a multilateral, fair, inclusive and green-sustainable development.

HDB, having a new organizational structure, new corporate governance and capitalizing on existing collaborations, is in its full essence a development-oriented bank. It is the reliable and effective partner of all domestic and international financial institutions that want to approach the Greek company, to help it grow into a new international competitive environment. HDB's total market impact to covering the Financial Gap of SMEs is estimated till now up to 8 bn. eur of financing and 15.600 of new jobs created.

In 2021, HDB succeeded in achieving all the goals that have been set, by launching five (5) Financial Instruments for SMEs with a Loan budget of more than EUR 942 million, fulfilling its original planning. In addition, the Top-Up of EUR 50 million in Equifund funds was materialized with investments made through the respective fund managers. For 2022, HDB continues to expand its financial support, through existing Covid and new non-Covid measures. Most of the new schemes of the HDB incorporate additional benefits on successful completion of selected ESG criteria. Some of the fundamental new schemes that are going to be launched during 2022 are presented below.

#### *A Capped Guarantee Fund for Innovation with a focus on innovative SMEs*

The projects should incorporate a strong innovation element regarding the production process, a service or a business model operation. The fund will guarantee loans up to EUR 400 thousand by 80% with a cap rate of 40%. The additional benefit on successful completion of the innovation project and the completion of selected ESG criteria will be a 15% + 5% grant, which will repay part of the loan. The estimated budget of the scheme is a total of EUR 65 million, leveraging loans of EUR120 million.

#### *A Capped Guarantee Fund for "Digital Transformation"*

The fund will focus on SMEs that plan to invest in their digital transformation process. The fund will guarantee loans up to EUR700 thousand for a term of up to 10 years. It will be a capped portfolio with a guarantee rate of 80% with a 30% cap rate. The additional benefit on successful completion of selected ESG criteria will be a 10% + 5% grant, which will repay part of the loan. The estimated guarantee budget is EUR100 million leveraging loans up to EUR417 million.

#### A Green Guarantee Fund for Sustainable Development

The fund will focus on investments by SMEs on green finance activities (for example energy efficiency, renewable energy, energy production, etc.). It will be a capped guarantee portfolio with a guarantee rate of 80% with a 30% cap rate. The additional benefit of complying to ESG criteria, will be a 50% return of the guarantee commission. The fund will guarantee loans amounting up to EUR20 million for a term of up to 10-12 years (tentative). The estimated budget is EUR300 million leveraging loans up to EUR1250 million.

#### **Partnership Agreement 2014-2020 and 2021-2027**

Under the new National Strategic Reference Framework (NSRF) 2021-2027, Greece stands to receive a total of 26.2 billion euros from the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), of which 20.9 billion is EU support and 5.3 billion euros is the national contribution. Therefore, it is roughly EUR 26,2 billion of EU Funds to support growth and jobs in Greece over the 2021-2027 programming period. It includes, inter alia, distinctive programs for digital transformation, civil protection, fair transition (concerning lignite areas), environment and climate change, human resources and social cohesion, as well as a new competitiveness program with business support actions.

In the framework of the partnership Agreement (ESPA) 2014-2020, Greece has invested and is in the process of completing investments up to 25, 5 billion euros EU contribution and national funding. The investments aim at economic growth and employment, reducing inequalities and promoting environmental resilience and climate adaptation. They are in alignment with the SDGs and contribute to the implementation of the SDG's. Those resources were increased by the Next Generation resources allocated through REACT EU – amounting to 1,7 billion euros. Although those resources are mainly aiming at addressing the severe economic and social effects of the pandemic, at least 25% of the REACT EU resources will be allocated to actions addressing climate change.

About 4,5 billion euros from the ESF but also the ERDF contribute to the first five Goals, namely no poverty, zero hunger, good health and wellbeing, quality education and gender mainstreaming, but also to Goal 8, decent work and economic growth and Goal 9, reducing inequalities within the country. Actions supporting the 5 SDGs and their targets include enhancing skills of workers and unemployed to secure better jobs with emphasis on young people and long term unemployed; creating resilient education systems including infrastructure ensuring access to all; enhancing resilient health systems including actions to ensure access to health services for vulnerable groups and low income families, establish community centers to provide services to vulnerable and low income groups, establish structures in order to ensure zero hunger and homelessness to low income families, targeted actions for gender mainstreaming including the eradication of violence against women.

Investments promoting research and innovation, industrial transformation as well as sustainable transport infrastructure accessible to all, contribute to Goal 9. Investments in protection of biodiversity, solid and water waste management systems, improvement in the water systems and housing and public buildings renovation aiming at energy conservation and energy transition, contribute to Goals 6, 7, 13 and 15. The Integrated Territorial Investments financed through the NSRF, contribute to Goal 11, actively promoting sustainable and better cities and communities. A distinct programme is dedicated to the restructuring of the public sector actively contributing to Goal 16.

Under the new National Strategic Reference Framework (NSRF) 2021-2027, Greece stands to invest a total of 26.2 billion euros, of which 20.9 billion is EU support and 5.3 billion euros is the national contribution, in order to support growth and jobs in Greece over the 2021-2027 programming

period. About 3,3 billion euros of those resources is dedicated to promoting research, innovation and industrial transition (Goal 9) leading to the creation of a resilient economy and sustainable and quality employment.

About 5,3 billion euros from the ESF+ resource (but also the ERDF) will continue to contribute to the first five Goals, namely no poverty, zero hunger, good health and wellbeing, quality education and gender mainstreaming, but also to Goal 9, reducing inequalities within the country. Actions supporting the 5 SDGs and their targets include enhancing skills of workers and unemployed to secure better jobs with emphasis on young people and long term unemployed; creating resilient education systems including infrastructure ensuring access to all; enhancing resilient health systems including actions to ensure access to health services for vulnerable groups and low income families, establish community centers to provide services to vulnerable and low income groups, establish structures in order to ensure zero hunger and homelessness to low income families, provide material assistance to the destitute, targeted actions for gender mainstreaming. About 1,5 billion euros are dedicated to social inclusion, limiting inequalities and ensuring access to quality services to all.

A distinct programme amounting to 1,7 billion euros is dedicated to energy transition and providing clean and affordable energy for all (Goal 7) while investments promoting energy conservation in private housing and public buildings are also foreseen in other programs as well. The transition to a green sustainable and circular economy and the protection of biodiversity (Goal 15) are priorities and about 3,5bil are dedicated to this effect. About 4,5 billion will be dedicated to actions addressing climate change and protection from the adverse effects of climate change on places and communities.

More than 1 billion euros is dedicated to building better cities and communities through local action and participation thus, actively contributing to Goal 11.

#### **Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF)**

The Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF) was set up to tackle the COVID-19 crisis and support the transition to a green and digital economy. Greece's recovery and resilience plan responds to the urgent need of fostering a strong recovery and making Greece ready for the future. The reforms and investments in the plan will help Greece become more sustainable, resilient and better prepared for the challenges and opportunities of the green and digital transitions. To this end, the plan consists of 106 investment measures and 68 reforms. The measures will be supported by €17.77 billion in grants and €12.73 billion in loans around 16% of national GDP. 37.5% of the plan will support climate objectives and 23.3% of the plan will foster the digital transition. The transformative impact of Greece's plan is the result of a strong combination of reforms and investments, which address the specific challenges of Greece. The reforms address bottlenecks to lasting and sustainable growth, while investments accelerate the transition towards a low-carbon, digital and more inclusive economy. In particular, the plan intends to facilitate the decarbonisation of the Greek economy, modernise and digitalise public administration including by improving the tax administration and justice systems, promote the innovation capacity, digital uptake and resilience of key economic sectors, and upgrade health care, education, and active labour market policies. 70% of RRF resources should be committed in 2021 and 2022 and 30% of resources in 2023.

#### **5.4 Evidence-based and quantified public policies**

Addressing effectively the critical and multi-dimensional global challenges associated with the implementation of the SDGs, including sustainable recovery from the adverse social and economic impacts of the pandemic crisis, climate change, natural disasters, depletion of natural resources, digital transition, social inequalities, demographic pressure and sustainable, resilient and inclusive growth requires the adoption of integrated and forward-looking public policies supported by

strong evidence and reliable data. It necessitates, more than ever, the establishment of mechanisms, tools and processes that incorporate, in a balanced and coherent manner, the use of robust, high-quality and quantified evidence in the whole policy cycle, including the planning, design, formulation, implementation and evaluation of public policies.

In the last years, Greece has made important steps to incorporate evidence in policy making. A particular case in point is the “Executive State” law adopted by the Government in August 2019, which includes several provisions outlining the importance of introducing the use of quantified evidence and data in the process of designing, formulating and evaluating public policies. In particular, the compilation of the Annual Action Plans by the Ministries postulates the adoption of clearly defined policy goals measured and evaluated on the basis of key performance indicators. The connection between the defined policy goals and their implementing actions and measures is examined and established with the support of innovative scientific tools like the Logical Framework Analysis (Logframe) that specifies the Theory of Change for policy interventions. In addition, it is mandatory for every draft bill, before its submission to the Hellenic Parliament, to be accompanied by a Regulatory Impact Assessment, which – inter alia – documents the necessity of the legal intervention with a cost-benefit analysis based on quantified and quality scientific criteria and data.

Meanwhile, the pandemic has accelerated the use of scientific data in the decision-making process. Since the beginning of the pandemic, the measures for controlling the spread of the disease were adopted after thorough consultation with an extended scientific committee comprising doctors and epidemiologists, which has been meeting regularly in order to examine the situation of the pandemic and the available scientific evidence coming from the medicine sector. The recent development of a large number of digital services by the Greek state, which has enabled, among others, the collection of large amounts of data, acted as a catalyst for the objective estimation of the situation. The collection and aggregation of data from heterogeneous sources, its processing, as well as its use for inference extraction are achieved by the operation of a special Observatory, which consists of experienced economists and data scientists, and provides to the political decision makers a complete and always updated view of the situation. All these mechanisms serve as experience and best-practice accumulation hubs for potential future crisis management in Greece. A highlight of these initiatives is the use of “Eva”, a state-of-the-art AI tool to perform targeted COVID-19 testing of incoming visitors during the tourism season of 2020, which supported the safe opening of the country during the initial phases of the pandemic, when no vaccines were available.

The experience of using evidence coming from key performance indicators to control the consequences of the pandemic was utilized in the national vaccination programme “Operation Freedom”. The fully digital implementation of the process, except for facilitating the smooth operation of the programme, has additionally enabled the monitoring of the vaccination progress with the use of detailed quantified data, updated in real time and referring to multiple dimensions, including geographical location, age group or disease vulnerability level. This detailed information has given important feedback to decision-making, while implementing the vaccination procedure and having to adjust it in a changing environment determined by the development of the pandemic and the need to support the economy.

In view of the increasing demand for boosting the cooperation with the scientific community in policy design, a close cooperation with the Joint Research Centre (JRC) - the European Commission’s science and knowledge service - has been initiated. In September 2021, the workshop “Science for policy making in Greece” took place, in which renowned policy makers and scientists across the EU participated. Greece was represented at a high political level in order to signal the importance of the subject and the undertaken efforts. The workshop concluded that science for policy making is gaining political momentum in Greece, given the successful use of scientific evidence and public management during COVID-19 and other government initiatives and that there seems to be strong political will to take further steps. Recognizing that there are clear

epistemic and bureaucratic challenges to bring together scientists and policymakers, the importance of the need to advance the strengthening of science advice practice via the formalization of science for policy organizations and networks of advisers was stated.

There is a strong political will supported by a coherent plan to strengthen the incorporation of scientific results and analysis into public policy making in the coming years. The enhancement of evaluation procedures for public policies requires the extended use of appropriate, reliable and high-quality scientific evidence according to the domain of the evaluation throughout the whole policy cycle. Given the benefits that can be realized by combining the competencies of scientists across multiple countries and aiming to leverage upon knowledge mobilization for the investigation of potential solutions to complex public policy issues, Greece is leading the multi-country project “Building capacity for evidence-informed policy making in governance and public administration in a post-pandemic Europe”, funded by the European Commission and supported by eight EU countries, which will enhance institutional mechanisms for mainstreaming scientific evidence in public policy design and evaluation.

### **5.5 Fostering the SDGs implementation at global and regional level**

Building a more effective and coherent multilateral governance and promoting a rules-based international order, which supports all dimensions of sustainable development and enables development opportunities for all, constitute key priorities of Greek foreign policy. It is within this context that Greece has decided to present its candidacy as a non-permanent member of the United Nations Security Council for the period 2025-2026.

Greece is strongly committed to the full implementation of all international agreements and policy frameworks which aim to promote and foster, in a coherent and balanced manner, sustainable development, including: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the Paris Agreement, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda (2015), the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (2015-2030) and the New Urban Agenda agreed in 2016 in the context of the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III).

The overall foreign and security policy of Greece contributes significantly to the achievement of the SDGs in several ways, both directly and indirectly: in the context of establishing multilateral and bilateral cooperation schemes, adopting comprehensive legal and policy instruments and undertaking cooperative initiatives at international and regional levels, including through trade and investments, through development cooperation, humanitarian assistance and economic cooperation, by ensuring the protection of the environment and the sustainable use of natural resources and by promoting peace, security, respect for democratic principles, human rights, fundamental freedoms, gender equality, the rule of law and good governance.

#### **Multilateral Cooperation Schemes**

Aware of the challenging developments in the Eastern Mediterranean and the broader Middle East, Greece has long been striving for the establishment of a regional security architecture, foremost by means of dialogue and cooperation. To this end, Greece is always keen to encourage multilateral cooperation and promote joint actions and initiatives in the region with countries that fully respect international law.

Since 2013, Greece and Cyprus have created a vibrant network of trilateral cooperation and partnership mechanisms in the region, having, thus far, acquired increasing momentum. In this network of cooperation mechanisms participate actively several countries in the region, including Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, UAE, Palestine, whereas in the last years these partnership mechanisms have expanded to other countries, including USA and Iraq. Within the framework of the aforementioned cooperative schemes, many sectoral synergies have been established in

various thematic fields inextricably linked to the SDGs, such as digital technology, health services technology, innovation, energy, management of water resources, marine pollution, agriculture, telecommunications, promotion of investments, tourism etc.

### **1. Trilateral cooperation Greece - Cyprus - Egypt**

Trilateral Summits Greece – Cyprus – Egypt (Elounda Crete, 10.10.2018), (Cairo, 8.10.2019), (Nicosia, 21.10.2020), (Athens, 19.10.2021).

The following legal texts were signed on the occasion of the aforementioned Summits:

- Memorandum on Cooperation in the fields of Environmental Education and Education for Sustainable Development Information and Communication Technology in Education, and Cooperation between Higher Education and other Educational, Scientific and Research Institutions (SDG 4.7).
- Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation in the fields of Small and Medium Sized Enterprises and Entrepreneurship (SDG 9.3).
- Memorandum on Customs Technical Cooperation (SDG 17.10).
- Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation between Enterprise Greece, Invest Cyprus and the General Authority of Egypt for Investment and Free Zones (SDGs 17.13, 8.3).
- A Tripartite Investment Promotion Executive Program was signed as a follow-up to the above-mentioned MoU (SDGs 17.13, 8.3).
- An Agreement for the establishment of a trilateral electricity interconnector between the grids of Egypt, Cyprus and Greece (SDG 7)

### **2. Partnership schemes Greece - Cyprus - Egypt and cooperation of the three countries with the USA**

(i) Trilateral Summits Greece-Cyprus-Israel (Beer Sheva/Israel, 20.12.2018), (Athens, 2.1.2020), (Jerusalem, 7.12.2021).

The following legal texts were signed on the occasion of the aforementioned Summits:

- Memorandum of Understanding on Cybersecurity Cooperation (SDGs 4, 8, 9, 16).
  - Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation in the field of Smart Cities & Smart Homes (SDG 11.3).
  - An Intergovernmental Energy Agreement for the construction of the EastMed natural gas pipeline by the Ministers of Energy of Greece, Cyprus and Israel was signed (SDG 7).
- (ii) Summits Greece-Cyprus-Israel with the participation of the USA (Jerusalem, 20.3.2019 and 7.12.2021).

In the context of these Summits, an extensive cooperation and fruitful exchange of views with regard to energy issues took place. In addition, relevant working groups have been set up, with a particular focus on renewable energy sources and development of sustainable energy infrastructure (SDGs 7, 9.4).

### **3. Trilateral cooperation Greece – Cyprus – Jordan**

Trilateral Summits (Amman 14.4.2019, Athens 28.7.2021).

The following legal texts were signed on the occasion of the aforementioned Summits:

- Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation in the field of Education for 2019-2022 (SDGs 4.7, 17.6).
- Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation between Jordan Investment Commission (JIC), Enterprise Greece S.A. and “Invest Cyprus” (SDGs 17.13, 8.3).

## Legal and Policy Instruments

On 9 June 2020, **Greece signed a historic Agreement with Italy on the delimitation of their respective maritime zones**. This Agreement demonstrates the common will of the two countries to take resolute action when dealing with sensitive issues, through the path of peaceful negotiations in good faith and in a spirit of good neighbourliness and in accordance with international law and in particular with the relevant provisions of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (1982), thus contributing to international peace and security (law 4716/2020) (**SDGs 14, 16.3**).

On 29 May 2019, the **Agreement on the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Prespa Park Area** entered into force, which was signed at Pyli, Greece, in 2010 on the initiative of the Greek Government, between the three States sharing the Prespa Lakes Area (Greece, North Macedonia and Albania) and the European Union. The Agreement, which is unique in its kind in our region and contributes to the provides the necessary institutional framework and directions for cooperation and joint activities between its Parties to ensure an integrated protection of the ecosystem and the sustainable development of the ecologically and hydrologically rich and sensitive Prespa Park Area, including the development of integrated river basin management plans and approaches, in line with international and European Union standards (law 4453/2017) (**SDGs 6.5, 6.6, 15.1, 15.5, 15.9, 17.16**).

The Government of the Hellenic Republic, the Government of the Republic of Cyprus and the Government of the State of Israel, have signed an **Implementation Agreement on the sub-regional marine oil pollution contingency plan** pursuant to the protocol concerning cooperation in preventing pollution from ships and, in cases of emergency, combating pollution of the Mediterranean Sea to the Barcelona Convention. The three countries signed and ratified the Implementation Agreement (law 4787/2022) (**SDG 14**).

On 26 June 2021, Greece signed the **Framework Agreement on the establishment of the International Solar Alliance (ISA)**, an alliance of 124 countries initiated by India. The primary objective of the alliance is to work, through coordinated actions and activities and in close cooperation with relevant organizations, public and private stakeholders, towards ensuring efficient consumption of solar energy and reducing dependence on fossil fuels. Greece has signed and ratified the ISA Framework Agreement (law 4911/2022) (**SDGs 7.2, 17.16**).

Greece is building strong “beyond borders” partnerships with partner countries that face similar challenges and share common goals, through bilateral and trilateral technical cooperation schemes, especially in its geographic neighborhood, i.e. South-East Europe and South-East Mediterranean. In particular, **at the Mediterranean level**, Greece is a very active Contracting Party to the **Barcelona Convention** for the protection of the environment of the Mediterranean coastal zone and Sea: the Coordination Unit/Secretariat of the Convention has been hosted in Athens since 1981 with the financial support of the Hellenic State. Greece has been chairing the “Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development” (MCSD) for 2017-2019, promoting the elaboration and regular update of a “Mediterranean Sustainability Dashboard” of indicators and aspiring to the implementation of the “Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development” (MSSD, 2016-2025) which constitutes a well elaborated “translation” of the global 2030 Agenda to the regional Mediterranean context and priorities and a useful tool to guide national efforts for SDGs’ implementation. **SDGs 14, 12, 13, 15, 17.14, 17.16, 17.17**.

Greece participates actively in the implementation process of the **South East Europe (SEE) 2030 Strategy**, along with 12 SEE economies (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Kosovo, Moldova, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Romania, Serbia, Slovenia, and Turkey). The SEE 2030 Strategy, which was adopted in June 2021 within the framework of the South-East Europe Cooperation Process (SEECPP), aims to promote and advance, through regional cooperation

initiatives and actions, the integrated implementation of the UN Sustainable Development Goals within the SEE region, across key dimensions of sustainable development and strategic areas of the 2030 Agenda, including: (i) Prosperity; (ii) People; and (iii) Peace and Partnerships. The priority thematic areas of intervention of the Strategy were selected on the basis of National Voluntary Reviews of SEECP participants. On this basis, thirteen Sustainable Development Goals were selected (**SDGs 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 13, 16, 17**). Leaders of SEECP gave mandate to the Regional Cooperation Council, a regionally owned organization to lead the preparation of the Strategy. Comprehensive implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development requires partnerships between economies and across sub-regions. Political commitment to regional cooperation will therefore be a cornerstone for the successful and efficient implementation of the Strategy (**SDG 17.16**). It is worth noting that Greece, which was very active during the preparation of the Strategy, assumed, on July 1st 2021, for a period of 12 months, the Chairmanship in Office of SEECP. Additionally, Greece participates in the Monitoring Committee responsible for the implementation of the SEE 2030 Strategy.

In the framework of the full implementation of the UN Security Council Resolutions on Women, Peace and Security (WPS), Greece finalized in 2021, under the coordination of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, its first **National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security- NAPWPS (2020-2024)**. The NAPWPS aims to promote a wide range of actions and measures under the following pillars and priority areas: (i) prevention of armed conflict and of any form of gender-based, sexual and domestic violence, sexual exploitation and abuse, (ii) gender-equal representation, participation and leadership in decision-making, (iii) protection of women and girls from gender-based, sexual and domestic violence, including sexual exploitation and abuse, and from other violations of international humanitarian law and international human rights law, (iv) relief and recovery of the survivors of gender-based, sexual and domestic violence, and (v) promotion of the UN Agenda on Women, Peace and Security (WPS) at bilateral, regional, multilateral level. In order to enhance policy coherence, the NAPWPS is fully aligned with the National Action Plan on Gender Equality (NAPGE), which has been renewed for the period 2021-2025. **SDGs 5.1, 5.2, 5.3, 5.5, 16.1, 16.2, 16.3, 17.14**

### **Greek Cooperative Initiatives**

Deeply concerned about the destructive impact of climate change on the cultural and natural heritage, Greece, since 2019, is **leading a global initiative** to accelerate and streamline global action towards the protection of the world's heritage. Following the International Conference on "Climate Change Impacts on Cultural Heritage – Facing the Challenge", that was held in Athens, 21-22.06.2019, Greece launched at the UN Climate Action Summit (September 2019), the initiative "**Addressing climate change impacts on cultural and natural heritage**". The UN Secretary General has included the Greek proposal in the "Report on the 2019 Climate Action Summit and the Way Forward in 2020" among the most ambitious initiatives. So far, more than 100 UN member states have expressed their support to this initiative as well as the UNSG, UNESCO, World Meteorological Organization (WMO), the Council of Europe and many NGOs and organizations. In December 2019, the Greek Initiative was presented at a side event in the framework of UNFCCC COP25, in Madrid, by the Greek Minister of Environment and Energy along with the Greek Minister of Culture, the WMO Secretary-General and UNESCO.

A Flexible Mechanism (FM) has been set up with the participation of Greece, UNESCO, UNFCCC and the WMO. Moreover, for the implementation of the Initiative and in order to support the work of the Flexible Mechanism, a Coordination Unit (CU) has been established, by decision of the Greek Prime Minister, in early 2021. The CU aims, inter alia, at raising awareness, facilitating and enhancing the efforts of the supporting States in a coordinated manner and bridging scientific knowledge and climate adaptation tools. The CU, located in the Academy of Athens, is made up of

distinguished scientists with expertise in the fields of climate change and cultural heritage. [SDGs 11.4, 13.2, 13.3](#)

In addition, it is worth noting that in the margins of the UNFCCC COP26 and with the aim to further accelerate global action, Greece organized on 2 November 2021, a High Level Meeting with Ministers of Culture and Environment on the issue of climate change impacts on cultural and natural heritage.

With a view to deepen their close cooperation and further contribute to the consolidation of peace, stability and security in the Eastern Mediterranean and the Middle East and Gulf region, seven countries, including Cyprus, Egypt, Greece, Bahrain, France, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) participated, on the initiative of Greece, in the **Philia Forum** taken place in Athens on 11 February 2021. The participating countries reiterated their common adherence to international law, including the UN Charter, UN Security Council Resolutions and the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) to which they are all signatories. They stressed their strong commitment to the promotion of the fundamental principles enshrined therein, including the respect for the principles of national sovereignty and non-interference in the internal affairs of States, sovereign rights, independence and territorial integrity of states, the peaceful resolution of differences and rejection of threat or use of force, and the freedom of navigation. [SDGs 16.3, 14, 17.16.](#)

#### **COVID-19 pandemic**

At international level, **Greece has donated over 4 million doses of COVID-19 vaccines**, through bilateral agreements, to Albania, Armenia, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Egypt, Gabon, Ghana, Iran, Jordan, Kenya, Libya, North Macedonia, Rwanda, Tunisia, Ukraine and Vietnam. The vaccines delivered, serve as an example of solidarity of Greece to its partner countries and of commitment to share resources to fight the COVID-19 pandemic. Moreover, via the European Union COVAX mechanism, Greece offered almost 6 million doses of COVID-19 vaccines, 4,3 millions of which were immediately donated to Djibouti, Ethiopia, Indonesia, Kenya, Laos, Nigeria, Pakistan and Syria, thus contributing to the full vaccination of approximately 17% of the combined population of these countries. [SDG 17.16, 17.9, 3.8, 3.b, 16.6](#)

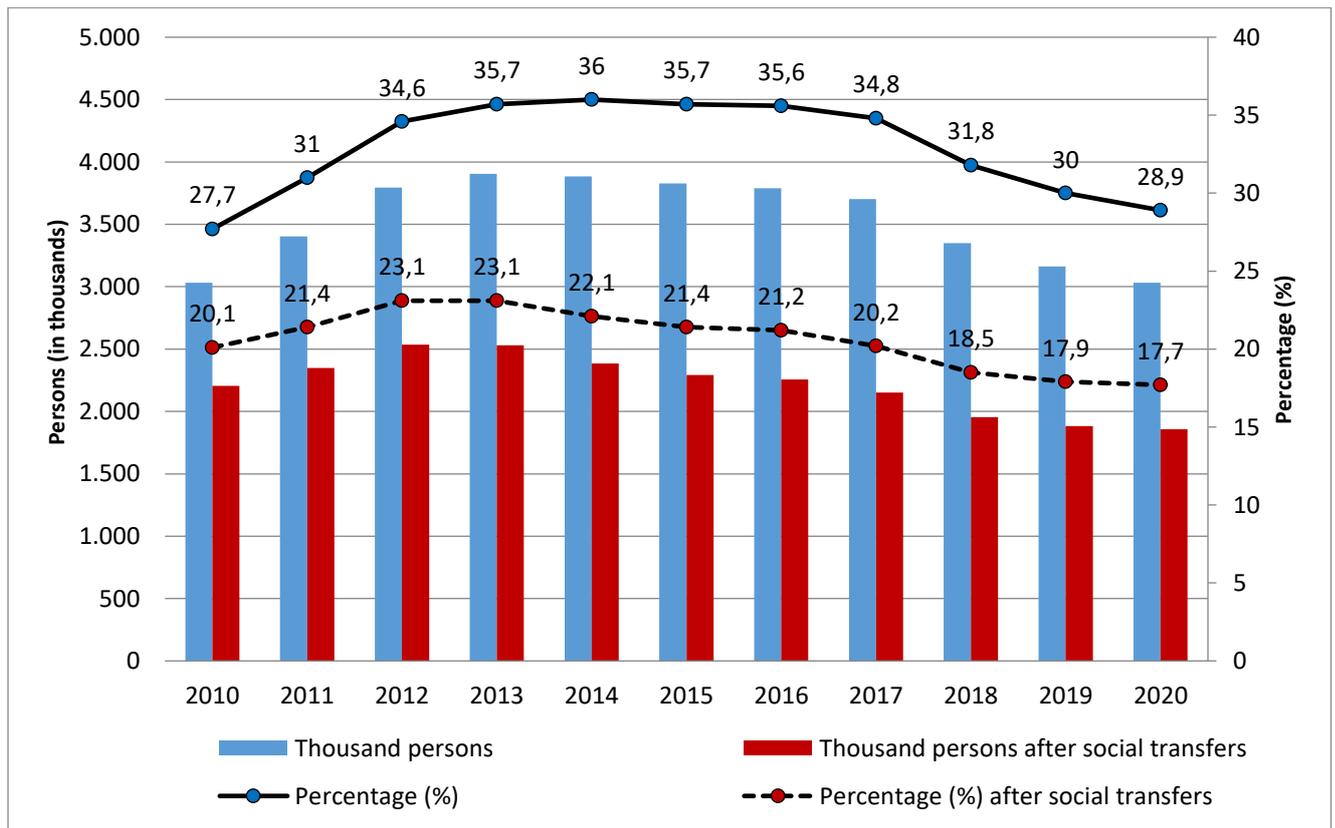
## ANNEX I

This section presents some characteristic statistical information and data from the National Indicators Set aligned with Greek National Priorities. Data are derived from the ELSTAT's and Eurostat's databases. All indicators have strong links with the national and regional (EU) policies and are in line with the United Nations Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics and the European Statistics Code of Practice.

# SDG 1. No Poverty

## People at risk of poverty or social exclusion and People at risk of poverty after social transfers

**Figure 1: People at risk of poverty or social exclusion and at risk of income poverty after social transfers**



**Table 1: People at risk of poverty or social exclusion and at risk of income poverty after social transfers**

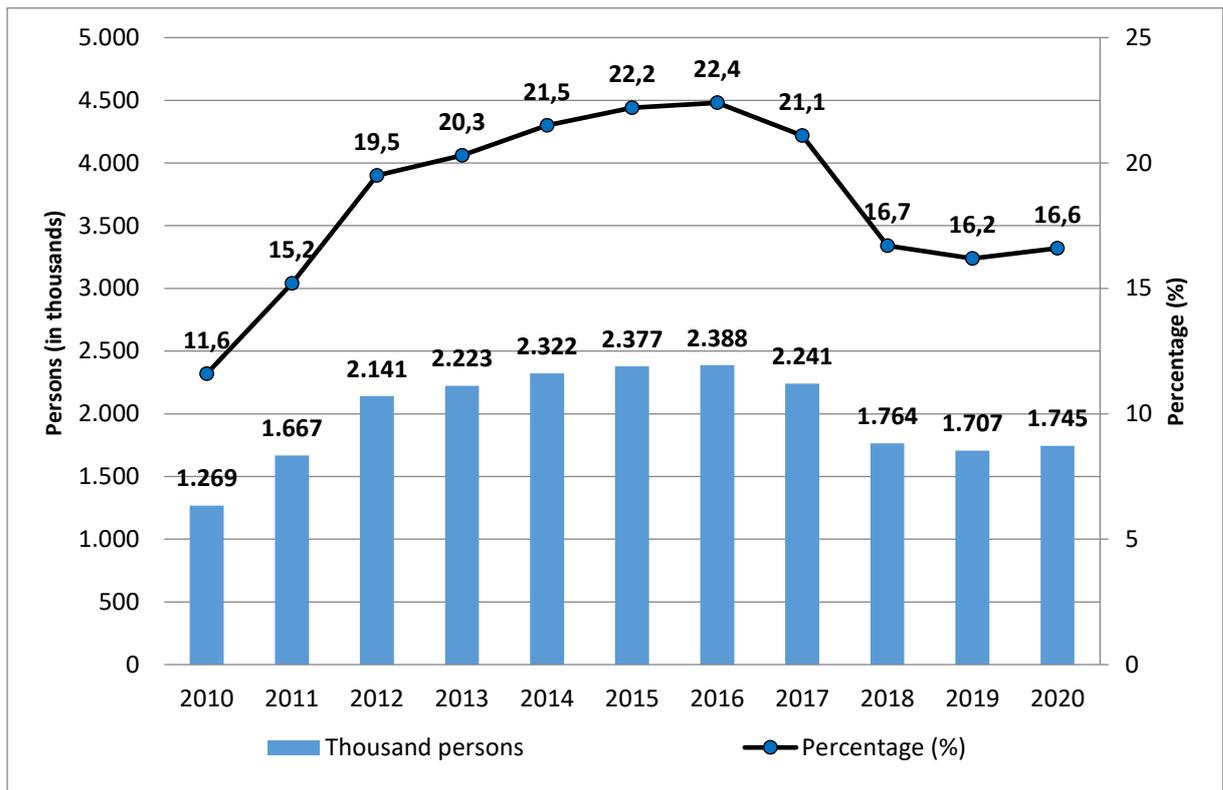
Year	People at risk of poverty or social exclusion	People at risk of income poverty after social transfers
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	Thousand persons	Percentage (%)	Thousand persons	Percentage (%)
<b>2010</b>	3,031	27.7	2,205	20.1
<b>2011</b>	3,403	31.0	2,349	21.4
<b>2012</b>	3,795	34.6	2,536	23.1
<b>2013</b>	3,904	35.7	2,529	23.1
<b>2014</b>	3,885	36.0	2,384	22.1
<b>2015</b>	3,829	35.7	2,293	21.4
<b>2016</b>	3,789	35.6	2,256	21.2
<b>2017</b>	3,702	34.8	2,151	20.2
<b>2018</b>	3,349	31.8	1,954	18.5
<b>2019</b>	3,162	30.0	1,882	17.9
<b>2020</b>	3,033	28.9	1,856	17.7

## Severely materially deprived people

The indicator measures the share of severely materially deprived persons who have living conditions severely constrained by a lack of resources. They experience at least 4 out of 9 following deprivations items: cannot afford i) to pay rent or utility bills, ii) keep home adequately warm, iii) face unexpected expenses, iv) eat meat, fish or a protein equivalent every second day, v) a week holiday away from home, vi) a car, vii) a washing machine, viii) a colour TV, or ix) a telephone.

**Figure 2: Severely materially deprived people (as % of total population)**



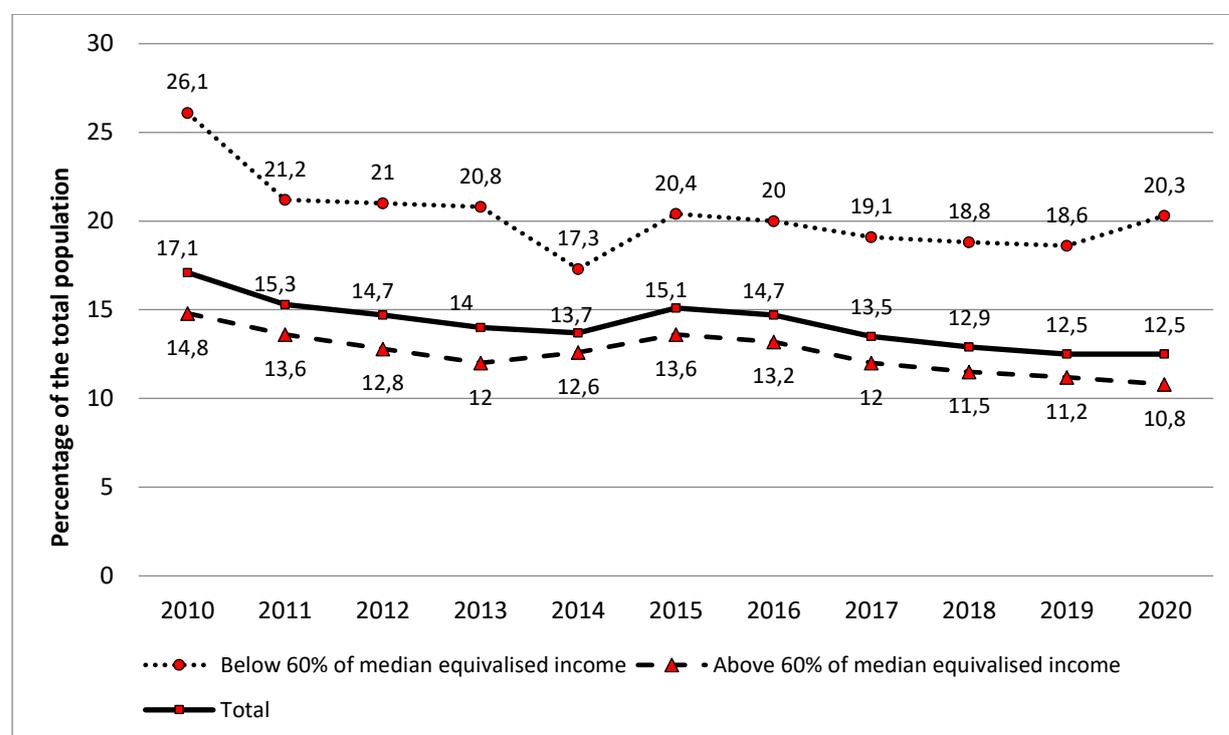
**Table 2: Severely materially deprived people (as % of total population)**

Year		
	Thousand persons	Percentage (%)
2010	1,269	11.6
2011	1,667	15.2
2012	2,141	19.5
2013	2,223	20.3
2014	2,322	21.5
2015	2,377	22.2
2016	2,388	22.4
2017	2,241	21.1
2018	1,764	16.7
2019	1,707	16.2
2020	1,745	16.6

## Population living in a dwelling with a leaking roof, damp walls, floors or foundation or rot in window frames of floor by poverty status

The indicator measures the share of the population experiencing at least one of the following basic deficits in their housing condition: a leaking roof, damp walls, floors or foundation, or rot in window frames or floor. A breakdown by poverty status is available.

**Figure 3: Percentages of people living in households with poor housing conditions (such as leaking roof, damp walls or foundation, etc.) by income situation in relation to the risk of poverty threshold**



**Table 3: Percentages (%) of people living in households with poor housing conditions by income situation in relation to the risk of poverty threshold**

Year	Below 60% of median equivalised income	Above 60% of median equivalised income	Total
2010	26.1	14.8	17.1
2011	21.2	13.6	15.3
2012	21.0	12.8	14.7
2013	20.8	12.0	14.0
2014	17.3	12.6	13.7
2015	20.4	13.6	15.1
2016	20.0	13.2	14.7

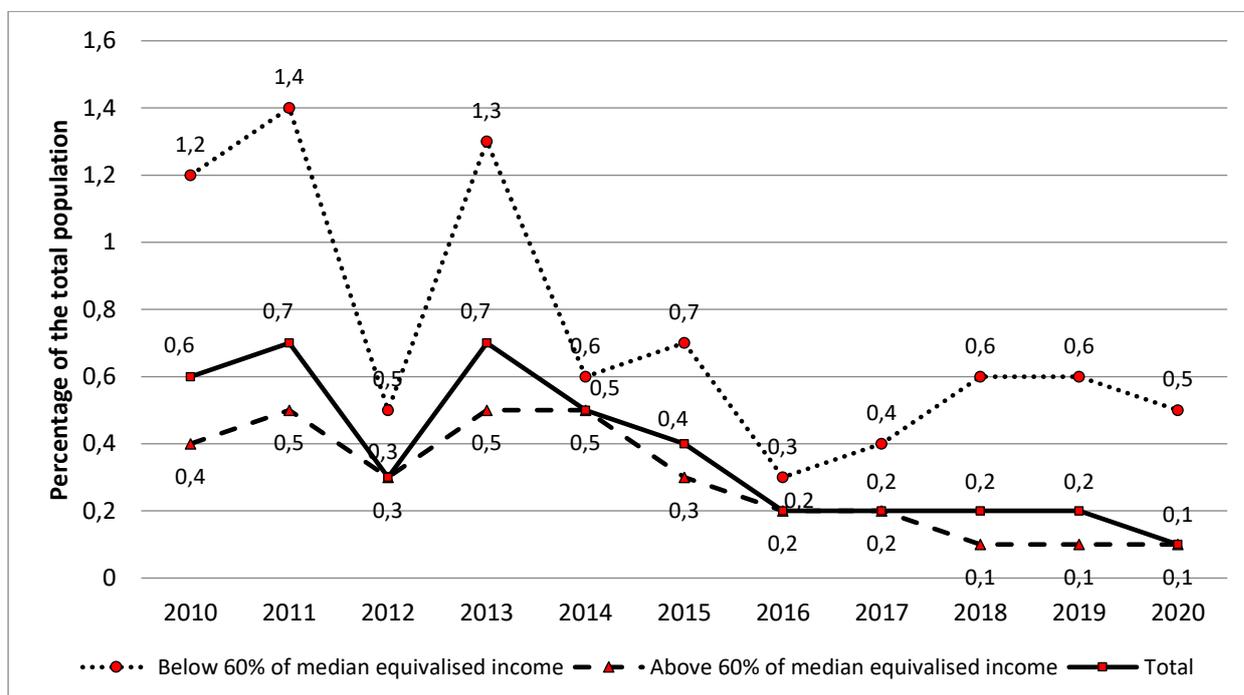
<b>2017</b>	19.1	12.0	13.5
<b>2018</b>	18.8	11,5	12.9
<b>2019</b>	18.6	11.2	12.5
<b>2020</b>	20.3	10.8	12.5

## Total population having neither a bath, nor a shower, nor indoor flushing toilet in their household

(This indicator is also included in the SDG 6: Clean water and sanitation)

The indicator measures the share of total population having neither a bath, nor a shower, nor an indoor flushing toilet in their household.

**Figure 4: Percentage (%) of people having neither a bath, nor a shower, not indoor flushing toilet in their households by income situation in relation to the risk of poverty threshold**



**Table 4: Percentage (%) of people having neither a bath, nor a shower, not indoor flushing toilet in their households by income situation in relation to the risk of poverty threshold**

Year			
	Below 60% of median equivalised income	Above 60% of median equivalised income	Total
2010	1.2	0.4	0.6
2011	1.4	0.5	0.7
2012	0.5	0.3	0.3
2013	1.3	0.5	0.7
2014	0.6	0.5	0.5
2015	0.7	0.3	0.4
2016	0.3	0.2	0.2
2017	0.4	0.2	0.2
2018	0.6	0.1	0.2

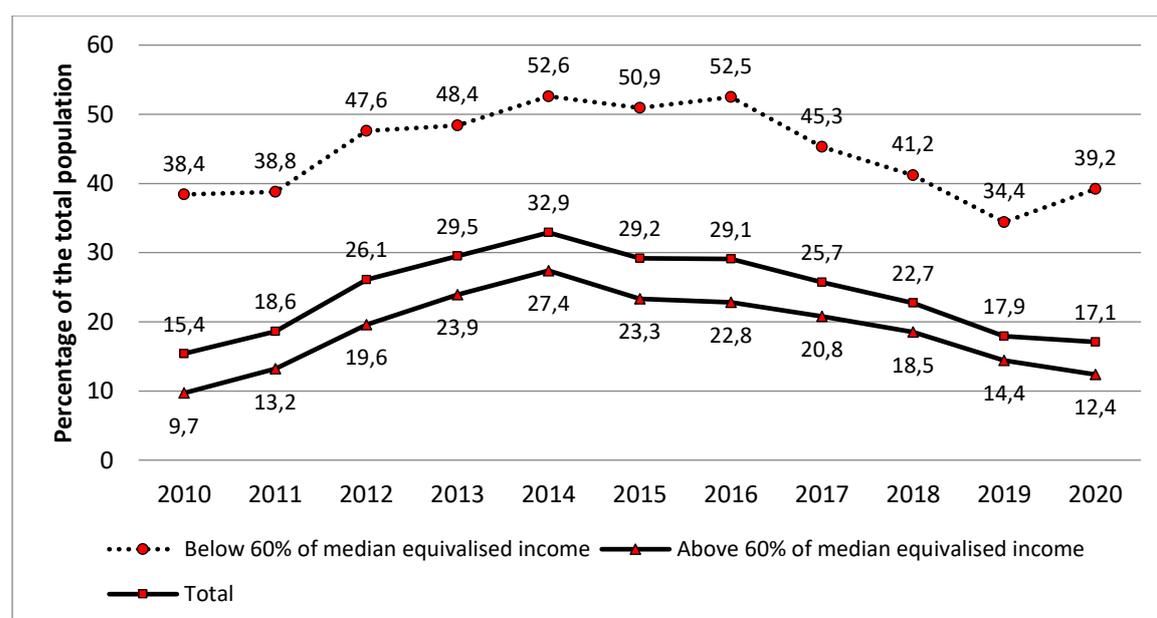
<b>2019</b>	0.6	0.1	0.2
<b>2020</b>	0.5	0.1	0.1

## Population unable to keep home adequately warm by poverty status

(This indicator is also included in the SDG 7: Affordable and clean energy)

Indicator measures the share of population who are in the state of enforced inability to keep home adequately warm. Data for this indicator are being collected as part of the European Union Statistics on Income and Living Conditions (EU-SILC) to monitor the development of poverty and social inclusion in the EU. The data collection is based on a survey, which means that indicator values are self-reported.

**Figure 5: Percentage (%) of people unable to keep their home adequately warm by income situation in relation to the risk of poverty threshold**



**Table 5: Percentage of people unable to keep their home adequately warm by income situation in relation to the risk of poverty threshold**

Year	Below 60% of median equivalised income	Above 60% of median equivalised income	Total
2010	38.4	9.7	15.4
2011	38.8	13.2	18.6
2012	47.6	19.6	26.1
2013	48.4	23.9	29.5
2014	52.6	27.4	32.9

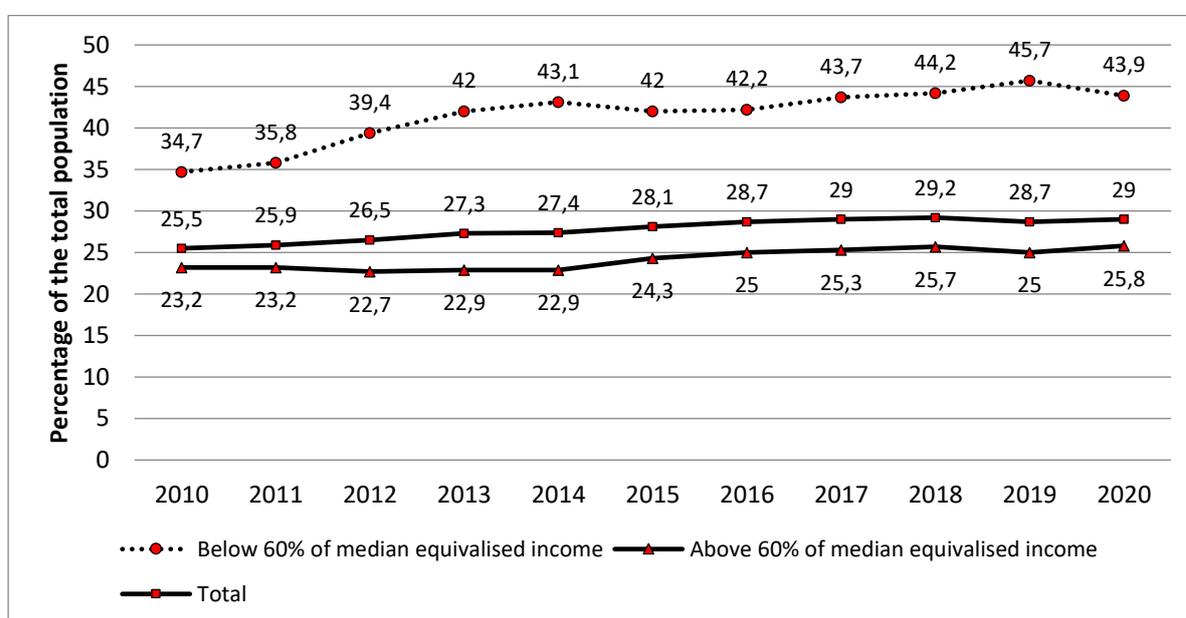
<b>2015</b>	50.9	23.3	29.2
<b>2016</b>	52.5	22.8	29.1
<b>2017</b>	45.3	20.8	25.7
<b>2018</b>	41.2	18.5	22.7
<b>2019</b>	34.4	14.4	17.9
<b>2020</b>	39.2	12.4	17.1

## Overcrowding rate by poverty status

(This indicator is also in the in the SDG 11: Sustainable cities and communities)

The indicator measures the share of people living in overcrowded conditions in the EU. A person is considered to be living in an overcrowded household if the house does not have at least one room for the entire household as well as a room for a couple, for each single person above 18, for a pair of teenagers (12 to 17 years of age) of the same sex, for each teenager of different sex and for a pair of children (under 12 years of age).

**Figure 6: Percentage (%) of people living in overcrowded household by income situation in relation to the risk of poverty threshold**



**Table 6: Percentage of people living in overcrowded household by income situation in relation to the risk of poverty threshold**

Year			
	Below 60% of median equivalised income	Above 60% of median equivalised income	Total
2010	34.7	23.2	25.5
2011	35.8	23.2	25.9
2012	39.4	22.7	26.5
2013	42	22.9	27.3
2014	43.1	22.9	27.4
2015	42	24.3	28.1
2016	42.2	25.0	28.7
2017	43.7	25.3	29.0
2018	44.2	25.7	29.2

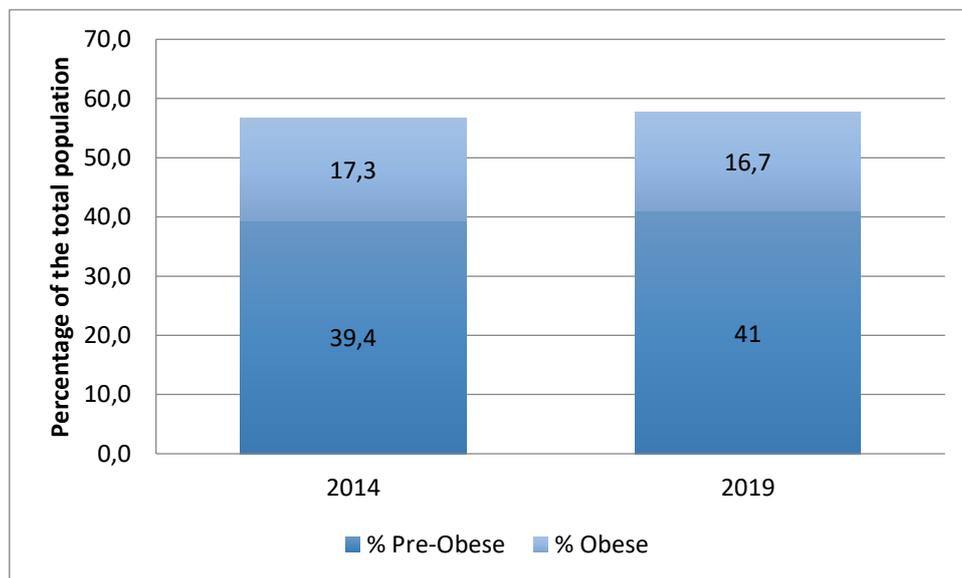
<b>2019</b>	45.7	25.0	28.7
<b>2020</b>	43.9	25.8	29.0

# SDG 2. Zero hunger

## Obesity rate by body mass index (BMI)

The indicator measures the share of obese people based on their body mass index (BMI). BMI is defined as the weight in kilos divided by the square of the height in meters. People aged 18 years or over are considered obese with a BMI equal or greater than 30. Other categories are: underweight (BMI less than 18.5), normal weight (BMI between 18.5 and less than 25), and pre-obese (BMI between 25 and less than 30). The category overweight (BMI equal or greater than 25) combines the two categories pre-obese and obese.

**Figure7: Percentage (%) of pre-Obese and Obese people**



**Table7: Percentage pre-Obese and Obese people**

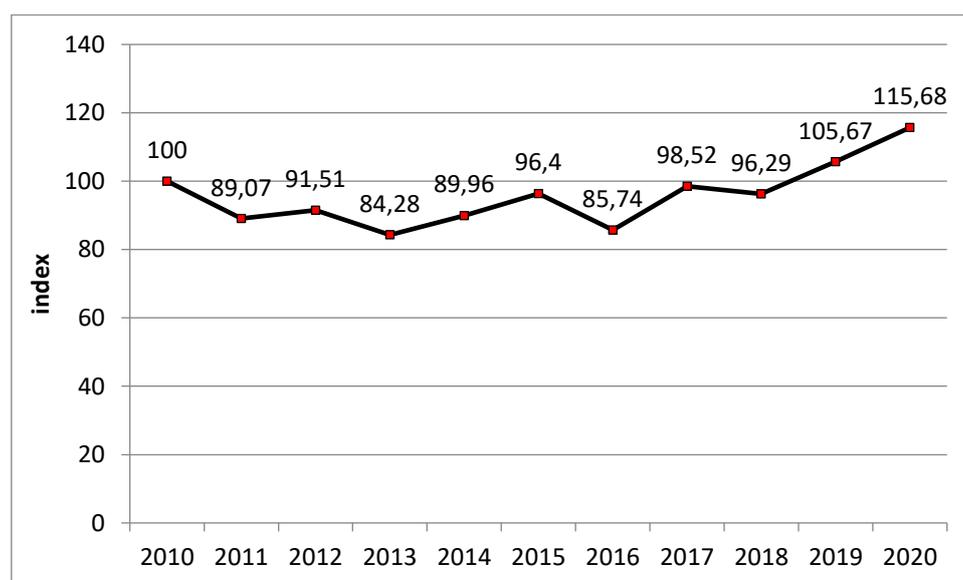
Year	% Pre-Obese	% Obese	% Overweight
2014	39.4	17.3	56.7
2019	41.0	16.7	57.6

## Agricultural factor income per annual work unit (AWU)

The indicator is an important measure of the productivity of the agricultural sector. Agricultural factor income measures the income generated by farming, which is used to remunerate borrowed or rented factors of production (capital, wages and land rents) as well as own production factors (own labour, capital and land). Factor income corresponds to the deflated (real) net value added at factor cost of agriculture. The implicit price index of GDP is used as deflator.

Annual work units (AWUs) are defined as full-time equivalent employment (corresponding to the number of full-time equivalent jobs), i.e. as total hours worked divided by the average annual number of hours worked in full-time jobs within the economic territory

**Figure 8: Index of the real income of factors in agriculture per annual work unit (2010=100)**



**Table 8: Index of the real income of factors in agriculture per annual work unit**

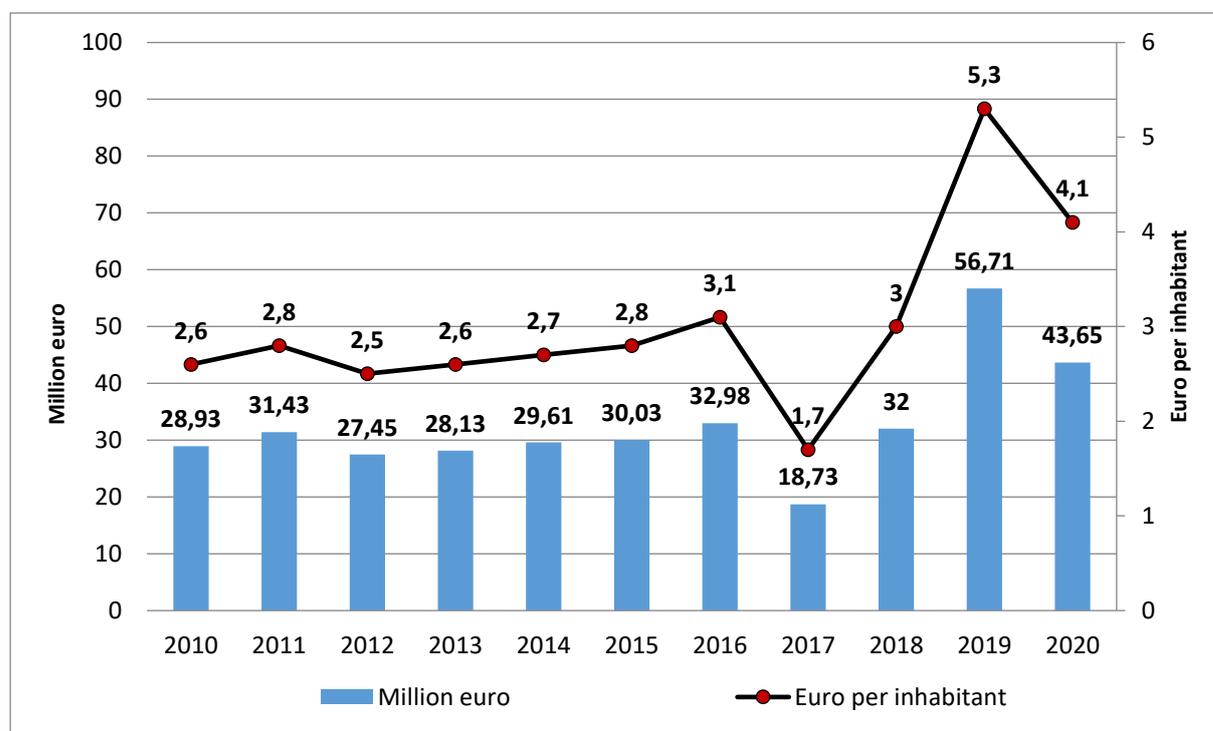
Year	Index of the real income of factors in agriculture per annual work unit
2010	100
2011	89.07
2012	91.51
2013	84.28
2014	89.96
2015	96.40
2016	85.74

2017	98.52
2018	96.29
2019	105.67
2020	115.68

## Government support to agricultural research and development

The indicator refers to Government Budget Appropriations or Outlays on R&D (GBAORD). GBAORD data measure government support to research and development (R&D) activities, or, in other words, how much priority governments place on the public funding of R&D. GBAORD data are built up using the guidelines laid out in the proposed standard practice for surveys of research and experimental development, the OECD's Frascati Manual from 2002. GBAORD data are broken down by socio-economic objectives in accordance to the nomenclature for the analysis and comparison of scientific programmes and budgets (NABS 2007).

**Figure 9: Government support to agriculture research and development in euro per inhabitant**



**Table 9: Government support to agriculture research and development in euro per inhabitant and in million euro**

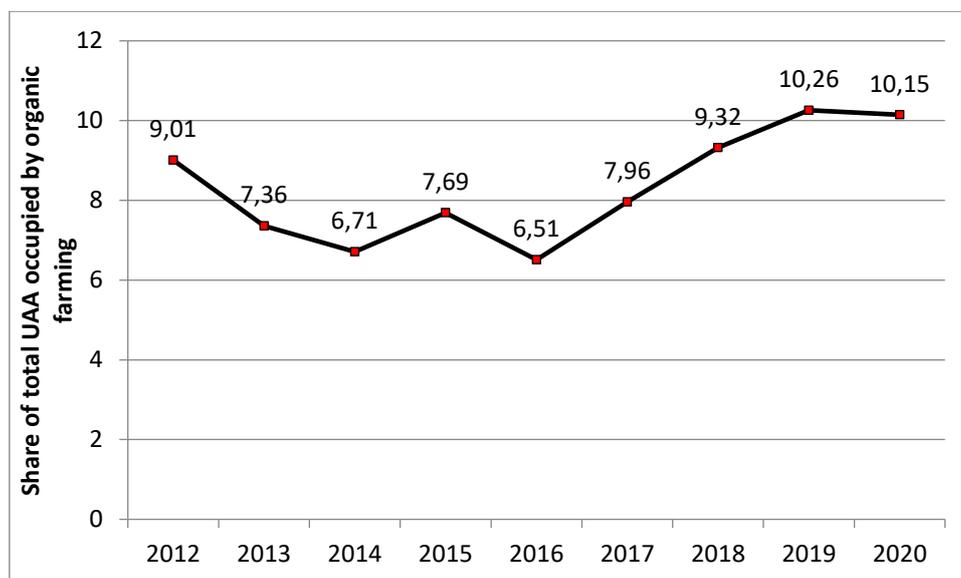
Year	Euro per inhabitant	Millioneuro
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2010	2.6	28.93
2011	2.8	31.43
2012	2.5	27.45
2013	2.6	28.13
2014	2.7	29.61
2015	2.8	30.03
2016	3.1	32.98
2017	1.7	18.73
2018	3	32.0
2019	5.3	56.71
2020	4.1	43.65

## Area under organic farming

The indicator is defined as the share of total utilized agricultural area (UAA) occupied by organic farming (existing organically-farmed areas and areas in process of conversion).

**Figure 10: Percentage of UUA under organic farming by agricultural production methods**



**Table 10: Percentage of UUA under organic farming by agricultural production methods**

Year	Total fully converted and under conversion to organic farming
2012	9.01
2013	7.36

<b>2014</b>	6.71
<b>2015</b>	7.69
<b>2016</b>	6.51
<b>2017</b>	7.96
<b>2018</b>	9.32
<b>2019</b>	10.26
<b>2020</b>	10.15

# SDG 3. Good health and well-being

## Healthy life years at birth by sex

Healthy life years (HLY) is defined as the number of remaining years that a person of specific age is expected to live without any severe or moderate health problems. The notion of health problem is reflecting a disability dimension and is based on a self-perceived question which aims to measure the extent of any limitations, for at least six months, because of a health problem that may have affected respondents as regards activities they usually do (the so-called GALI - Global Activity Limitation Instrument foreseen in the annual EU-SILC survey). An increase in healthy life years would not only improve the situation of individuals, but also result in lower levels of public health care expenditure. If healthy life years are increasing more rapidly than life expectancy, it means that people are living more years in better health.

Figure 11: Healthy life years at birth by sex

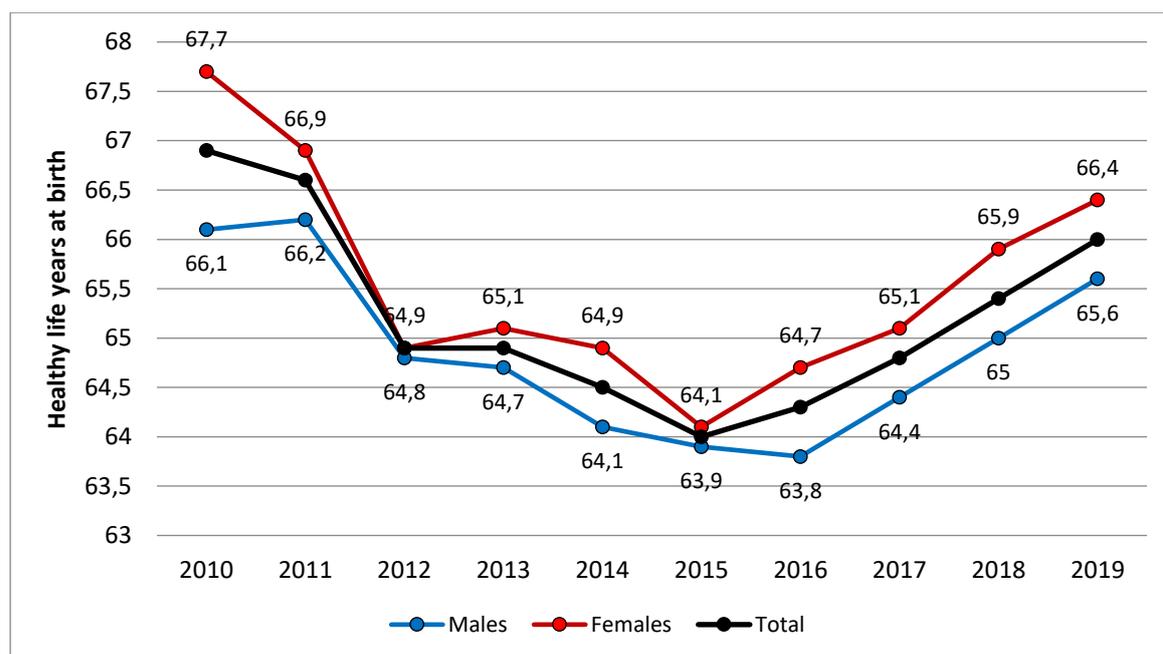


Table 11: Healthy life years at birth by sex

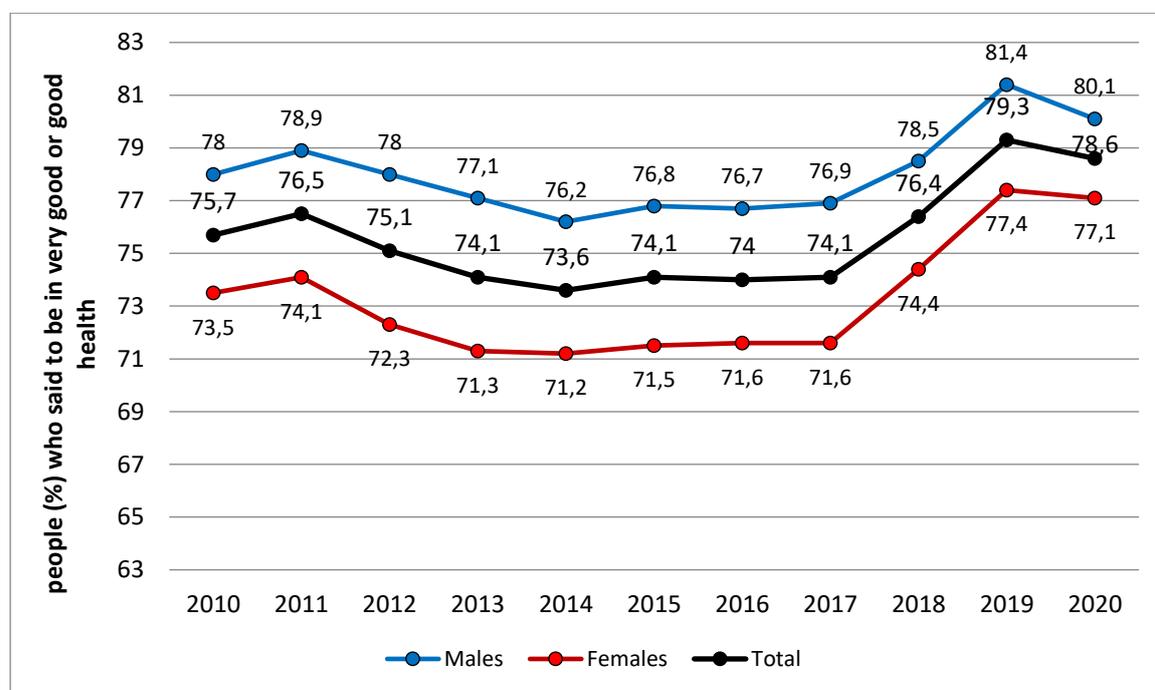
Year	Total	Males	Females
2010	66.9	66.1	67.7
2011	66.6	66.2	66.9
2012	64.9	64.8	64.9
2013	64.9	64.7	65.1
2014	64.5	64.1	64.9
2015	64.0	63.9	64.1

<b>2016</b>	64.3	63.8	64.7
<b>2017</b>	64.8	64.4	65.1
<b>2018</b>	65.4	65.0	65.9
<b>2019</b>	66.0	65.6	66.4

## Self-perceived health by level of perception

The indicator is a subjective measure on how people judge their health in general on a scale from 'very good' to 'very bad'. It is expressed as the share of the population aged 16 or over perceiving itself to be in "good" or "very good" health. The data stem from the Survey on Income and Living Conditions (SILC).

**Figure 12: Self-perceived health: people (%) who said to be in very good or good health by sex**



**Table 12: Self-perceived health: people (%) who said to be in very good or good health by sex**

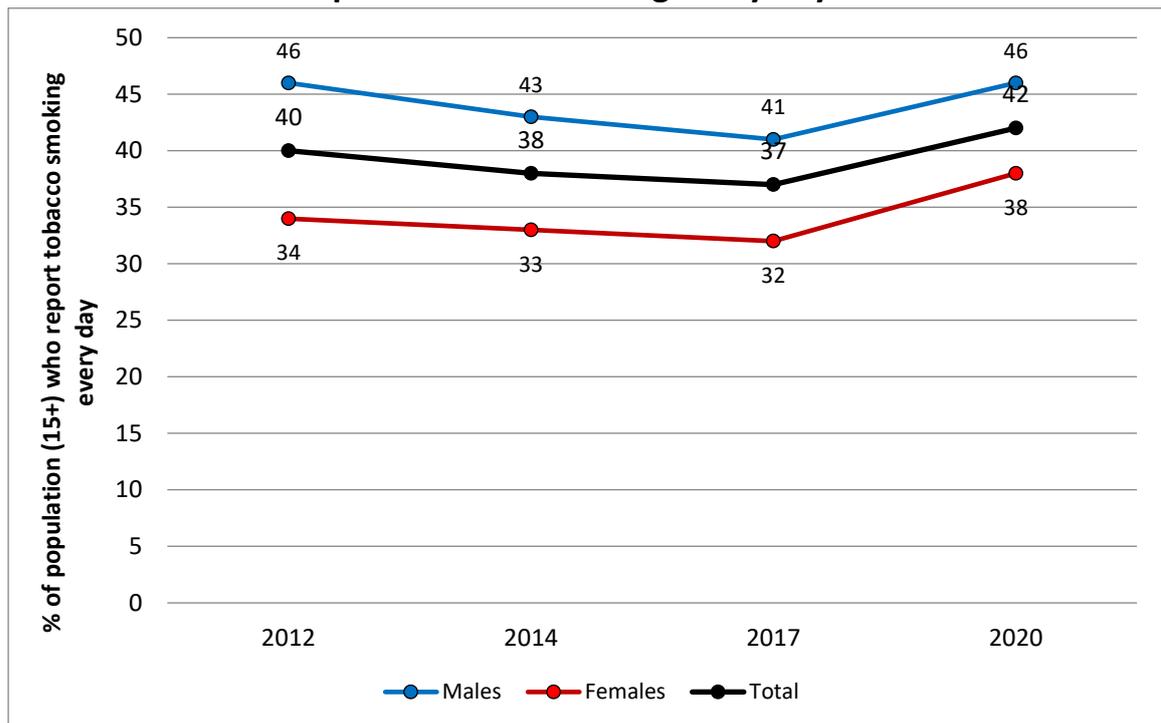
Year	Total	Males	Females
<b>2010</b>	75.7	78.0	73.5
<b>2011</b>	76.5	78.9	74.1
<b>2012</b>	75.1	78.0	72.3
<b>2013</b>	74.1	77.1	71.3
<b>2014</b>	73.6	76.2	71.2
<b>2015</b>	74.1	76.8	71.5

<b>2016</b>	74.0	76.7	71.6
<b>2017</b>	74.1	76.9	71.6
<b>2018</b>	76.4	78.5	74.4
<b>2019</b>	79.3	81.4	77.4
<b>2020</b>	78.6	80.1	77.1

## Smoking prevalence

The indicator measures the percentage of the population aged 15 years and over who report tobacco smoking every day. Estimates based on self-reports of daily smoking. The general coverage of the survey is the population aged 15 or over living in private households residing in the territory of the country.

**Figure 13: Percentage of the population aged 15 years and over who report tobacco smoking every day**



**Table 13: Percentage of the population aged 15 years and over who report tobacco smoking every day**

Year	Total	Males	Females
<b>2012</b>	40	46	34
<b>2014</b>	38	43	33
<b>2017</b>	37	41	32

<b>2020</b>	42	46	38
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## Standardised death rate due to tuberculosis, HIV and hepatitis by type of disease

The indicator measures the standardised death rate of tuberculosis, HIV and hepatitis (International Classification of Diseases (ICD) codes A15-A19\_B90, B15-B19\_B942 and B20-B24). The rate is calculated by dividing the number of people dying due to selected communicable diseases by the total population

Figure 14: Standardised death rate due to tuberculosis, HIV and hepatitis by type of disease

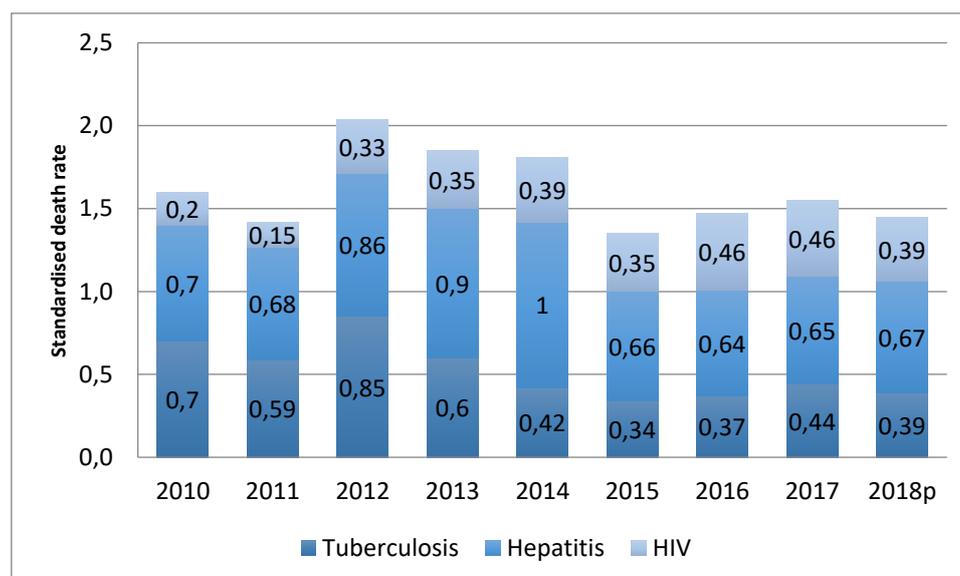


Table 14: Standardised death rate due to tuberculosis, HIV and hepatitis by type of disease

Year	Total	Tuberculosis	Hepatitis	HIV
2010	1.60	0.70	0.70	0.20
2011	1.42	0.59	0.68	0.15
2012	2.04	0.85	0.86	0.33
2013	1.85	0.60	0.90	0.35
2014	1.81	0.42	1.00	0.39
2015	1.35	0.34	0.66	0.35
2016	1.47	0.37	0.64	0.46
2017	1.55	0.44	0.65	0.46
2018 <sup>p</sup>	1.45	0.39	0.67	0.39

*p: provisional*

## Obesity rate by body mass index (BMI)

(This indicator has been covered in SDG 2: Zero hunger)

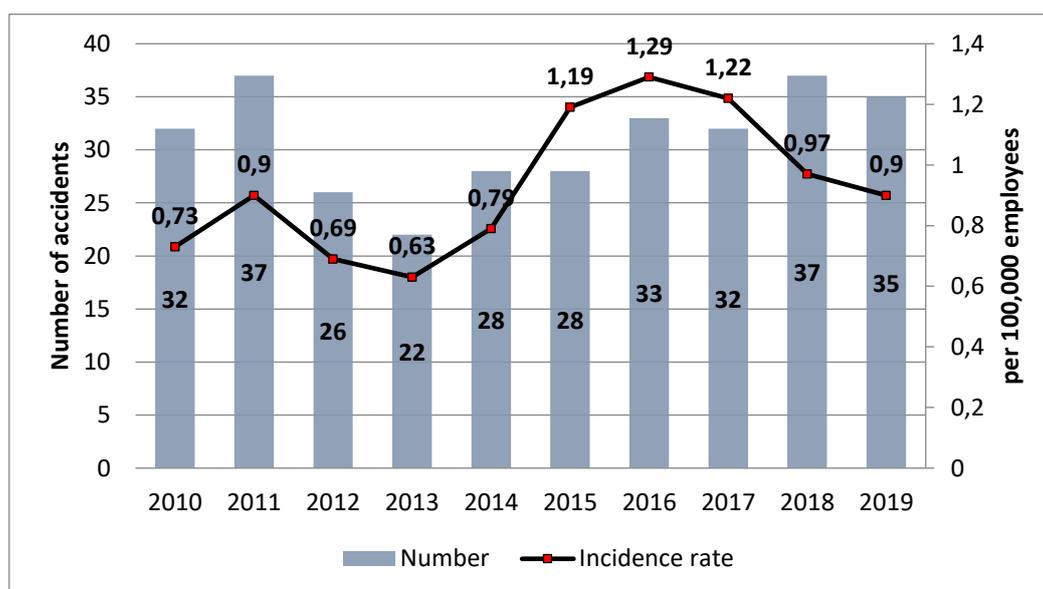


## People killed in accidents at work

*(This indicator is also included in the SDG 8: Decent work and economic growth)*

The indicator measures the number of fatal accidents that occur during the course of work and lead to the death of the victim within one year of the accident. The incidence rate refers to the number of fatal accidents per 100,000 persons in employment. An accident at work is 'a discrete occurrence in the course of work which leads to physical or mental harm'. This includes all accidents in the course of work, whether they happen inside or outside the premises of the employer, accidents in public places or different means of transport during a journey in the course of the work (commuting accidents are excluded) and at home (such as during teleworking). It also includes cases of acute poisoning and wilful acts of other persons, if these happened during the course of the work.

**Figure 15: Number and incidence rate of fatal accidents at work**



**Table 15: Number and incidence rate of fatal accidents at work**

Year	Number	Incidence rate
2010	32	0.73
2011	37	0.90
2012	26	0.69
2013	22	0.63
2014	28	0.79
2015	28	1.19
2016	33	1.29
2017	32	1.22
2018	37	0.97

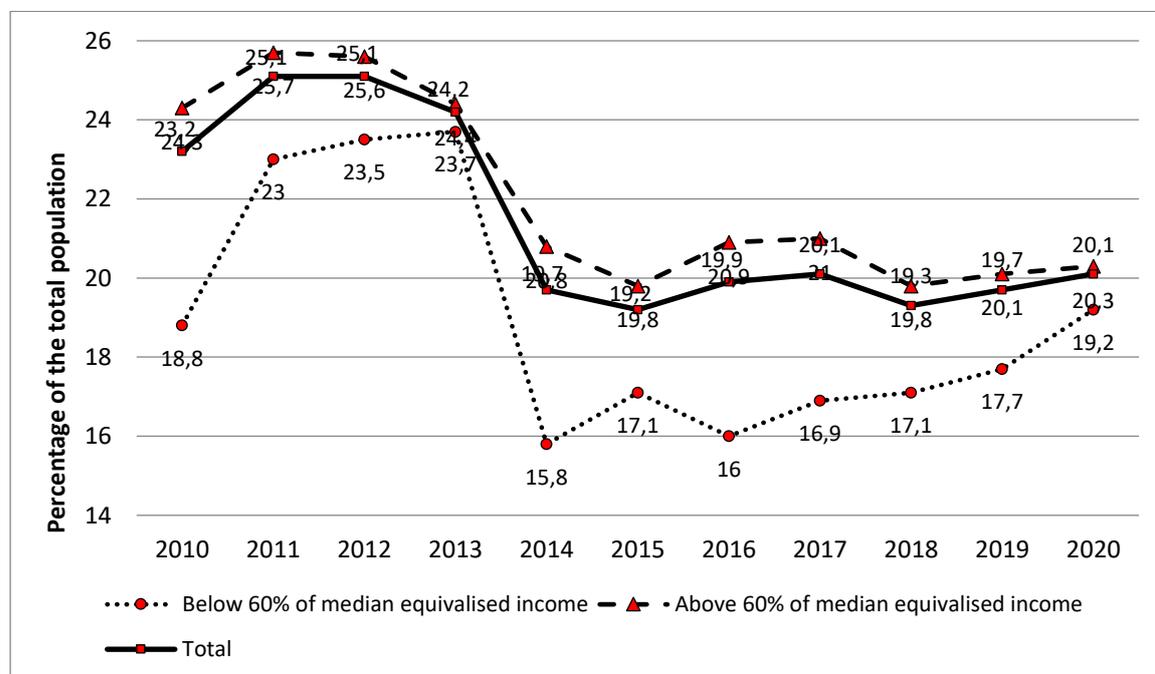
2019	35	0.90
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## Population living in households considering that they suffer from noise, by poverty status

(This indicator is also included in the SDG 11: Sustainable cities and communities)

The indicator measures the proportion of the population who declare that they are affected either by noise from neighbours or from the street.

**Figure 16: Percentage (%) of people living in households suffering from noise by poverty status**



**Table 16: Percentage (%) of people living in households suffering from noise and by poverty status**

Year			
	Below 60% of median equivalised income	Above 60% of median equivalised income	Total
2010	18.8	24.3	23.2
2011	23.0	25.7	25.1
2012	23.5	25.6	25.1
2013	23.7	24.4	24.2
2014	15.8	20.8	19.7
2015	17.1	19.8	19.2
2016	16.0	20.9	19.9
2017	16.9	21.0	20.1

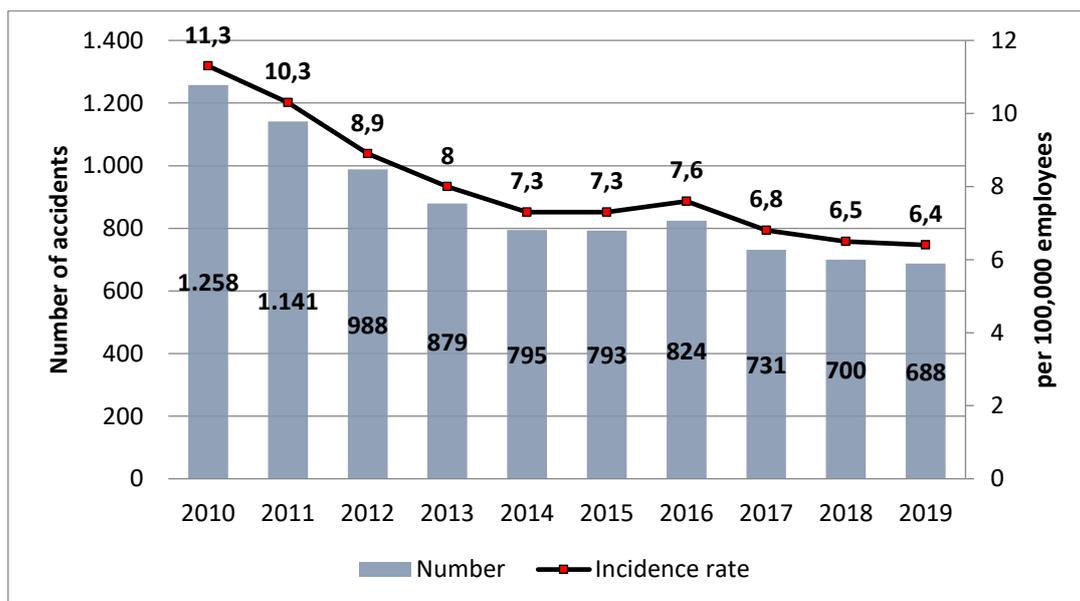
<b>2018</b>	17.1	19.8	19.3
<b>2019</b>	17.7	20.1	19.7
<b>2020</b>	19.2	20.3	20.1

## People killed in road accidents

*(This indicator is also included in the SDG 11: Sustainable cities and communities)*

The indicator measures the number of fatalities caused by road accidents, including drivers and passengers of motorised vehicles and pedal cycles as well as pedestrians. Persons dying on road accidents up to 30 days after the occurrence of the accident are counted as road accident fatalities. After these 30 days, the reason for dying might be declared differently.

**Figure 17: Number and incidence rate of road accidents**



**Table 17: Number and incidence rate of road accidents**

Year	Number	Incidence rate
<b>2010</b>	1,258	11.3
<b>2011</b>	1,141	10.3
<b>2012</b>	988	8.9
<b>2013</b>	879	8.0
<b>2014</b>	795	7.3
<b>2015</b>	793	7.3

2016	824	7.6
2017	731	6.8
2018	700	6.5
2019	688	6.4

### Exposure to air pollution by particulate matter

This indicator is covered in SDG 11: Sustainable cities and communities

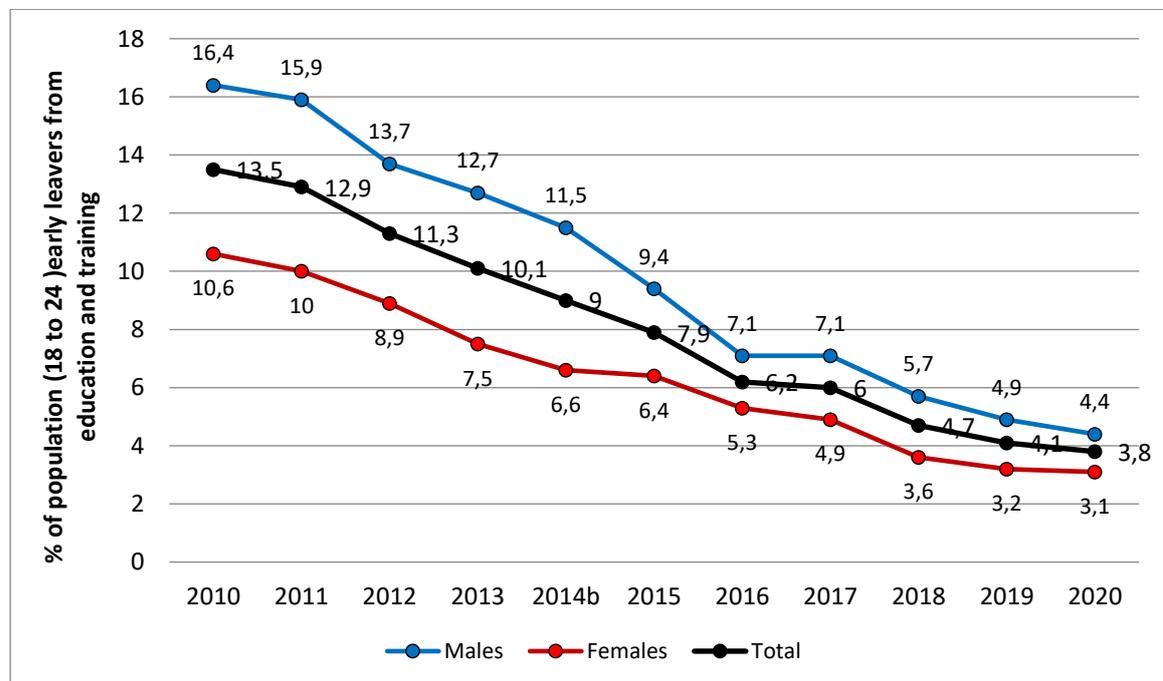
## SDG 4. Quality education

### Early leavers from education and training by sex

(This indicator is also included in SDG 5: Gender equality)

The indicator measures the share of the population aged 18 to 24 with at most lower secondary education who was not involved in any education or training during the four weeks preceding the survey. Data stem from the Labour Force Survey (LFS).

**Figure 18: Percentage (%) of the population aged 18 to 24 early leavers from education and training by sex**



**Table 18: Percentage of the population aged 18 to 24 early leavers from education and training by sex**

Year	Total	Males	Females
2010	13.5	16.4	10.6

<b>2011</b>	12.9	15.9	10.0
<b>2012</b>	11.3	13.7	8.9
<b>2013</b>	10.1	12.7	7.5
<b>2014<sup>b</sup></b>	9.0	11.5	6.6
<b>2015</b>	7.9	9.4	6.4
<b>2016</b>	6.2	7.1	5.3
<b>2017</b>	6.0	7.1	4.9
<b>2018</b>	4.7	5.7	3.6
<b>2019</b>	4.1	4.9	3.2
<b>2020</b>	3.8	4.4	3.1

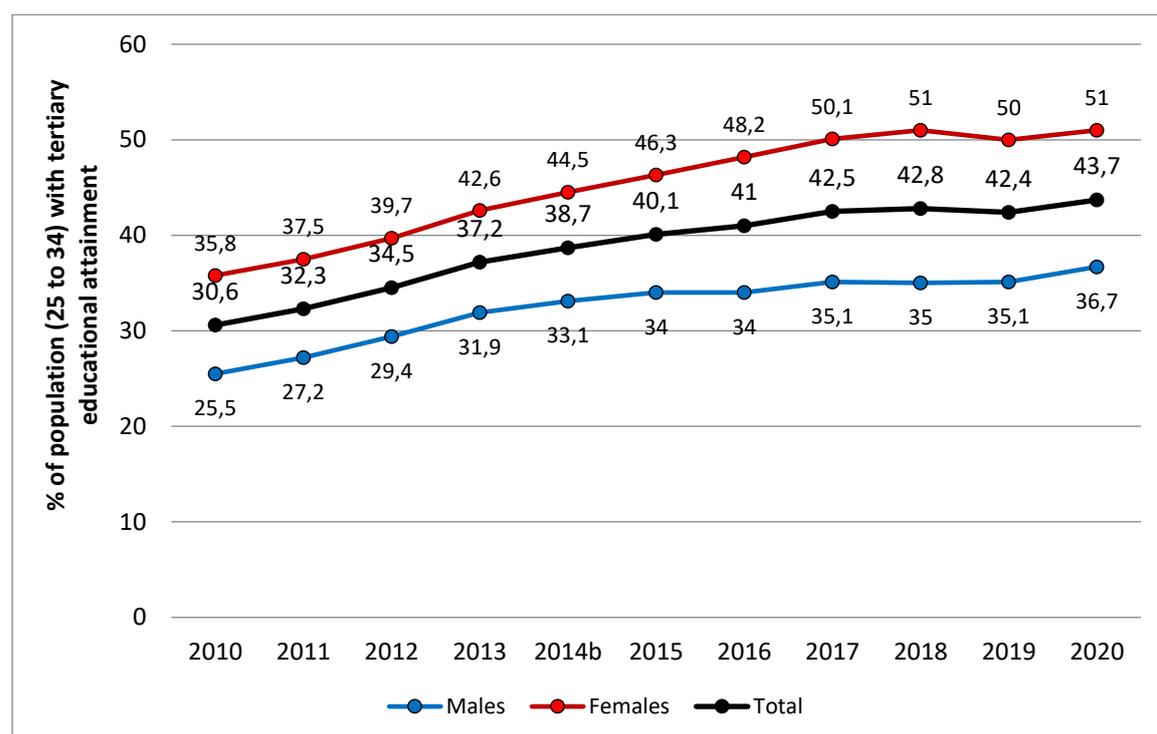
b: break in time series

## Tertiary educational attainment by sex

(This indicator is also included in SDG 5: Gender equality)

The indicator measures the share of the population aged 25-34 who have successfully completed tertiary studies (e.g. University, Higher Technical Institution, etc.). The indicator is based on the Labour Force Survey (LFS).

**Figure 19: Percentage of people aged 25 to 34 with tertiary educational attainment by sex**



**Table 19: Percentage of people aged 25 to 34 with tertiary educational attainment in total and by sex**

Year	Total	Males	Females
2010	30.6	25.5	35.8
2011	32.3	27.2	37.5
2012	34.5	29.4	39.7
2013	37.2	31.9	42.6
2014 <sup>b</sup>	38.7	33.1	44.5
2015	40.1	34.0	46.3
2016	41.0	34.0	48.2
2017	42.5	35.1	50.1
2018	42.8	35.0	51.0
2019	42.4	35.1	50.0
2020	43.7	36.7	51.0

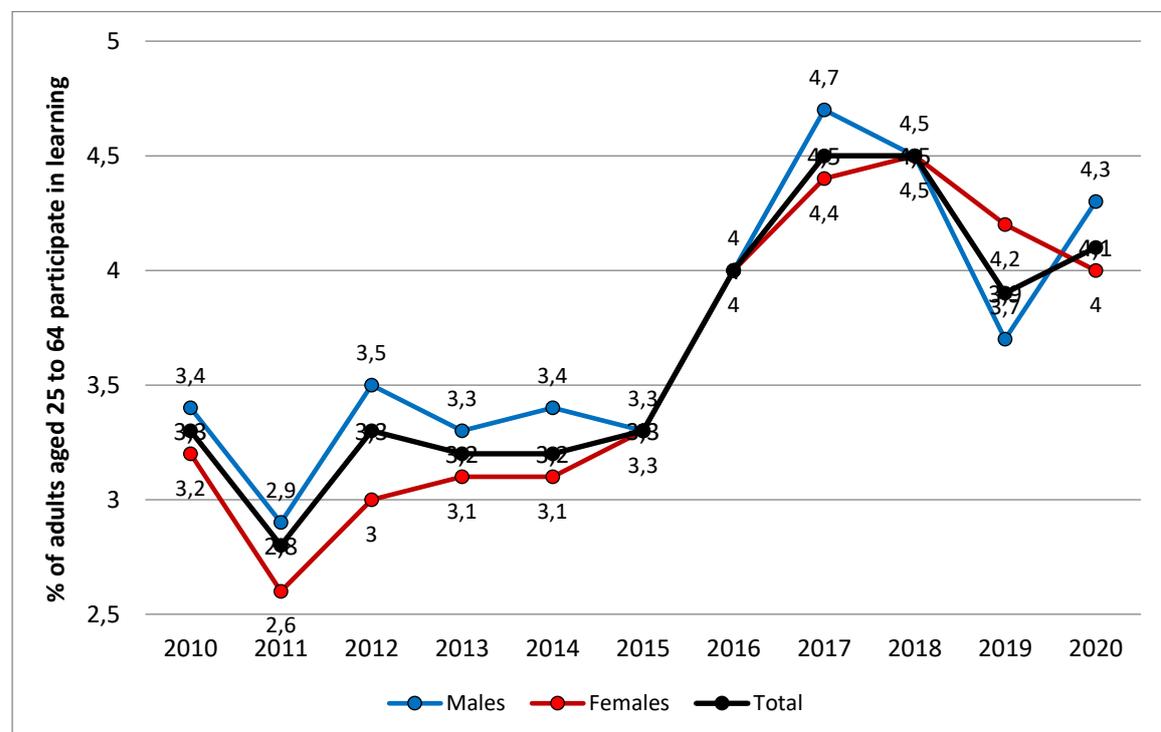
b: break in time series



## Adult participation in learning by sex

The indicator measures the share of people aged 25 to 64 who stated that they received formal or non-formal education and training in the four weeks preceding the survey. The denominator consists of the total population of the same age group. Adult learning covers formal and non-formal learning activities (both general and vocational) undertaken by adults after leaving initial education and training. Data stem from the Labour Force Survey (LFS).

**Figure20: Percentage (%) of adults aged 25 to 64 participate in learning by sex**



**Table20: Percentage of adults aged 25 to 64 participate in learning in total and by sex**

Year	Total	Males	Females
2010	3.3	3.4	3.2
2011	2.8	2.9	2.6
2012	3.3	3.5	3.0
2013	3.2	3.3	3.1
2014	3.2	3.4	3.1
2015	3.3	3.3	3.3
2016	4.0	4.0	4.0
2017	4.5	4.7	4.4
2018	4.5	4.5	4.5

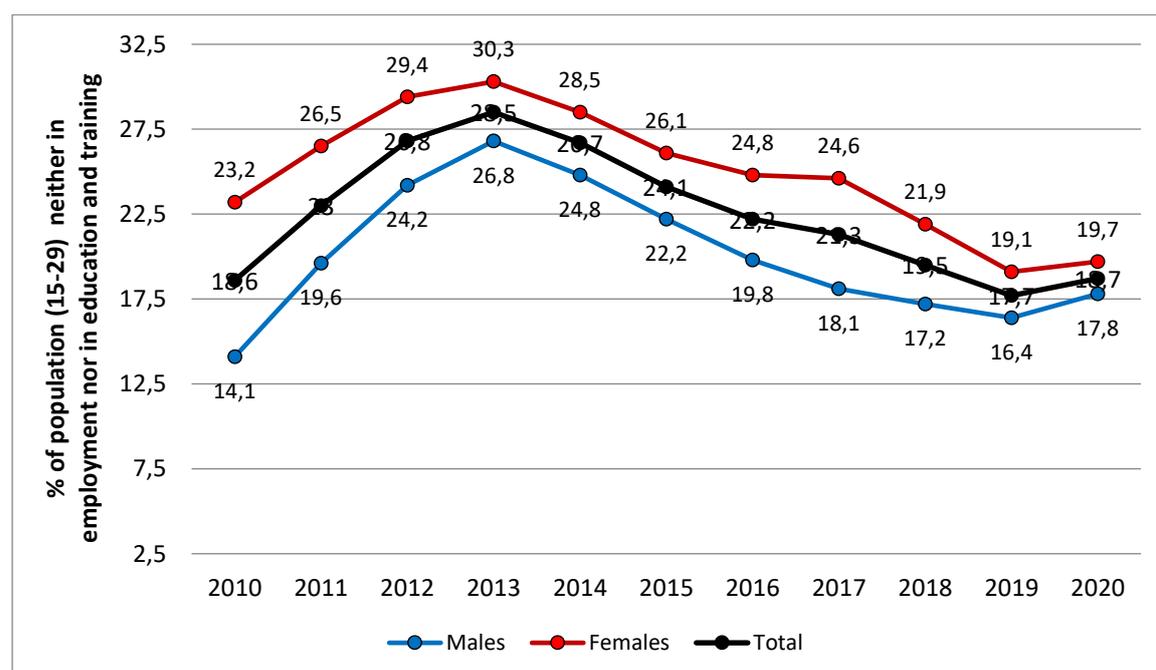
<b>2019</b>	3.9	3.7	4.2
<b>2020</b>	4.1	4.3	4.0

## Young people neither in employment nor in education and training by sex

(This indicator is also included in the SDG 8: Decent work and economic growth)

The indicator measures the share of the population aged 15 to 29 who is not employed and not involved in education or training. The numerator of the indicator refers to persons who meet the following two conditions: (a) they are not employed (i.e. unemployed or inactive according to the International Labour Organisation definition) and (b) they have not received any education or training (i.e. neither formal nor non-formal) in the four weeks preceding the Labour Force Survey (LFS). The denominator includes the total population aged 15 to 29 (excluding those who did not answer the questions on 'participation in regular (formal) education and training').

**Figure 21: Percentage of population aged 15 to 29 years neither in employment nor in education and training (NEET) by sex**



**Table 21: Percentage of population aged 15 to 29 years neither in employment nor in education and training in total and by sex**

Year	Total	Males	Females
2010	18.6	14.1	23.2
2011	23.0	19.6	26.5
2012	26.8	24.2	29.4
2013	28.5	26.8	30.3
2014	26.7	24.8	28.5

<b>2015</b>	24.1	22.2	26.1
<b>2016</b>	22.2	19.8	24.8
<b>2017</b>	21.3	18.1	24.6
<b>2018</b>	19.5	17.2	21.9
<b>2019</b>	17.7	16.4	19.1
<b>2020</b>	18.7	17.8	19.7

## 5. Gender equality

### Gender pay gap in unadjusted form

The indicator measures the difference between average gross hourly earnings of male paid employees and of female paid employees as a percentage of average gross hourly earnings of male paid employees. The indicator has been defined as unadjusted, because it gives an overall picture of gender inequalities in terms of pay and measures a concept which is broader than the concept of equal pay for equal work. All employees working in firms with ten or more employees, without restrictions for age and hours worked, are included.

Figure 22: Difference between average gross hourly earnings of males and females employees

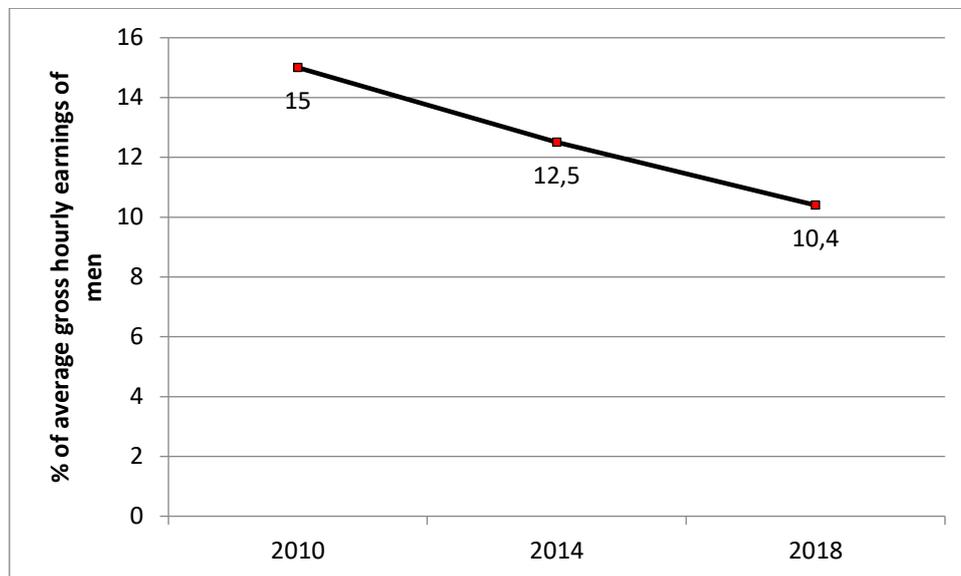


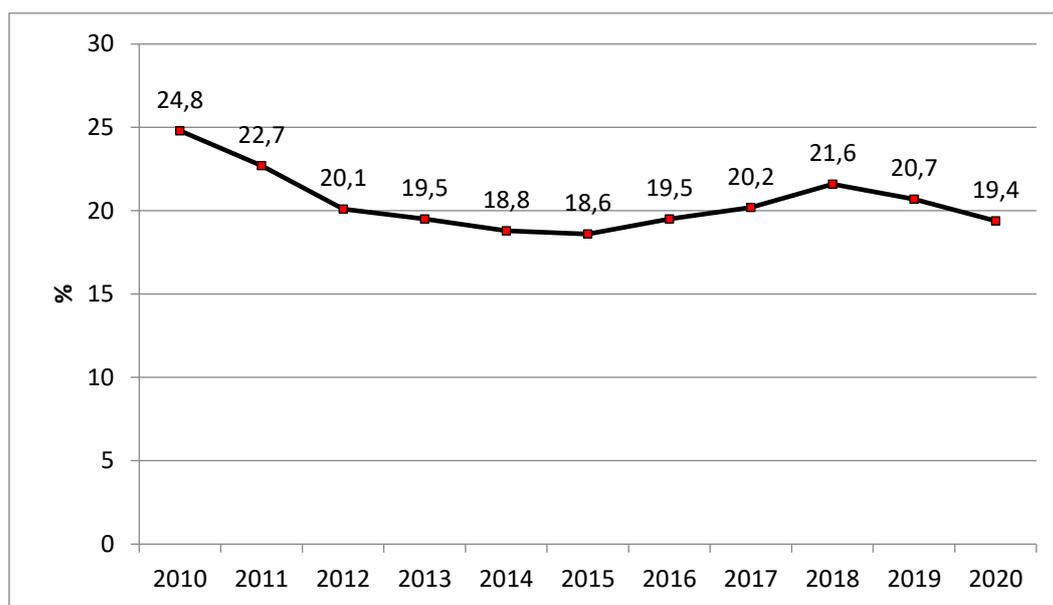
Table 22: Difference between average gross hourly earnings of males and females employees

	<b>2010</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2018</b>
<b>% of average gross hourly earnings of men</b>	15.0	12.5	10.4

## Gender employment gap

The indicator measures the difference between the employment rates of men and women aged 20 to 64. The employment rate is calculated by dividing the number of persons aged 20 to 64 in employment by the total population of the same age group. The indicator is based on the Labour Force Survey (LFS).

**Figure 23: Gender Employment Gap - Difference between employees and employment rates of men and women aged 20 to 64**



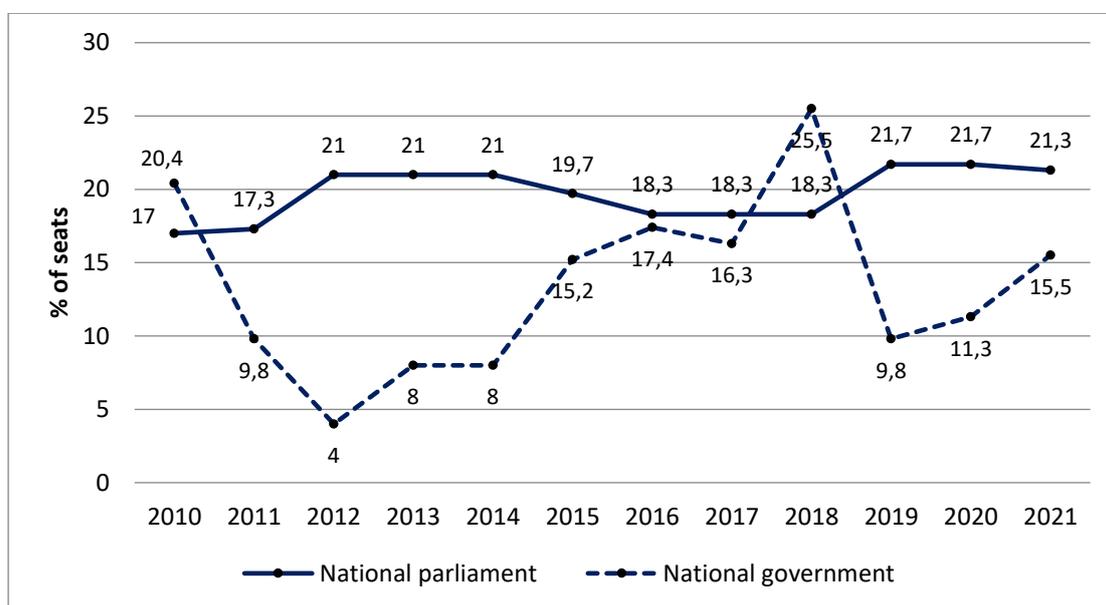
**Table 23: Gender Employment Gap - Difference between employees and employment rates of men and women aged 20 to 64**

Year	Percentage (%)
2010	24.8
2011	22.7
2012	20.1
2013	19.5
2014	18.8
2015	18.6
2016	19.5
2017	20.2
2018	21.6
2019	20.7
2020	19.4

## Seats held by women in national parliaments and governments

The indicator measures the proportion of women in national parliaments and national governments. The national parliament is the national legislative assembly. The national government is the executive body with authority to govern a country or a state. Members of government include both senior ministers (having a seat in the cabinet or council of ministers, including the prime minister) and junior ministers.

**Figure 24: Percentage (%) of seats held by women in national parliaments and national governments**



**Table 24: Percentage of seats held by women in national parliaments and national governments**

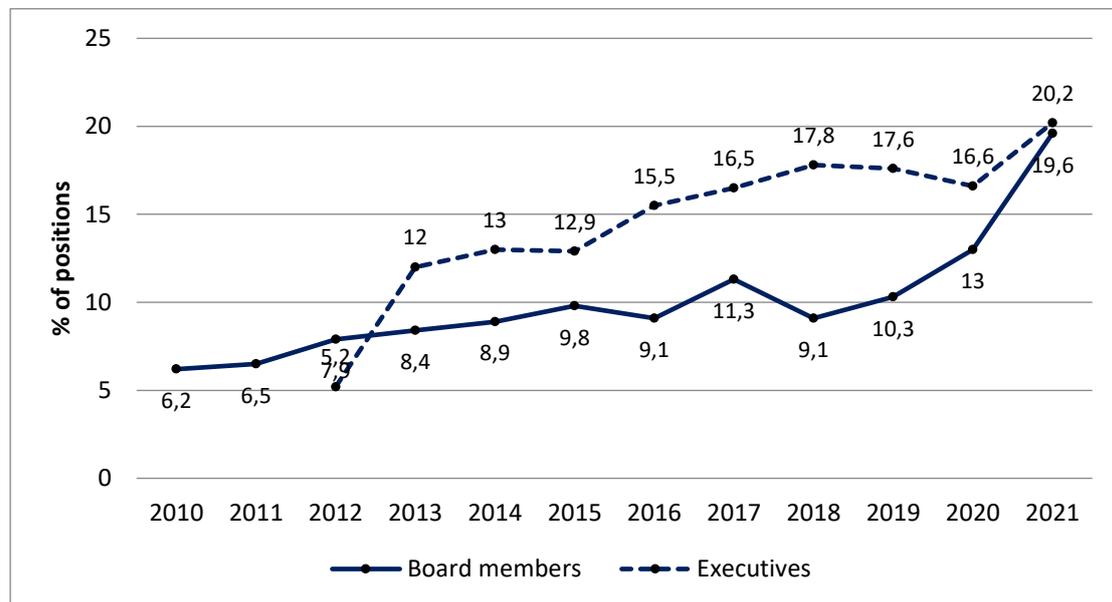
Year	National parliament	National government
2010	17.0	20.4
2011	17.3	9.8
2012	21.0	4.0
2013	21.0	8.0
2014	21.0	8.0
2015	19.7	15.2
2016	18.3	17.4
2017	18.3	16.3
2018	18.3	25.5
2019	21.7	9.8
2020	21.7	11.3

2021	21.3	15.5
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## Positions held by women in senior management positions

The indicator measures the share of female board members in the largest publicly listed companies. Publicly listed means that the shares of the company are traded on the stock exchange. Only companies which are registered in the country concerned are counted. Board members cover all members of the highest decision-making body in each company (i.e. chairperson, non-executive directors, senior executives and employee representatives, where present). The highest decision-making body is usually termed the supervisory board (in case of a two-tier governance system) or the board of directors (in a unitary system).

**Figure 25: Percentage (%) of women in senior management positions**



**Table 25: Percentage of women in senior management positions**

Year	Board members	Executives
2010	6.2	N/A
2011	6.5	N/A

<b>2012</b>	7.9	5.2
<b>2013</b>	8.4	12
<b>2014</b>	8.9	13
<b>2015</b>	9.8	12.9
<b>2016</b>	9.1	15.5
<b>2017</b>	11.3	16.5
<b>2018</b>	9.1	17.8
<b>2019</b>	10.3	17.6
<b>2020</b>	13.0	16.6
<b>2021</b>	19.6	20.2

## **Early leavers from education and training by sex**

*This indicator has been covered in SDG 4: Quality education*

## **Tertiary educational attainment by sex**

*This indicator has been covered in SDG 4: Quality education*

## SDG 6. Clean water and sanitation

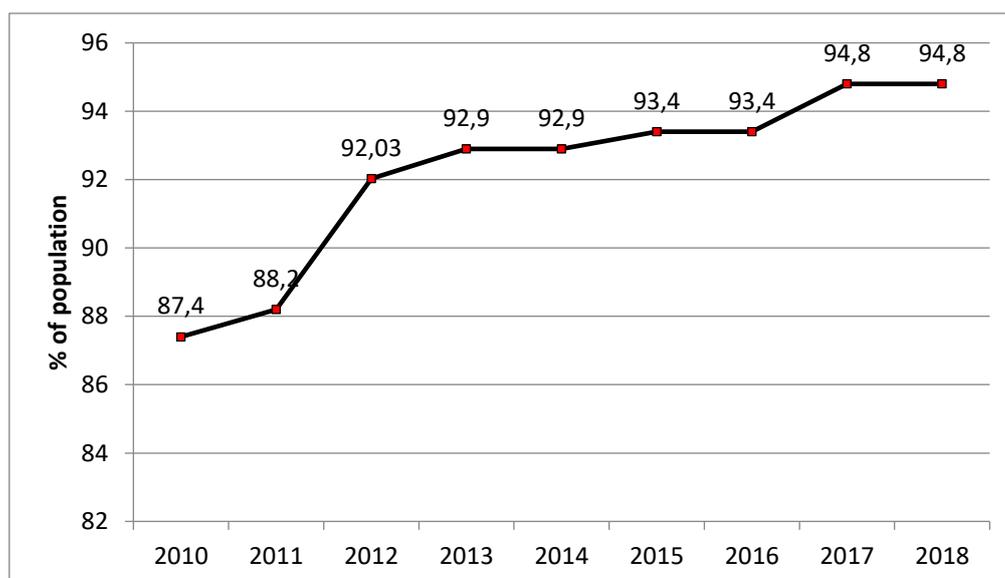
### Population having neither a bath, nor a shower, nor indoor flushing toilet in their household by poverty status

The indicator has been covered in SDG 1: Poverty

### Population connected to at least secondary wastewater treatment

The indicator measures the percentage of population connected to wastewater treatment systems with at least secondary treatment. Thereby, wastewater from urban sources or elsewhere is treated by a process generally involving biological treatment with a secondary settlement or other process, resulting in a removal of organic material that reduces the biochemical oxygen demand (BOD) by at least 70 % and the chemical oxygen demand (COD) by at least 75 %.

**Figure 26: Percentage of population connected to at least secondary wastewater treatment**



**Table 26: Percentage of population connected to at least secondary wastewater treatment**

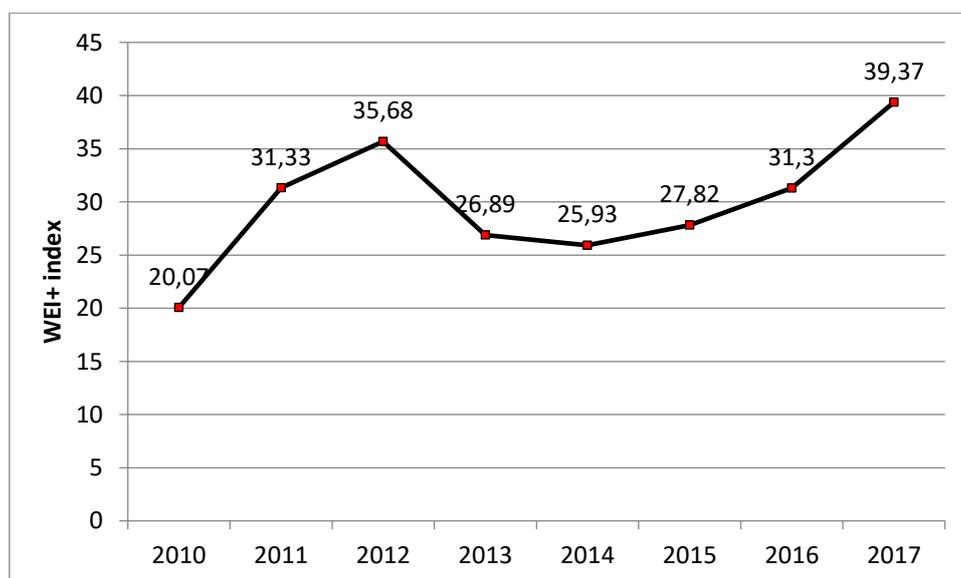
Year	% of population
2010	87.40
2011	88.20
2012	92.03
2013	92.90
2014	92.90
2015	93.40
2016	93.40

<b>2017</b>	94.80
<b>2018</b>	94.80

### Water exploitation index, plus (WEI+)

The Water Exploitation Index plus (WEI+) is a measure of total fresh water use as a percentage of the renewable fresh water resources (groundwater and surface water) at a given time and place. It quantifies how much water is abstracted and how much water is returned after use to the environment. The difference between water abstraction and return is regarded as water use and illustrates the pressure on renewable freshwater resources due to water demand. In the absence of Europe-wide agreed formal targets, values above 20% are generally considered as an indication of water scarcity, while values equal or bigger than 40% indicate situations of severe water scarcity, i.e. the use of freshwater resources is clearly unsustainable. The indicator is presented as annual average values. Annual calculations at national level, however, cannot reflect uneven spatial and seasonal distribution of resources and may therefore mask water scarcity that occurs on a seasonal or regional basis. The indicator is a result of estimations by EEA based on data from the WISE SoE - Water quantity database (WISE 3) and other open sources (JRC, Eurostat, OECD, FAO) and including gap filling methods.

**Figure 27: Percentage of Water exploitation index, plus (WEI+)**



**Table 27: Percentage of Water exploitation index, plus (WEI+)**

Year	WEI+
<b>2010</b>	20.07

<b>2011</b>	31.33
<b>2012</b>	35.68
<b>2013</b>	26.89
<b>2014</b>	25.93
<b>2015</b>	27.82
<b>2016</b>	31.30
<b>2017</b>	39.37

### Bathing sites with excellent water quality by locality

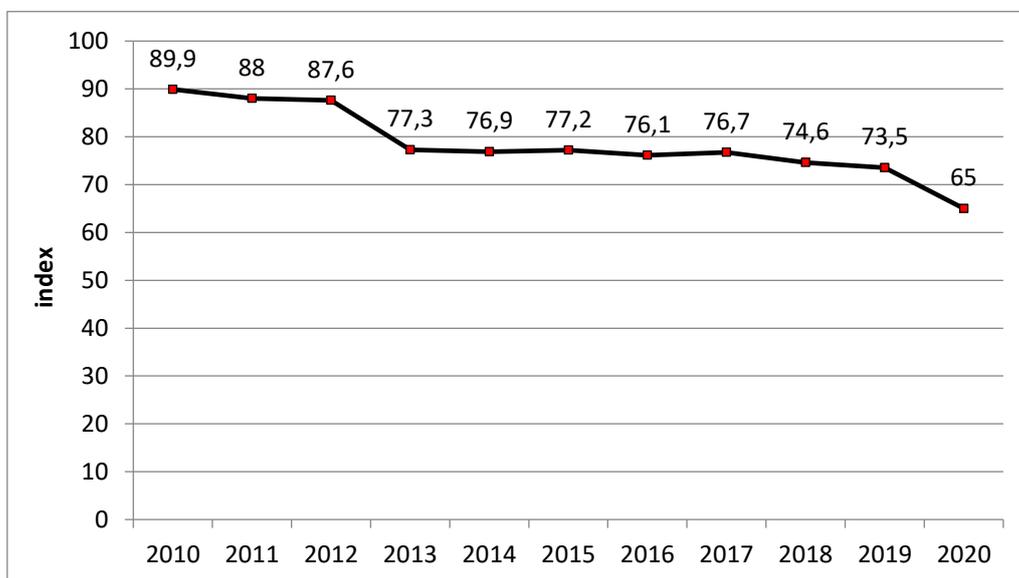
*The indicator is covered in SDG 14: Life below water*

# SDG 7. Affordable and clean energy

## Primary energy consumption

The indicator measures the total energy demand of a country excluding all non-energy use of energy carriers (e.g. natural gas used not for combustion but for producing chemicals). "Primary Energy Consumption" covers the energy consumption by end users such as industry, transport, households, services and agriculture, plus energy consumption of the energy sector itself, losses occurring during transformation and distribution of energy.

**Figure 28: Index of primary energy consumption (2005 = 100)**



**Table 28: Primary energy consumption in million tonnes of oil equivalent and as index**

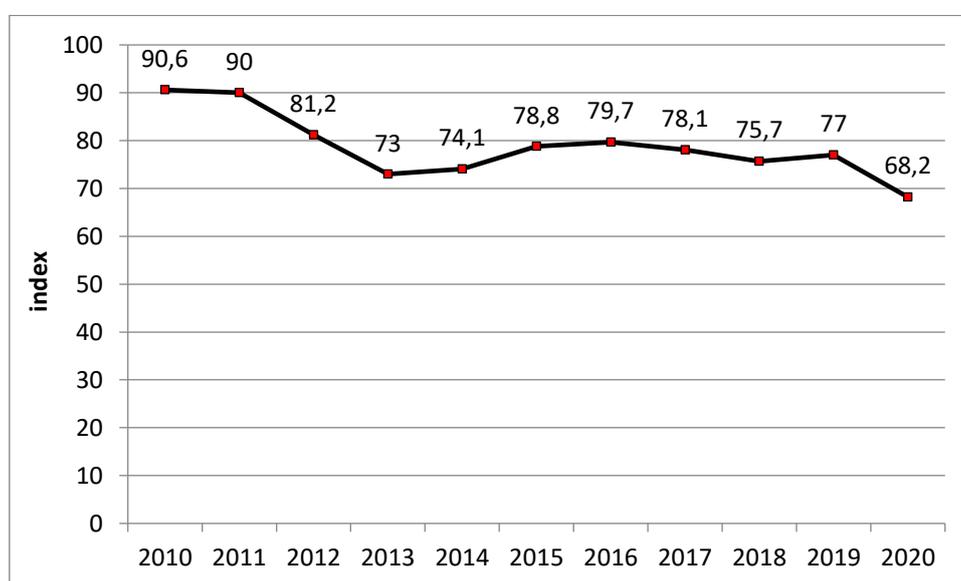
Year	Million tonnes of oil equivalent (TOE)	Index, 2005=100
2010	27.2	89.9
2011	26.7	88.0
2012	26.5	87.6
2013	23.4	77.3
2014	23.3	76.9
2015	23.4	77.2
2016	23.1	76.1
2017	23.2	76.7
2018	22.6	74.6

<b>2019</b>	22.3	73.5
<b>2020</b>	19.7	65.0

## Final energy consumption

The indicator measures the total energy demand of a country excluding all non-energy use of energy carriers (e.g. natural gas used not for combustion but for producing chemicals). “Final energy consumption” only covers the energy consumed by end users, such as industry, transport, households, services and agriculture, it excludes energy consumption of the energy sector itself and losses occurring during transformation and distribution of energy.

**Figure 29: Index of final energy consumption (2005=100)**



**Table 29: Final energy consumption in million tonnes of oil equivalent and as index**

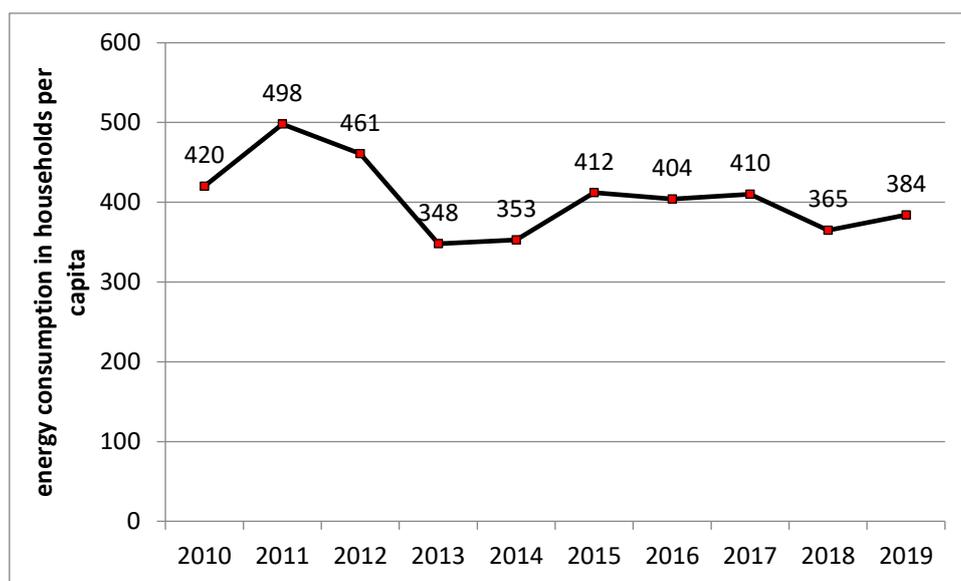
Year	Million tonnes of oil equivalent (TOE)	Index, 2005=100
2010	19.1	90.6
2011	18.9	90.0
2012	17.1	81.2
2013	15.3	73.0
2014	15.6	74.1
2015	16.6	78.8
2016	16.8	79.7
2017	16.4	78.1
2018	15.9	75.7
2019	16.2	77.0
2020	14.3	68.2



## Final energy consumption in households per capita

Indicator measures how much electricity and heat every citizen consumes at home without consideration of energy used for transportation. Since the indicator refers to final energy consumption, only energy used by end consumers is considered. The related consumption of the energy sector itself is excluded.

**Figure30: Final energy consumption in households per capita**



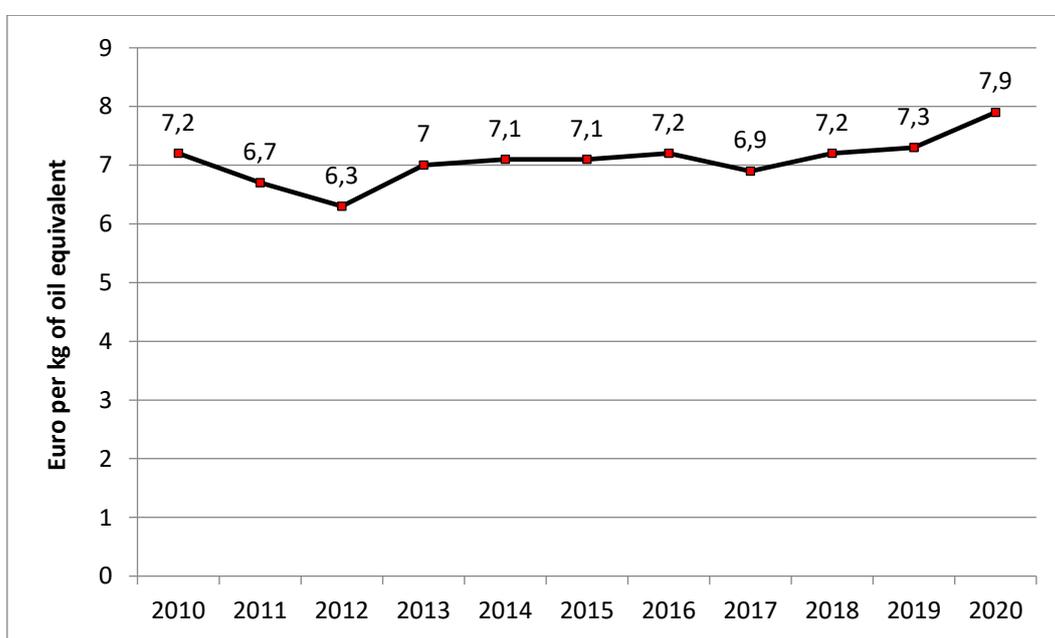
**Table30: Final energy consumption in households per capita in kilograms of oil equivalent**

Year	Final energy consumption in households per capita
2010	420
2011	498
2012	461
2013	348
2014	353
2015	412
2016	404
2017	410
2018	365
2019	384

## Energy productivity

The indicator measures the amount of economic output that is produced per unit of gross inland energy consumption. The gross inland energy consumption is the primary energy consumption (PEC) plus energy carriers employed for non-energy purposes. The economic output is either given as in the unit of Euros in chain-linked volumes to the reference year 2010 at 2010 exchange rates or in the unit PPS (Purchasing Power Standard). The former is used to observe the evolution over time for a specific region while the latter allows comparing Member States in a given year.

**Figure 31: Energy productivity**



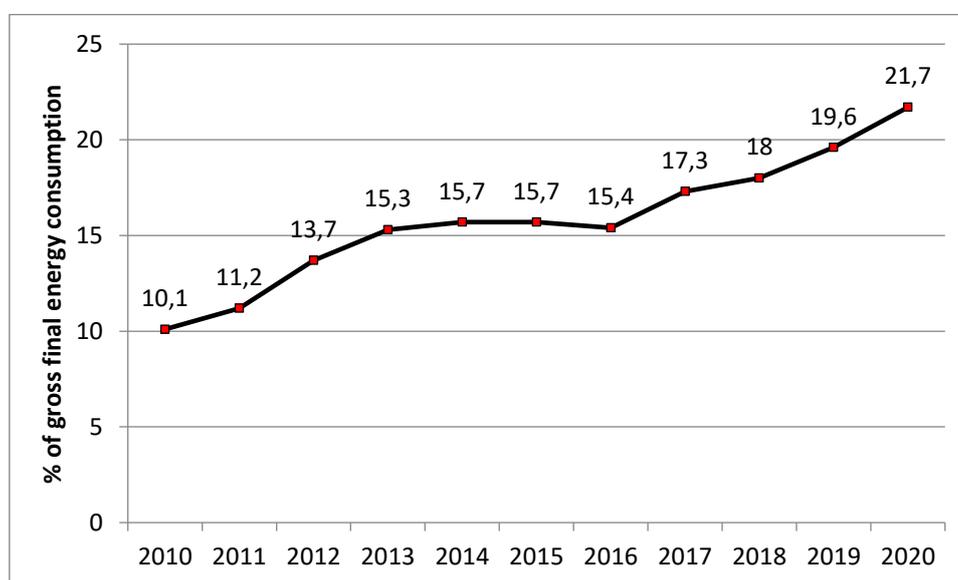
**Table 31: Energy productivity in euro per kilogram of oil equivalent**

Year	Energy productivity
2010	7,2
2011	6,7
2012	6,3
2013	7,0
2014	7,1
2015	7,1
2016	7,2
2017	6,9
2018	7,2
2019	7,3
2020	7,9

## Share of renewable energy in gross final energy consumption by sector

The indicator measures the share of renewable energy consumption in gross final energy consumption according to the Renewable Energy Directive. The gross final energy consumption is the energy used by end-consumers (final energy consumption) plus grid losses and self-consumption of power plants.

**Figure 32: Share of renewable energy sources**



**Table 322: Share of renewable energy in gross final energy consumption by sector**

Year	Share of renewable energy sources	Share of renewable energy in transport	Share of renewable energy in electricity	Share of renewable energy in heating and cooling
2010	10.1	1.9	12.3	18.7
2011	11.2	0.6	13.8	20.1
2012	13.7	0.9	16.4	24.1
2013	15.3	1.0	21.2	27.4
2014	15.7	1.3	21.9	27.9
2015	15.7	1.1	22.1	26.6
2016	15.4	1.6	22.7	25.4
2017	17.3	4.0	24.5	28.2
2018	18.0	4.1	26.0	30.1

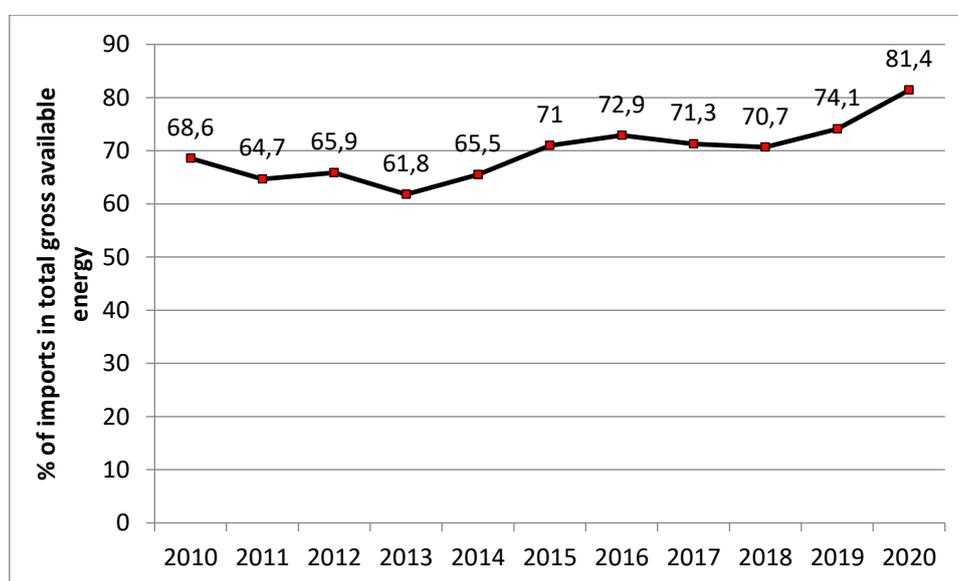
<b>2019</b>	19.6	4.0	31.3	30.0
<b>2020</b>	21.7	5.3	35.9	31.9

## Energy import dependency by products

The indicator shows the share of total inland energy needs met by imports from other countries. It is calculated as net imports divided by the sum of gross inland energy consumption plus maritime bunkers.

$$\text{Energy dependence} = \frac{\text{Net imports}}{\sum (\text{Gross inland energy consumption} + \text{International maritime bunkers})}$$

**Figure33: Total energy dependence as percentage of imports in total energy consumption**



**Table 33: Energy import dependency by product**

Year	All products	Solid fuels	Oil and petroleum products (excluding biofuel portion)	Natural Gas
2010	68.6	5.1	98.7	99.9
2011	64.7	2.9	93.9	100.0
2012	65.9	2.3	101.3	100.3
2013	61.8	3.2	94.7	100.0
2014	65.5	2.9	99.9	99.3
2015	71.0	2.8	105.4	99.9
2016	72.9	4.4	99.7	99.2
2017	71.3	4.8	98,1	100.5
2018	70.7	5.1	97.9	100.7

2019	74.1	6.3	95.7	99.0
2020	81.4	10.1	106.4	100.7

### Population unable to keep home adequately warm by poverty status

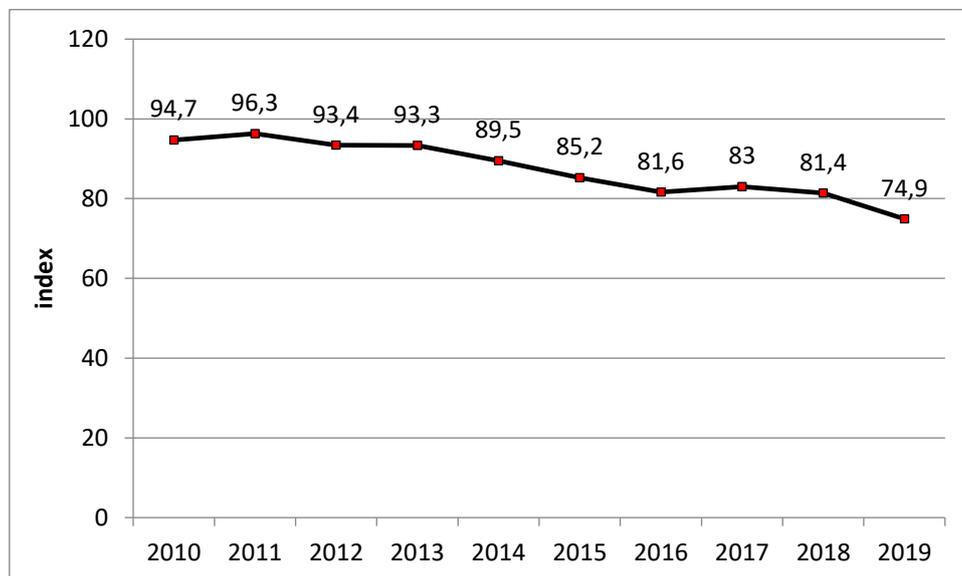
The indicator has been covered in SDF 1: Poverty

## Greenhouse gas emissions intensity of energy consumption

*(This indicator is also included in SDG 13: Climate action)*

The indicator is calculated as the ratio between energy-related GHG emissions and gross inland consumption of energy. It expresses how many tonnes CO<sub>2</sub> equivalents of energy-related GHGs are being emitted in a certain economy per unit of energy that is being consumed. The data on energy emissions are being sourced from the GHG emissions reported to the UNFCCC.

**Figure 34: Index of greenhouse gas emission intensity of energy consumption**



**Table 34: Index of greenhouse gas emission intensity of energy consumption**

Year	Greenhouse gas emissions intensity of energy consumption (Index, 2000=100)
2010	94.7
2011	96.3

2012	93.4
2013	93.3
2014	89.5
2015	85.2
2016	81.6
2017	83.0
2018	81.4
2019	74.9

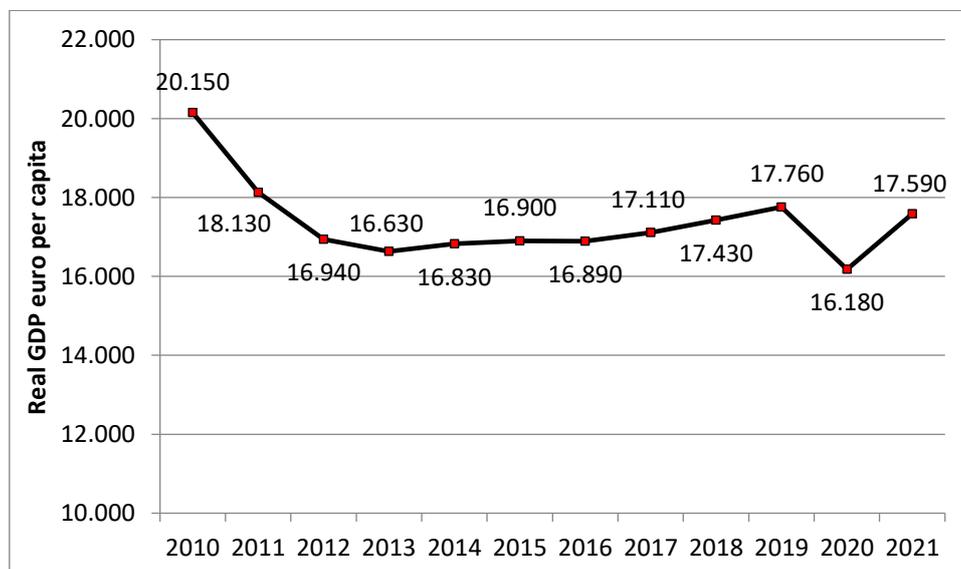
## SDG 8. Decent work and economic growth

### Real GDP per capita

The indicator is calculated as the ratio of real GDP to the average population of a specific year. GDP measures the value of total final output of goods and services produced by an economy within a certain period of time. It includes goods and services that have markets (or which could have markets) and products which are produced by general government and non-profit institutions.

It is a measure of economic activity and is commonly used as a proxy for the development in a country's material living standards. However, it is not a complete measure of economic welfare. For example, GDP does not include most unpaid household work. Neither does GDP take account of negative effects of economic activity, like environmental degradation.

**Figure35: Real GDP in euro per inhabitant**



**Table 35: Real GDP in euro per inhabitant**

Year	Real GDP euro per capita
2010	20,150
2011	18,130
2012	16,940
2013	16,630
2014	16,830
2015	16,900
2016	16,890
2017	17,110
2018	17,430
2019p	17,760
2020p	16,180
2021p	17,590

*p: provisional*

### **Young people neither in employment nor in education and training by sex**

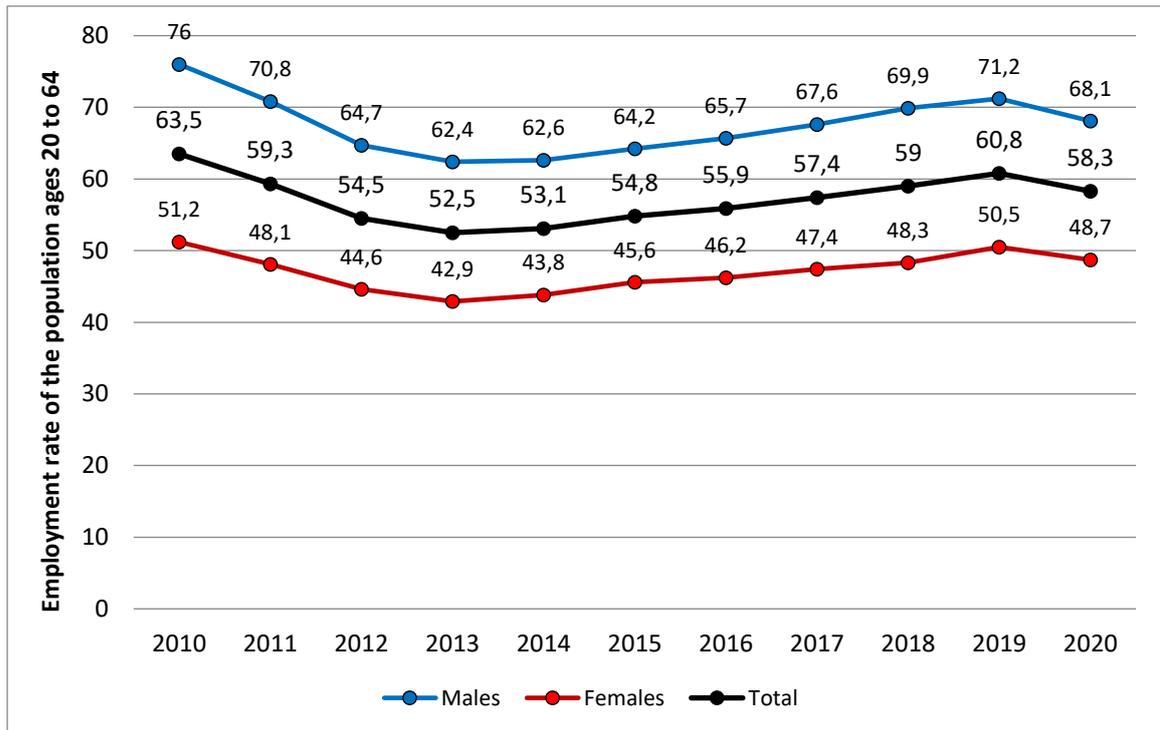
The indicator has been covered in SDG 4: Quality education

## **Employment rate by sex**

The indicator measures the share of the population aged 20 to 64 which is employed. Employed persons are defined as all persons who, during a reference week, worked at least one hour for pay or profit or were temporarily absent from such work.

The indicator is part of the adjusted, break-corrected main indicators series and should not be compared with the annual and quarterly non-adjusted series, which have slightly different results.

**Figure 36: Employment rate of the population aged 20 to 64 years by sex**



**Table 36: Employment rate of the population ages 20 to 64 in total and by sex**

Year	Total	Males	Females
2010	63.5	76.0	51.2
2011	59.3	70.8	48.1
2012	54.5	64.7	44.6
2013	52.5	62.4	42.9
2014	53.1	62.6	43.8
2015	54.8	64.2	45.6
2016	55.9	65.7	46.2
2017	57.4	67.6	47.4
2018	59.0	69.9	48.3
2019	60.8	71.2	50.5
2020	58.3	68.1	48.7

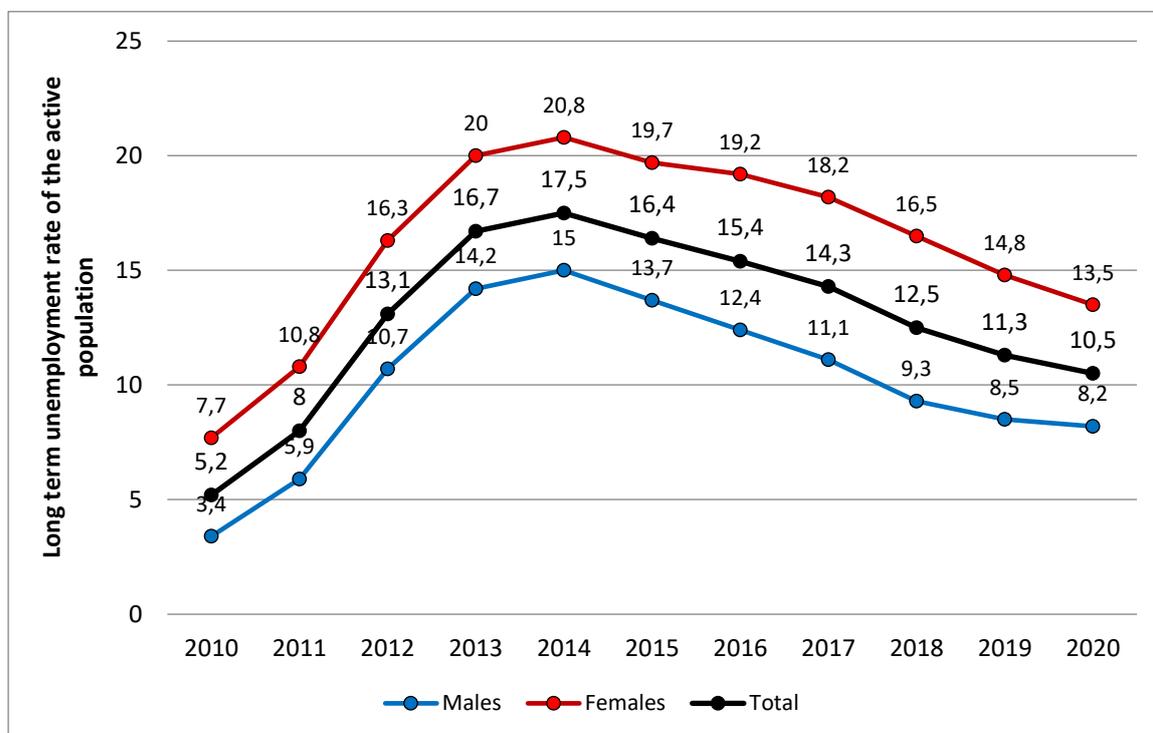
## Long-term unemployment rate by sex

The indicator measures the share of the economically active population aged 15 to 74 who has been unemployed for 12 months or more.

Unemployed persons are defined as all persons who were without work during the reference week, were currently available for work and were either actively seeking work in the last four

weeks or had already found a job to start within the next three months. The economically active population comprises employed and unemployed persons.

**Figure 37: Long term unemployment rate of the active population by sex**



**Table76: Long-term unemployment of the active population in total and by sex**

Year	Total	Males	Females
2010	5.2	3.4	7.7
2011	8.0	5.9	10.8
2012	13.1	10.7	16.3
2013	16.7	14.2	20.0
2014	17.5	15.0	20.8
2015	16.4	13.7	19.7
2016	15.4	12.4	19.2
2017	14.3	11.1	18.2
2018	12.5	9.3	16.5
2019	11.3	8.5	14.8
2020	10.5	8.2	13.5

### People killed in accidents at work

The indicator has been covered in SDG 3: Good health and well-being

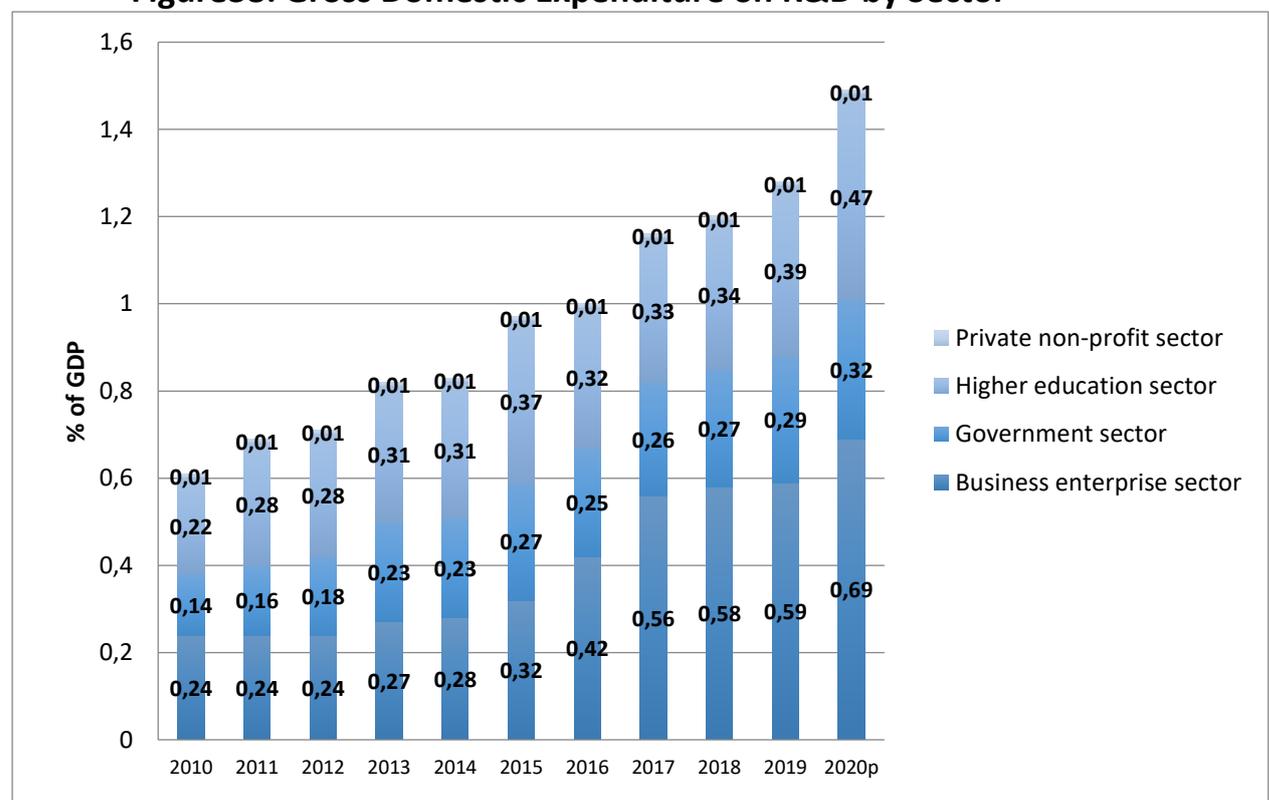


# SDG 9 - Industry, innovation and infrastructure

## Gross domestic expenditure on R&D by sector - % of GDP

The indicator measures gross domestic expenditure on R&D (GERD) as a percentage of the gross domestic product (GDP). "Research and experimental development (R&D) comprise creative work undertaken on a systematic basis in order to increase the stock of knowledge, including knowledge of man, culture and society and the use of this stock of knowledge to devise new applications".

**Figure38: Gross Domestic Expenditure on R&D by Sector**



**Table 38: Gross Domestic Expenditure on R&D by Sector**

Year	All sectors	Business enterprise sector	Government sector	Higher education sector	Private non-profit sector
2010	0.6	0.24	0.14	0.22	0.01
2011	0.7	0.24	0.16	0.28	0.01
2012	0.7	0.24	0.18	0.28	0.01
2013	0.8	0.27	0.23	0.31	0.01

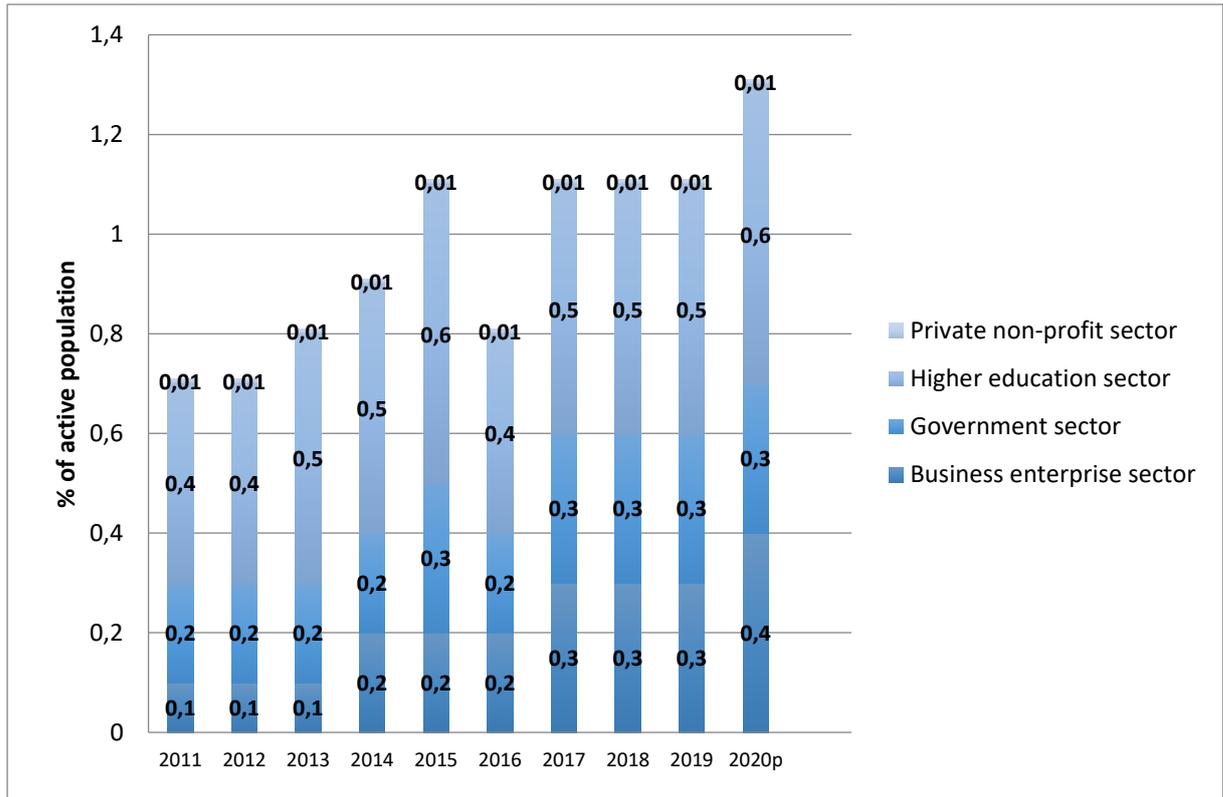
<b>2014</b>	0.8	0.28	0.23	0.31	0.01
<b>2015</b>	1.0	0.32	0.27	0.37	0.01
<b>2016</b>	1.0	0.42	0.25	0.32	0.01
<b>2017</b>	1.2	0.56	0.26	0.33	0.01
<b>2018</b>	1.2	0.58	0.27	0.34	0.01
<b>2019</b>	1.3	0.59	0.29	0.39	0.01
<b>2020<sup>p</sup></b>	1.5	0.69	0.32	0.47	0.01

p: provisional

## R&D personnel by sector - % of active population

The indicator measures the share of R&D personnel broken down by the following institutional sectors: Business Enterprise, Government, Higher Education, Private Non-Profit. Data are presented in full-time equivalents as a share of the economically active population (the 'labour force'). The indicator measures the share of R&D personnel broken down by the following institutional sectors: Business Enterprise, Government, Higher Education, Private Non-Profit. Data are presented in full-time equivalents as a share of the economically active population (the 'labour force').

**Figure 39: R&D Personnel by Sector (% of Active Population)**



**Table 39: R&D Personnel by Sector (% of Active Population)**

Year	All sectors	Business enterprise sector	Government sector	Higher education sector	Private non-profit sector
2011	0.8	0.1	0.2	0.4	0.01
2012	0.8	0.1	0.2	0.4	0.01
2013	0.9	0.1	0.2	0.5	0.01
2014	0.9	0.2	0.2	0.5	0.01
2015	1.0	0.2	0.3	0.6	0.01
2016	0.9	0.2	0.2	0.4	0.01
2017	1.0	0.3	0.3	0.5	0.01
2018	1.1	0.3	0.3	0.5	0.01
2019	1.2	0.3	0.3	0.5	0.01
2020 <sup>p</sup>	1.3	0.4	0.3	0.6	0.01

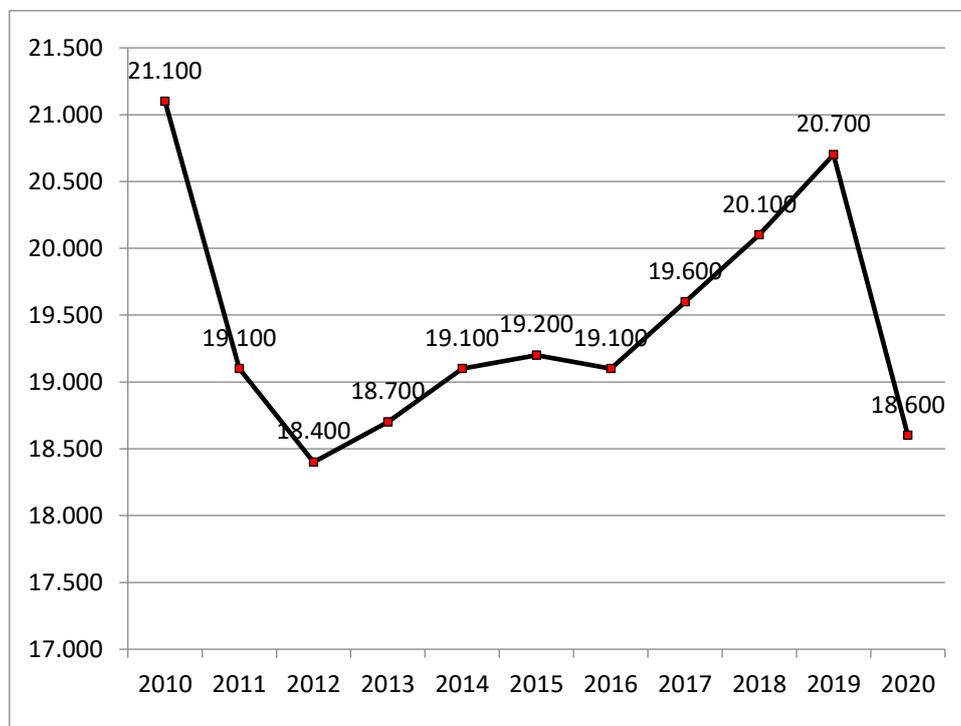
p: provisional

# SDG 10 - Reduced inequalities

## Purchasing power adjusted GDP per capita

Gross domestic product (GDP) is a measure for the economic activity. It refers to the value of the total output of goods and services produced by an economy, less intermediate consumption, plus net taxes on products and imports. GDP per capita is calculated as the ratio of GDP to the average population in a specific year. Basic figures are expressed in purchasing power standards (PPS), which represents a common currency that eliminates the differences in price levels between countries to allow meaningful volume comparisons of GDP.

**Figure 40: Purchasing Power Adjusted GDP per Capita**



**Table40: Purchasing power adjusted GDP per capita**

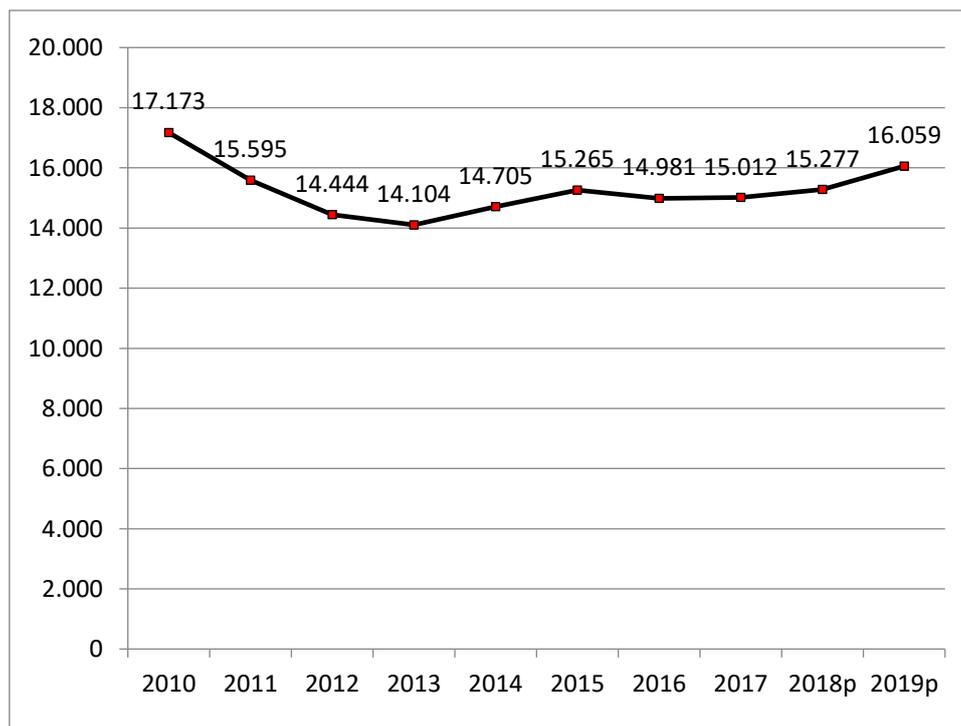
Year	PP adjusted GDP per capita (€)
2010	21,100
2011	19,100
2012	18,400
2013	18,700
2014	19,100
2015	19,200
2016	19,100
2017	19,600

2018	20,100
2019	20,700
2020	18,600

## Adjusted gross disposable income of households per capita

The indicator reflects the purchasing power of households and their ability to invest in goods and services or save for the future, by accounting for taxes and social contributions and monetary in-kind social benefits. It is calculated as the adjusted gross disposable income of households and Non-Profit Institutions Serving Households (NPISH) divided by the purchasing power parities (PPP) of the actual individual consumption of households and by the total resident population.

**Figure 41: Adjusted Gross Disposable Income of Household per Capita**



**Table 41: Adjusted gross disposable income of households per capita - Purchasing power standard (PPS) per inhabitant**

Year	PP adjusted gross disposable income of households per capita
2010	17,173
2011	15,595

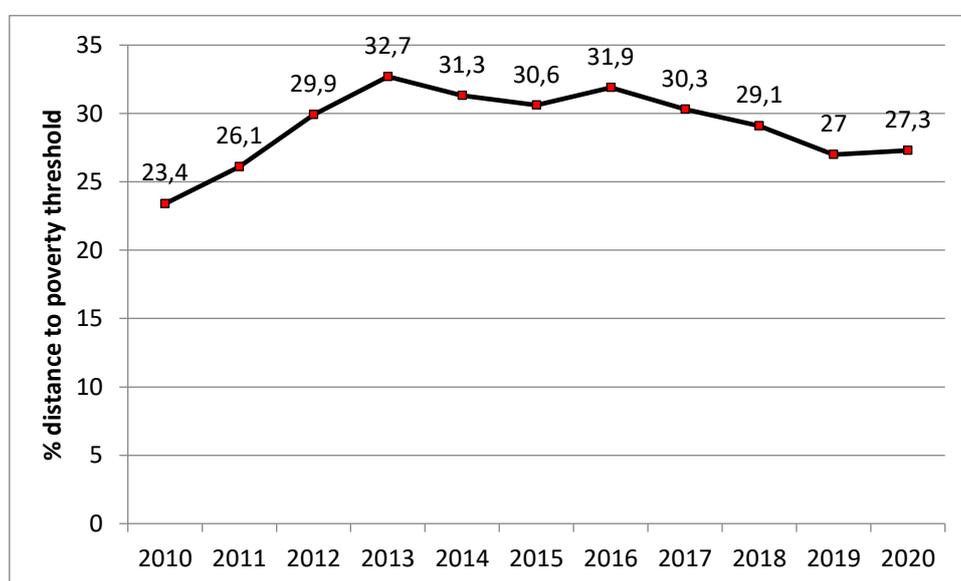
<b>2012</b>	14,444
<b>2013</b>	14,104
<b>2014</b>	14,705
<b>2015</b>	15,265
<b>2016</b>	14,981
<b>2017</b>	15,012
<b>2018<sup>p</sup></b>	15,277
<b>2019<sup>p</sup></b>	16,059

*p: provisional*

## Relative median at-risk-of-poverty gap - % distance to poverty threshold

The indicator is calculated as the distance between the median equivalised total net income of persons below the at-risk-of-poverty threshold and the at-risk-of-poverty threshold itself, expressed as a percentage of the at-risk-of-poverty threshold. This threshold is set at 60% of the national median equivalised disposable income of all people in a country.

**Figure 42: Relative median at-risk-of-poverty gap - % distance to poverty threshold**



**Table 42: Relative median at-risk-of-poverty gap - % distance to poverty threshold**

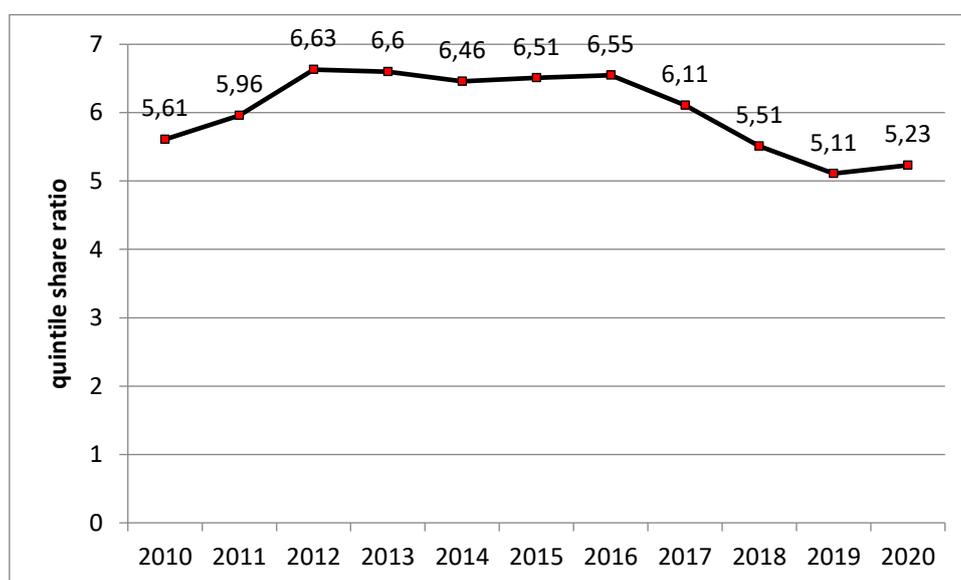
Year	% distance to poverty threshold
2010	23.4
2011	26.1
2012	29.9
2013	32.7
2014	31.3
2015	30.6
2016	31.9
2017	30.3
2018	29.1
2019	27.0
2020	27.3



## Income distribution

The indicator measures the inequality of income distribution. It is calculated as the ratio of total income received by the 20% of the population with the highest income (the top quintile) to that received by the 20% of the population with the lowest income (the bottom quintile).

**Figure 43: Ratio of total income received by the 20% of the population with highest income to that received by the 20% of the population with the lowest income S80/S20**



**Table 43: Ratio of total income received by the 20% of the population with highest income to that received by the 20% of the population with the lowest income S80/S20**

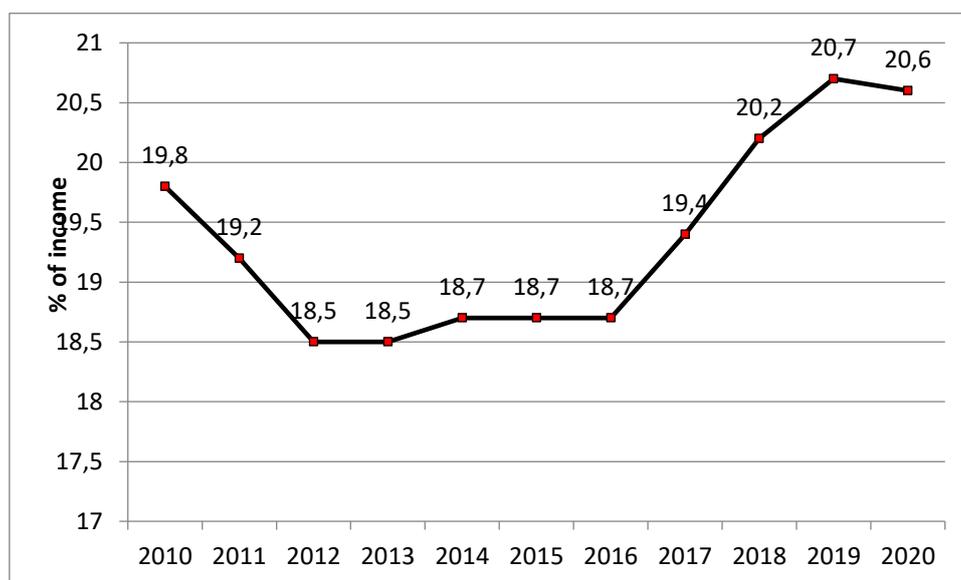
Year	Income quintile share ratio
2010	5.61
2011	5.96
2012	6.63
2013	6.60
2014	6.46
2015	6.51
2016	6.55
2017	6.11
2018	5.51
2019	5.11
2020	5.23



## Income share of the bottom 40% of the population

The indicator measures the income share received by the bottom 40% of the population. The income concept used is the total disposable household income.

**Figure 44: Income share of the bottom 40% of the Population - % of Income**



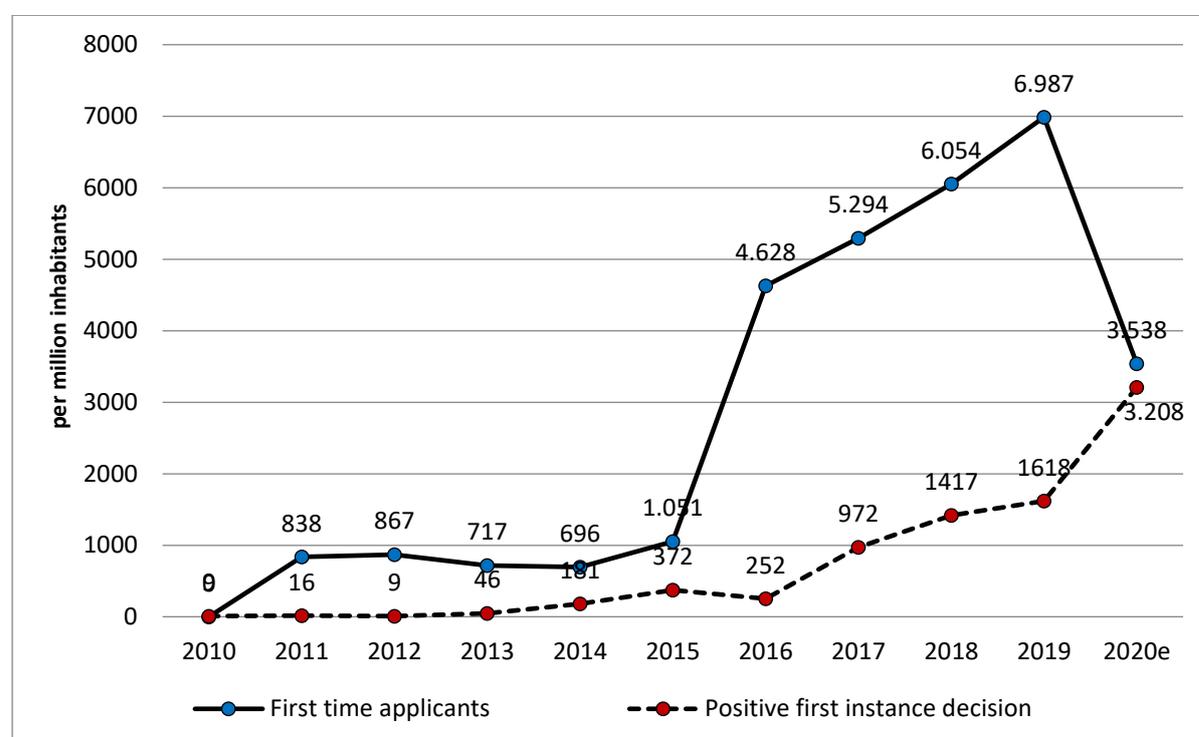
**Table 44: Income share of the bottom 40% of the Population - % of Income**

Year	Percentage (%) of income
2010	19.8
2011	19.2
2012	18.5
2013	18.5
2014	18.7
2015	18.7
2016	18.7
2017	19.4
2018	20.2
2019	20.7
2020	20.6

## Asylum applications

The indicator shows the number of first-time asylum applicants per million inhabitants and the number of positive first instance decisions per million inhabitants. Please note that caution is required when comparing these two values, since applications received in a given year might not be processed until a later year. A first-time applicant for international protection is a person who lodged an application for asylum for the first time in a given Member State. First instance decisions are decisions granted by the respective authority acting as a first instance of the administrative/judicial asylum procedure in the receiving country.

**Figure 45: Asylum applications - number per million inhabitants**



**Table 45: Asylum applications - number per million inhabitants**

Year	First time applicants	Positive first instance decision
2010	-	9
2011	838	16
2012	867	9
2013	717	46
2014	696	181
2015	1,051	372
2016	4,628	252
2017	5,294	972
2018	6,054	1,417

2019	6,987	1618
2020 <sup>e</sup>	3,538	3,208

*e: estimated*

## **SDG 11 - Sustainable cities and communities**

### **Overcrowding rate by poverty status**

*(This indicator has been covered in the SDG 1: Poverty)*

### **Population living in households considering that they suffer from noise, by poverty status**

*(This indicator has been covered in the SDG 3: Good health and well-being)*

### **People killed in road accidents**

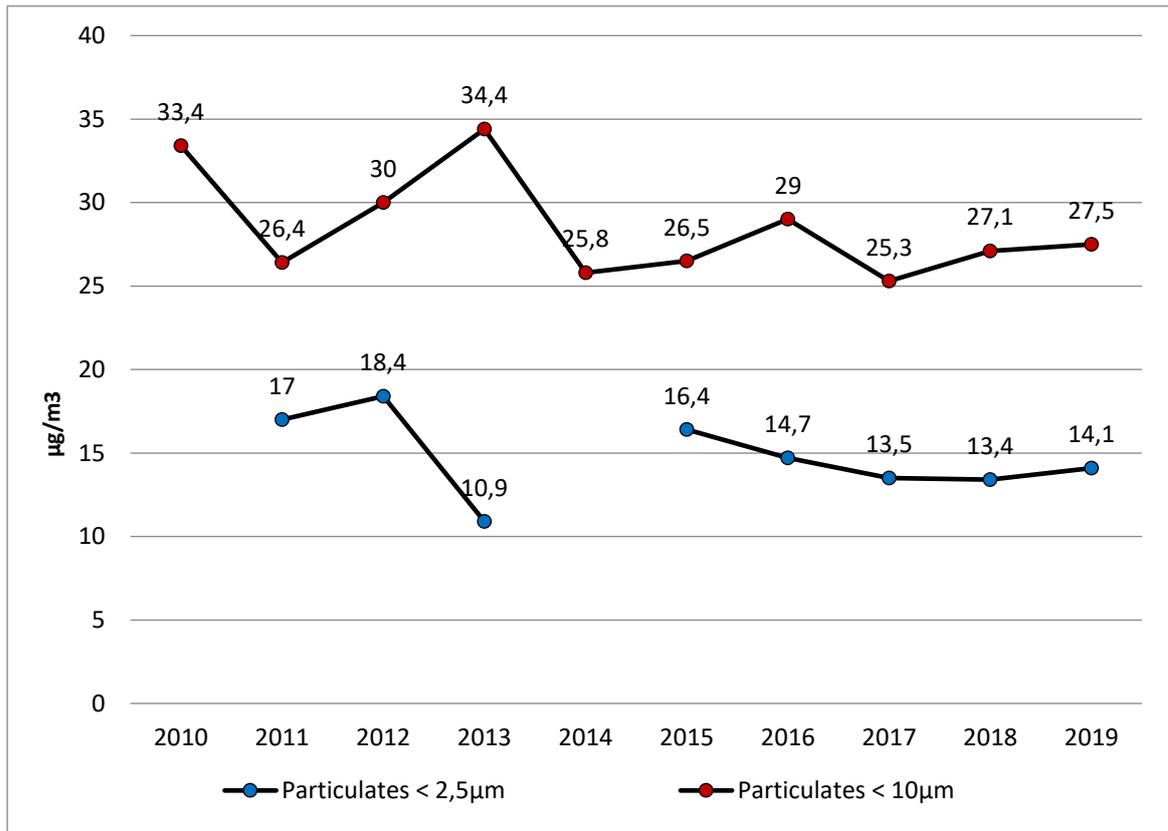
*(This indicator has been covered in the SDG 3: Good health and well-being)*

### **Exposure to air pollution by particulate matter**

The indicator measures the population weighted annual mean concentration of particulate matter at urban background stations in agglomerations. Fine and coarse particulates (PM10), i.e. particulates whose diameters are less than 10 micrometers, can be carried deep into the lungs where they can cause inflammation and exacerbate the condition of people suffering heart and lung diseases.

Fine particulates (PM2.5) are those whose diameters are less than 2.5 micrometers. They are therefore a subset of the PM10 particles. Their deleterious health impacts are more serious than PM10 as they can be drawn further into the lungs and may be more toxic.

**Figure46: Exposure to air pollution by particulate matter**



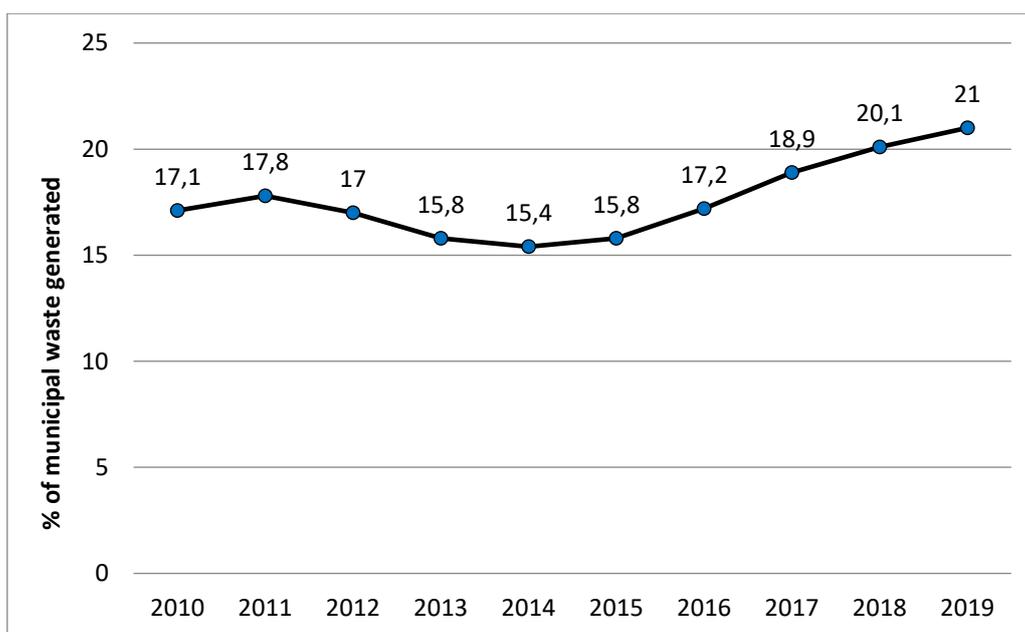
**Table 46: Exposure to air pollution by particulate matter – µg/m<sup>3</sup>**

Year	Particulates < 2,5µm	Particulates < 10µm
2010	N/A	33.4
2011	17.0	26.4
2012	18.4	30.0
2013	10.9	34.4
2014	N/A	25.8
2015	16.4	26.5
2016	14.7	29.0
2017	13.5	25.3
2018	13.4	27.1
2019	14.1	27.5

## Recycling rate of municipal waste

The indicator measures the tonnage recycled from municipal waste divided by the total municipal waste arising. Recycling includes material recycling, composting and anaerobic digestion.

**Figure47: Recycling rate of municipal waste**



**Table 47: Recycling rate of municipal waste - % of total waste generated**

Year	% of total waste generated
2010	17.1
2011	17.8
2012	17.0
2013	15.8
2014	15.4
2015	15.8
2016	17.2
2017	18.9
2018	20.1
2019	21,0

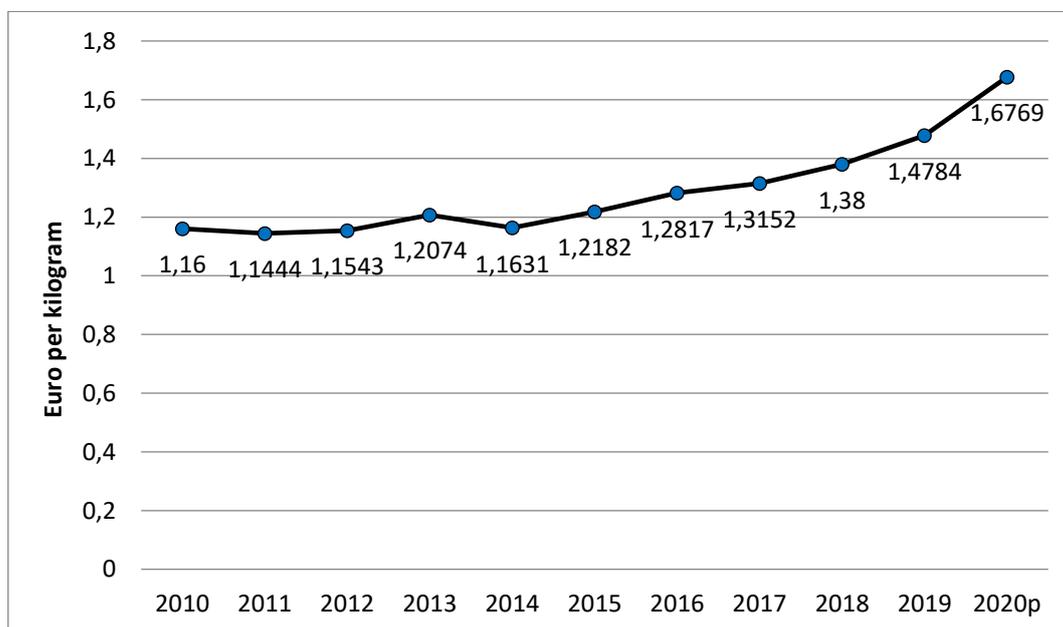


# SDG 12 - Responsible consumption and production

## Resource productivity and domestic material consumption (DMC)

This indicator presents the gross domestic product (GDP) divided by domestic material consumption (DMC). DMC measures the total amount of materials directly used by an economy. It is defined as the annual quantity of raw materials extracted from the domestic territory of the focal economy, plus all physical imports minus all physical exports. It is important to note that the term “consumption”, as used in DMC, denotes apparent consumption and not final consumption. DMC does not include upstream flows related to imports and exports of raw materials and products originating outside of the focal economy.

**Figure 48: Resource productivity and domestic material Consumption (DMC)**



**Table 48: Resource productivity and domestic material Consumption (DMC)**

Year	Euro per kilogram
2010	1,16
2011	1,1444
2012	1,1543
2013	1,2074

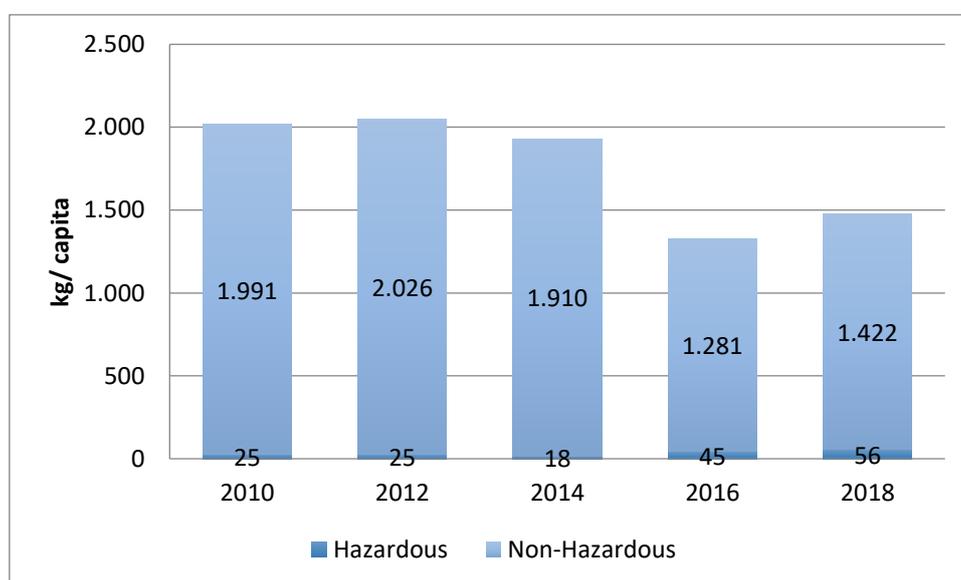
<b>2014</b>	1,1631
<b>2015</b>	1,2182
<b>2016</b>	1,2817
<b>2017</b>	1,3152
<b>2018</b>	1,38
<b>2019</b>	1,4784
<b>2020p</b>	1,6769

*p: provisional*

## Generation of waste excluding major mineral wastes by hazardousness

This indicator is defined as all waste generated in a country per inhabitant and year (in kg), excluding major mineral wastes, dredging spoils and contaminated soils. This exclusion enhances comparability across countries as mineral waste accounts for high quantities in some countries and economic activities such as mining and construction.

**Figure49: Generation of waste excluding major mineral wastes by hazardousness- kg per capita**



**Table 49: Generation of waste excluding major mineral wastes by hazardousness- kg per capita**

Year	Hazardous and non-hazardous Total	Hazardous	Non-Hazardous

<b>2010</b>	2,016	25	1,991
<b>2012</b>	2,051	25	2,026
<b>2014</b>	1,928	18	1,910
<b>2016</b>	1,326	45	1,281
<b>2018</b>	1,478	56	1,422

## Circular material use rate

The circular material use rate (CMR) measures the share of material recovered and fed back into the economy in overall material use. The CMU is defined as the ratio of the circular use of material to the overall material use. The overall material use is measured by summing up the aggregate domestic material consumption (DMC) and the circular use of materials. DMC is defined in economy-wide material flow accounts. The circular use of materials is approximated by the amount of waste recycled in domestic recovery plants minus imported waste destined for recovery plus exported waste destined for recovery abroad. A higher CMU rate value means that more secondary materials substitute for primary raw materials thus reducing the environmental impacts of extracting primary material.

Figure 50: Circular material use rate (CMR) – % of the circular use of material to the overall material use

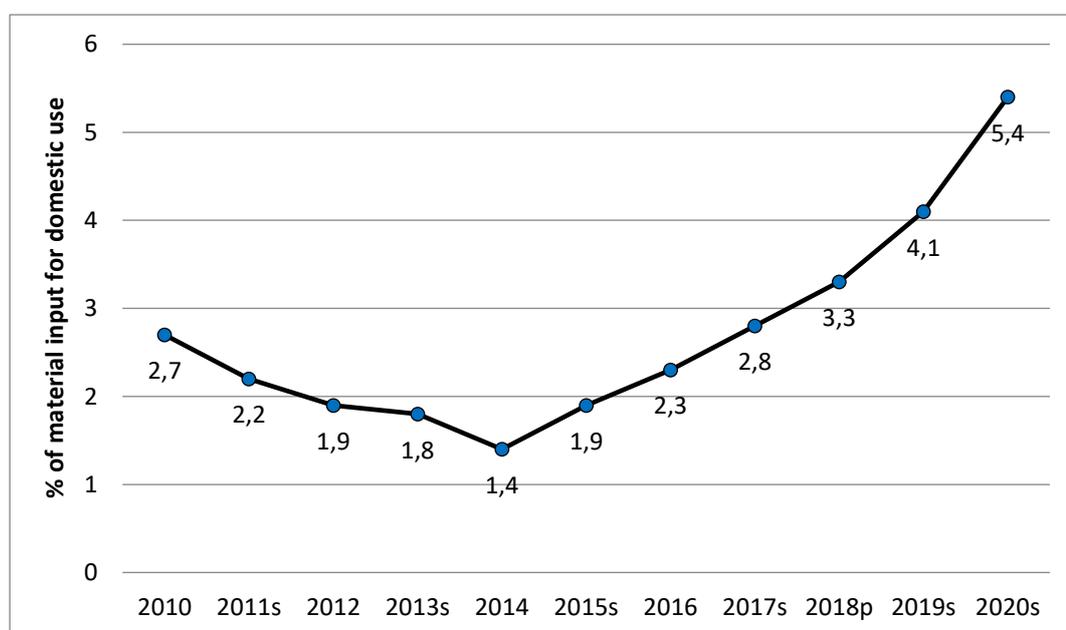


Table 50: Circular material use rate (CMR) – % of the circular use of material to the overall material use

Year	% of material input for domestic use
2010	2.7
2011 <sup>s</sup>	2.2
2012	1.9
2013 <sup>s</sup>	1.8
2014	1.4
2015 <sup>s</sup>	1.9
2016	2.3
2017 <sup>s</sup>	2.8

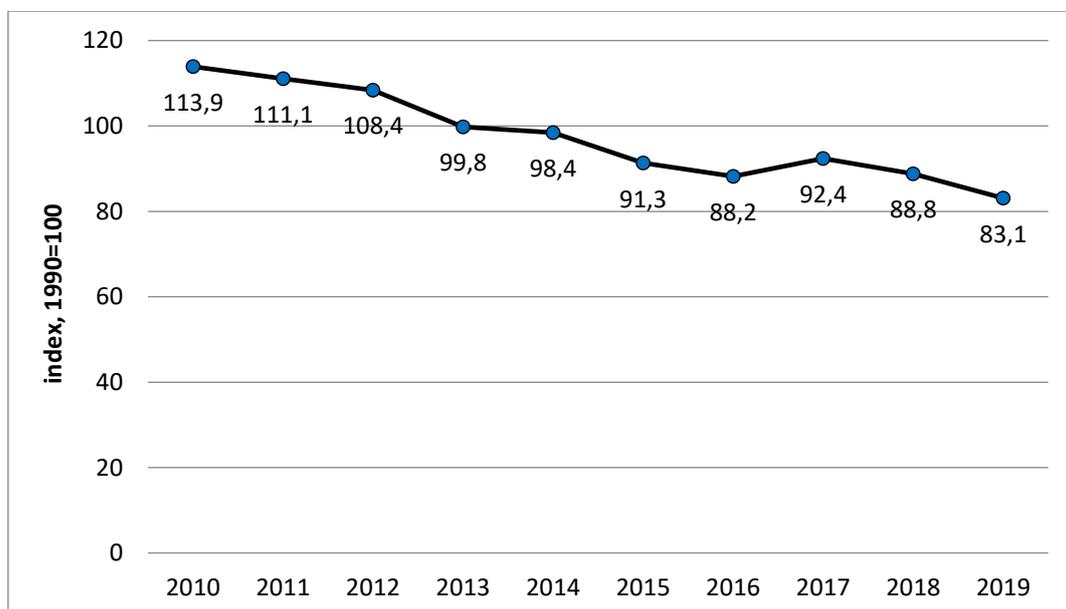
<b>2018<sup>p</sup></b>	3.3
<b>2019<sup>s</sup></b>	4.1
<b>2020<sup>s</sup></b>	5.4

# SDG 13 - Climate change

## Greenhouse gas emissions

The indicator measures all man-made emissions of the so called 'Kyoto basket' of greenhouse gases, including carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>), methane (CH<sub>4</sub>), nitrous oxide (N<sub>2</sub>O), and the so-called F-gases (hydrofluorocarbons, perfluorocarbons, nitrogen trifluoride (NF<sub>3</sub>) and sulphur hexafluoride (SF<sub>6</sub>)). Using each gas' individual global warming potential (GWP), they are being integrated into a single indicator expressed in units of CO<sub>2</sub> equivalents.

**Figure51: Greenhouse gas emissions - index, 1990=100**



**Table 51: Greenhouse gas emissions - index, 1990=100**

Year	Greenhouse gas emissions
2010	113.9
2011	111.1
2012	108.4
2013	99.8
2014	98.4
2015	91.3
2016	88.2
2017	92.4
2018	88.8
2019	83.1

## Greenhouse gas emissions intensity of energy consumption

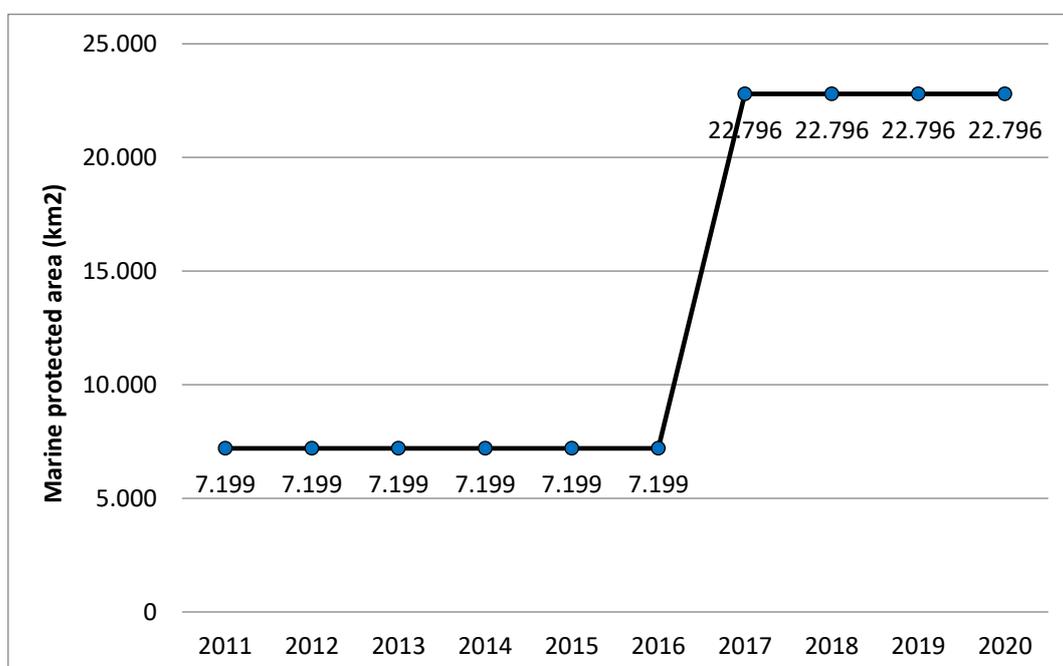
*(This indicator has been covered in the SDG 7. Affordable and clean energy)*

## SDG 14 - Life below water

### Surface of marine sites designated under Natura 2000

The indicator measures the surface of marine sites designated under Natura 2000. The Natura 2000 network comprises both marine and terrestrial protected areas designated under the EU Habitats and Birds Directives with the goal to maintain or restore a favourable conservation status for habitat types and species of EU interest.

**Figure 52: Surface of marine sites designated under Natura 2000**



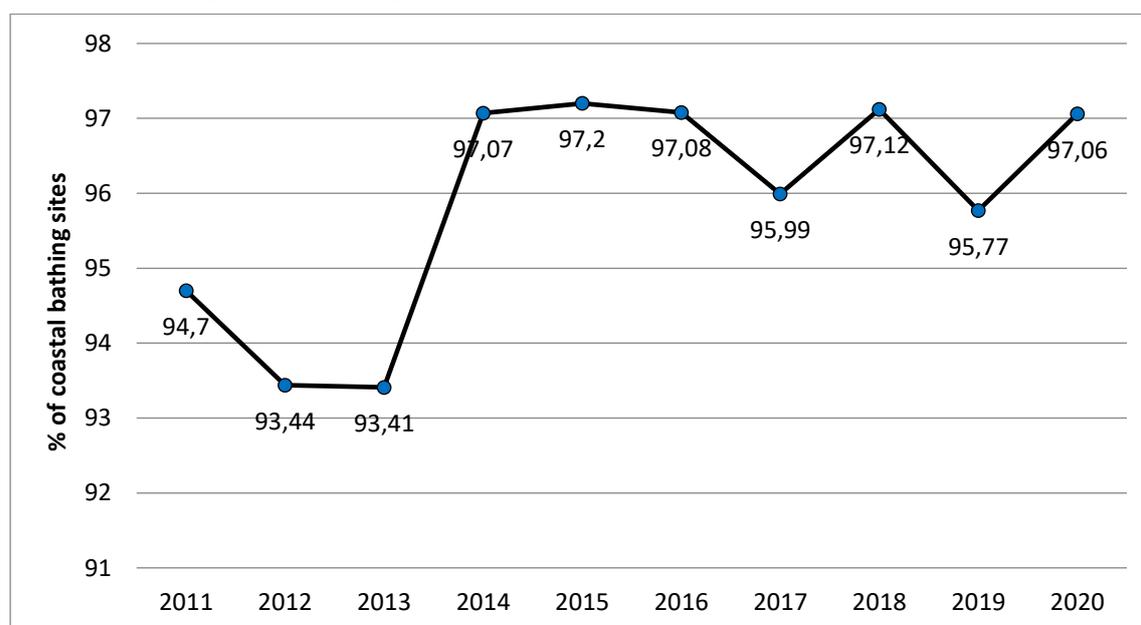
**Table 52: Surface of marine sites designated under Natura 2000**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Marine protected area (km<sup>2</sup>)</b>
<b>2011</b>	7,199
<b>2012</b>	7,199
<b>2013</b>	7,199
<b>2014</b>	7,199
<b>2015</b>	7,199
<b>2016</b>	7,199
<b>2017</b>	22,796
<b>2018</b>	22,796
<b>2019</b>	22,796
<b>2020</b>	22,796

## Bathing sites with excellent water quality

This indicator measures the proportion of coastal bath sites with excellent water quality. The indicator is assessed according to standards for microbiological parameters (intestinal enterococci and Escherichia coli).

**Figure 53: Bathing sites with excellent water quality by locality**



**Table 53: Bathing sites with excellent water quality**

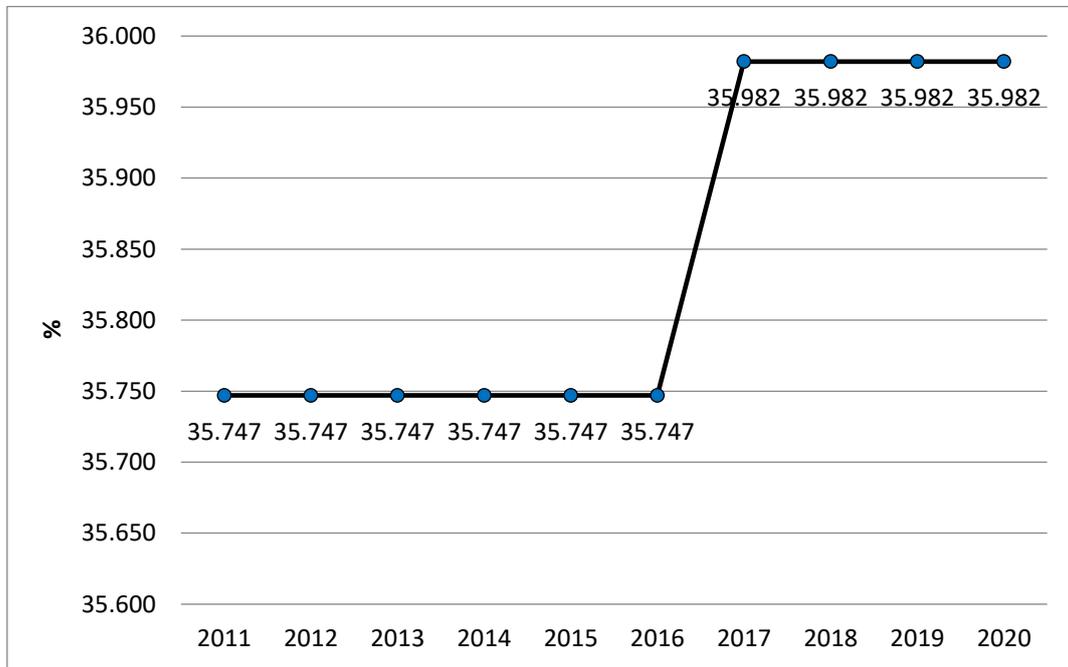
Year	Coastal water excellent (%)
2011	94.70
2012	93.44
2013	93.41
2014	97.07
2015	97.20
2016	97.08
2017	95.99
2018	97.12
2019	95.77
2020	97.06

# 15.LIFE ON LAND

## Surface of terrestrial sites designated under Natura 2000

The indicator measures the surface of terrestrial sites designated under Natura 2000. The Natura 2000 network comprises both marine and terrestrial protected areas designated under the EU Habitats and Birds Directives with the goal to maintain or restore a favourable conservation status for habitat types and species of EU interest.

**Figure 54: Surface of terrestrial sites designated under Natura 2000**



**Table 54: Surface of terrestrial sites designated under Natura 2000**

Year	Surface of terrestrial sites designated under Natura 2000
2011	35,747
2012	35,747
2013	35,747
2014	35,747
2015	35,747
2016	35,747
2017	35,982
2018	35,982
2019	35,982

2020	35,982
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# SDG 16 - Peace, justice and strong institutions

## Standardised death rate due to homicide by sex

The indicator measures the standardised death rate of homicide and injuries inflicted by another person with the intent to injure or kill by any means, including 'late effects' from assault (International Classification of Diseases (ICD) codes X85 to Y09 and Y87.1). It does not include deaths due to legal interventions or war (ICD codes Y35 and Y36). The rate is calculated by dividing the number of people dying due to homicide or assault by the total population.

Figure 55: Standardised death rate due to homicide by sex

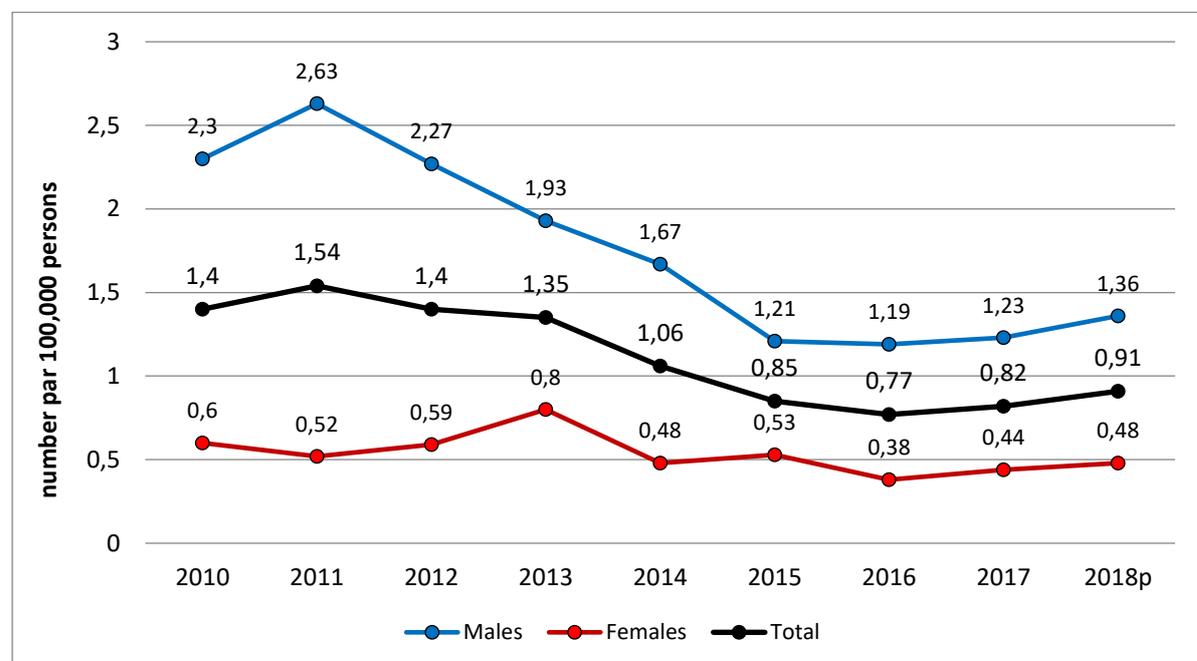


Table 55: Standardised death rate due to homicide by sex- number par 100,000 persons

Year	Total	Males	Females
2010	1.4	2.3	0.6
2011	1.54	2.63	0.52
2012	1.4	2.27	0.59
2013	1.35	1.93	0.8
2014	1.06	1.67	0.48
2015	0.85	1.21	0.53
2016	0.77	1.19	0.38
2017	0.82	1.23	0.44

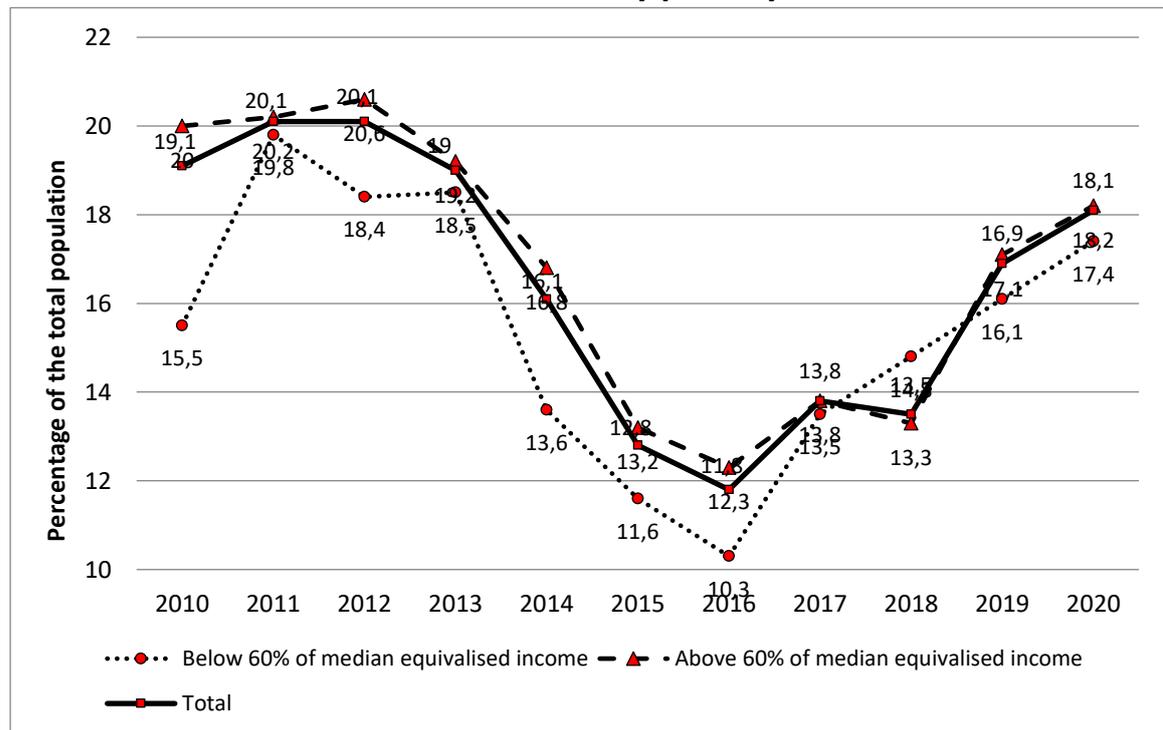
<b>2018<sup>P</sup></b>	0.91	1.36	0.48
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*p: provisional*

## Population reporting occurrence of crime, violence or vandalism in their area by poverty status

The indicator shows the share of the population who reported that they face the problem of crime, violence or vandalism in their local area. This describes the situation where the respondent feels crime, violence or vandalism in the area to be a problem for the household, although this perception is not necessarily based on personal experience.

**Figure 56: Population reporting occurrence of crime, violence or vandalism in their area by poverty status**



**Table 56: Population reporting occurrence of crime, violence or vandalism in their area by poverty status - % of population**

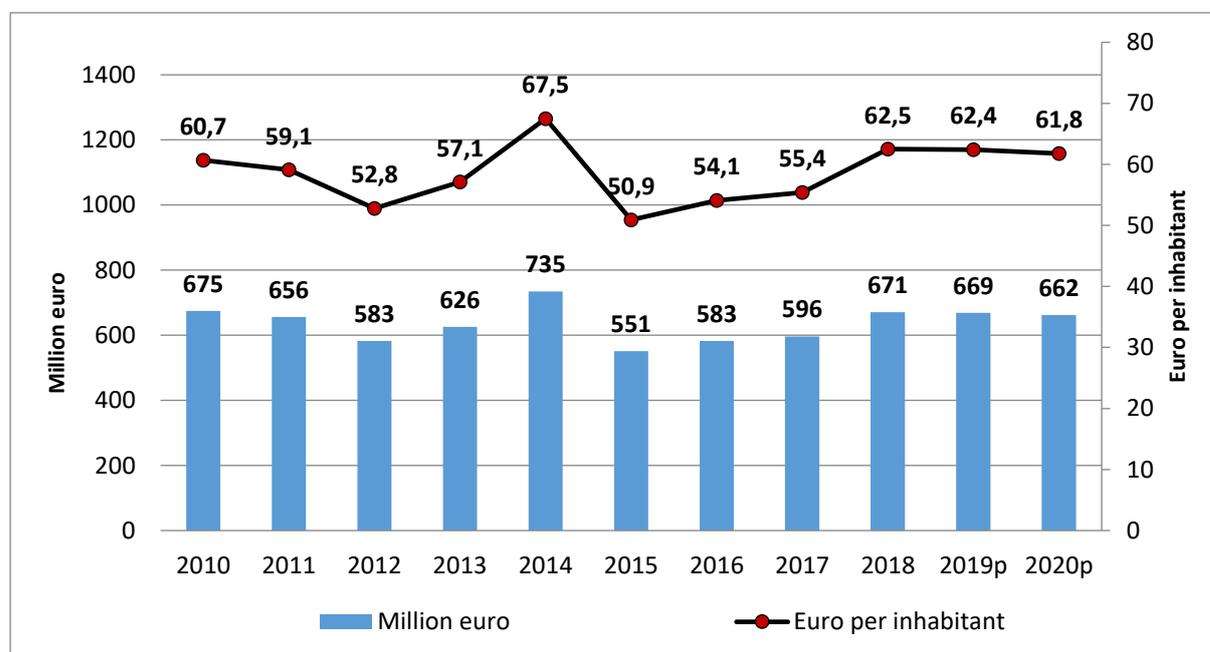
Year	Below 60% of median equivalised income		Above 60% of median equivalised income		Total
<b>2010</b>	15.5		20.0		19.1

<b>2011</b>	19.8	20.2	20.1
<b>2012</b>	18.4	20.6	20.1
<b>2013</b>	18.5	19.2	19.0
<b>2014</b>	13.6	16.8	16.1
<b>2015</b>	11.6	13.2	12.8
<b>2016</b>	10.3	12.3	11.8
<b>2017</b>	13.5	13.8	13.8
<b>2018</b>	14.8	13.3	13.5
<b>2019</b>	16.1	17.1	16.9
<b>2020</b>	17.4	18.2	18.1

## General government total expenditure on law courts

The indicator refers to the general government total expenditure on 'law courts' according to the classification of the functions of government (COFOG). This includes expenditure on the "administration, operation or support of administrative, civil and criminal law courts and the judicial system, including enforcement of fines and legal settlements imposed by the courts and operation of parole probation systems, and parts of legal aid, i.e. legal representation and advice on behalf of government or on behalf of others provided by government in cash or in services". It includes administrative tribunals, ombudsmen and the like and excludes prison administrations.

**Figure 57: General government total expenditure on law courts**



**Table 57: General government total expenditure on law courts**

Year	Million euro	Euro per inhabitant
2010	675	60.7
2011	656	59.1
2012	583	52.8
2013	626	57.1
2014	735	67.5
2015	551	50.9
2016	583	54.1
2017	596	55.4
2018	671	62.5
2019 <sup>p</sup>	669	62.4

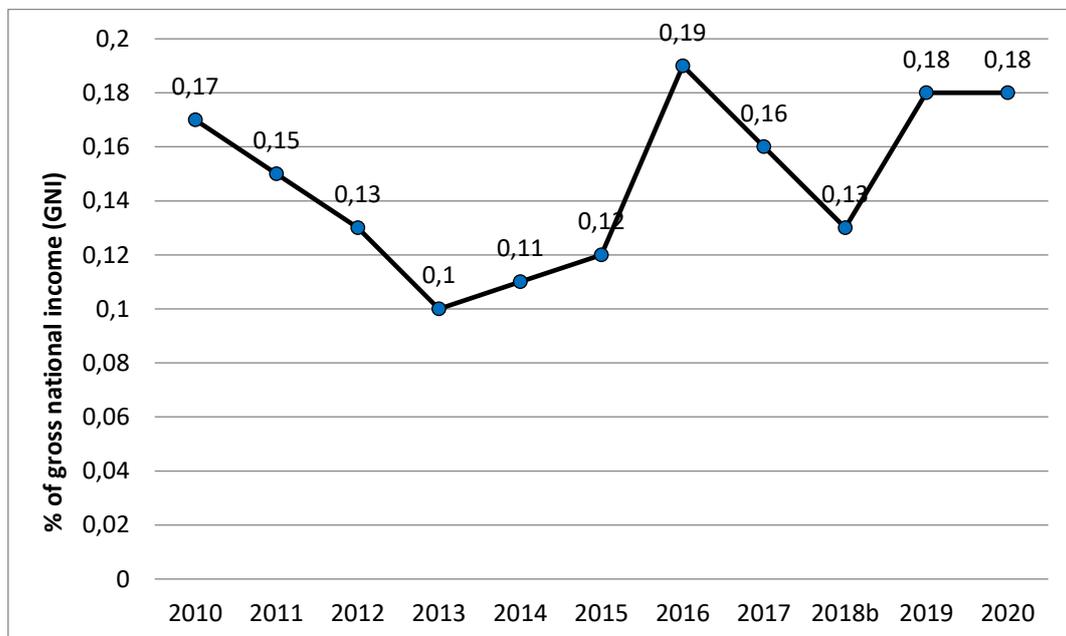
2020 <sup>P</sup>	662	61.8
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## SDG 17 - Partnership for the goals

### Official development assistance as share of gross national income

Official development assistance (ODA) consists of grants or loans that are undertaken by the official sector with the objective of promoting economic development and welfare in recipient countries. Disbursements record the actual international transfer of financial resources, or of goods or services valued at the cost of the donor. ODA is here presented as a share of Gross National Income (GNI). GNI at market prices equals Gross Domestic Product (GDP) minus primary income payable by resident units to non-resident units, plus primary income receivable by resident units from the rest of the world. The list of countries and territories eligible to receive ODA is determined by the OECD's Development Assistance Committee.

**Figure 58: Official development assistance as share of gross national income (GNI)**



**Table 58: Official development assistance as share of gross national income - % of gross national income (GNI)**

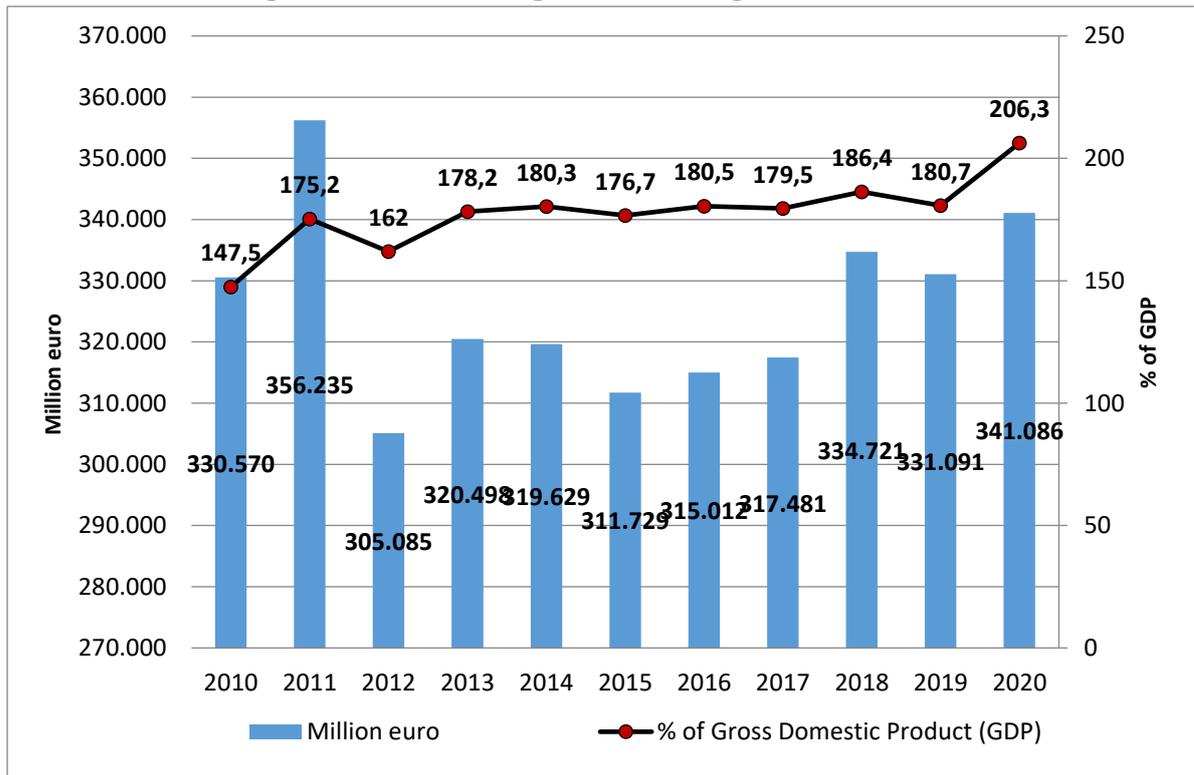
Year	O.D.A.
2010	0.17
2011	0.15
2012	0.13
2013	0.10
2014	0.11
2015	0.12
2016	0.19
2017	0.16
2018 <sup>b</sup>	0.13
2019	0.18
2020	0.18

*b: break*

## **General government gross debt**

The indicator is defined as the ratio of government debt outstanding at the end of the year to gross domestic product at current market prices. For this calculation, government debt is defined as the total consolidated gross debt at nominal value in the following categories of government liabilities (as defined in ESA 2010): currency and deposits (AF.2), debt securities (AF.3) and loans (AF.4). The general government sector comprises the subsectors of central government, state government, local government and social security funds.

**Figure 59: General government gross debt**



*Table 59: General government gross debt*

Year	% of Gross Domestic Product (GDP)	Million euro
2010	147.5	330,570
2011	175.2	356,235
2012	162.0	305,085
2013	178.2	320,498
2014	180.3	319,629
2015	176.7	311,729
2016	180.5	315,012
2017	179.5	317,481
2018	186.4	334,721
2019	180.7	331,091
2020	206.3	341,086

## **ANNEX II**

### **RESEARCH CENTERS**

#### **1. ATHENA Research Center**

The Athena Research and Innovation Center (ATHENA) is the only Research Center in Greece that focuses exclusively on Information, Communication and Knowledge Technologies. It includes three Institutes and eight Units.

##### **Industrial Systems Institute**

The Industrial Systems Institute is a public research institute of the Athena Research Center. Relevant research work is associated with projects funded by national, European and private sources. The main contribution of the Industrial Systems Institute concerns **SDG 9**, with a number of projects dealing with industry, manufacturing, innovation promotion and critical infrastructures. Focus is placed on circularity both in the context of manufacturing and industry as well as in the context of smart and circular cities, where the Institute leads an IEEE Special Technical Committee, addressing **SDGs 11** and **12**. Several outcomes of the Institute are related to energy issues with reference to both renewables and energy efficiency and consumption reduction, thus contributing to **SDGs 7** and **13**. Different projects of the institute have dealt with pollution issues contributing to **SDGs 13, 14** and **15**. Research focus on e-health and telemedicine as well as peace of mind services contributes to **SDG 3**. The overall research outcome of the Institute contributes to the wider economic growth and enhancement of employment, contributing to **SDG 8**. Finally, emphasis is placed on high quality education and training as well as on gender equality issues contributing to **SDGs 4** and **5**.

##### **Sustainable Development Unit: The Greek Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN Greece)**

The UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN), set up in 2012, promotes practical problem solving for sustainable development, including the design and implementation of the SDGs. Its members are organised into national or regional networks promoting sustainable development projects and solutions through training materials and action plans. The Greek chapter of SDSN ([SDSN Greece](#)) has been included in the SDSN network and is co-hosted by Athens University of Economics and Business [RESEES laboratory](#) (Research laboratory on Socio-Economic and Environmental Sustainability), PESD (Political Economy of Sustainable Development Lab of the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens) and [ATHENA Sustainable Development Unit \(ATHENA SDU\)](#). It started operating in September 2015 and its main purpose is to include the country's university and research institutes engaged in sustainable development in the international network and to coordinate efforts towards the achievement of the SDGs. Currently, 28 universities and research centres around the country are members of the SDSN Greece community, on a path to incorporate a sustainable agenda within education at a university level. To this end, SDSN Greece has launched an action plan to universities that urges them to promote the SDGs agenda through a number of educational and training activities and initiatives. Following the adoption of the SDGs, SDSN Greece, RESEES, PESD and **ATHENA SDU** is now committed to supporting the implementation of the SDGs at

local, national, and global scales. The Cluster has undergone a series of projects, initiatives and publications, spanning across the range of the 17 SDGs ([SDSN EGD SWG](#), [H2020 DOORS](#), [H2020 SEAWise](#), [H2020 IntelComp](#), [EIT CLIMATE KIC Maritime ClimAccelerator](#), [CE Beacons](#), [H2020 DESIRA](#), [H2020 ARSINOE](#), [H2020 IMPETUS](#), [H2020 BRIDGE -BS](#), [H2020 AWSOME](#)).

### **Unit of Environmental and Networking Technologies and Applications (ENTA)**

The ENTA [Unit](#) of ATHENA Research Center is related to **SDG13** for “Climate Change Mitigation-National Climate Adaptation Plans” and **SDG12** for “Sustainable Consumption and Production-Materials Footprint”. In the first case, the Unit established the need for determining a new aircraft take-off mass and/or airport runway length, in the single runway island airports, whereas in the second case it established the need to calculate the energy and carbon footprint in Greek viticulture and viniculture industry.

## **2. Centre for Research and Technology-Hellas (CERTH)**

The Centre for Research and Technology-Hellas (CERTH), founded in 2000, is a leading Research Centre in Greece and in the EU, consisting of five research Institutes: the Chemical Process & Energy Resources Institute (CPERI), the Information Technologies Institute (ITI), the Hellenic Institute of Transport (HIT), the Institute of Applied Biosciences (INAB) and the Bio-economy and Agro-technology Institute (IBO). Areas covered include sustainable & clean energy; environmental technologies; chemical & biochemical processes; advanced functional materials; informatics, telematics and telecommunication technologies; artificial intelligence; advanced robotics; internet of things; planning and development of transportation infrastructure; autonomous vehicle technologies; impact assessment of land, maritime, air, and multimodal transport services; smart cities; agri-biotechnology; health translational research; informatics for big bio-data; agri-technology; bio-systems engineering and rational environmental management are the scientific and research fields around which CERTH’s institutes are organized. Combining unique research facilities, highly qualified research personnel, extended network of industrial collaborators and great capability in transforming research results into innovative technological solutions, CERTH greatly contributes to the critical needs of society and economy at national and international level. Leveraging public and private funding through highly competitive procedures, CERTH devises numerous innovative projects, enhancing the resilience of the human, natural and economic environment, in accordance to **SDGs 2, 3, 6, 7, 9, 11, 12, 13** and **14**. “Food as Medicine”, “Personalized Medicine”, “Digitalization”, “Industry 4.0”, “Sustainable Mega-cities”, “Decentralized Production”, “Decarbonisation” and “Circular Economy” are the research challenges that CERTH prioritizes and uses as driving forces for the strategic planning of its research agenda and facilities investment. Moreover, as a one of the top research and development employers for highly qualified personnel in 6 regions and 7 cities, and having acknowledged its human capital importance, CERTH applies policies for creating a non-discriminating working environment (**SDGs 8, 10**), using accountable and transparent procedures (**SDG 16**) and respecting Gender Equality (**SDG5**).

## **3. Foundation for Research and Technology – Hellas (FORTH)**

The Foundation for Research and Technology – Hellas (FORTH) actively contributes towards the

achievement of the SDGs, through its 9 Institutes: Institute of Molecular Biology and Biotechnology (SDGs 2, 3, 6, 7, 15), Institute of Computer Science (SDGs 3, 4, 11), Institute of Applied and Computational Mathematics (SDGs 4, 6, 13, 14), Institute of Electronic Structure and Laser (SDG 7), Institute for Mediterranean Studies (SDGs 5, 16), Institute of Chemical Engineering Sciences (SDGs 6, 7, 11, 13), Institute of Astrophysics (SDG 4), Institute of Geoenergy (SDGs 7, 11, 13), Biomedical Research Institute (SDGs 2, 3, 6, 7); and through its 3 Units: Crete University Press (SDG 4), PRAXI Network (SDGs 9, 17), Science and Technology Park of Crete (SDGs 9, 17).

#### **4. Hellenic Centre for Marine Research (HCMR)**

The HCMR is a governmental research organisation operating under the supervision of the General Secretariat for Research and Innovation (GSRI) of the Ministry of Development and Investments. The HCMR is participating on a long-term basis in a series of municipal, national, European and international research projects and actions associated mainly with SDGs 2, 4, 6, 7, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15 and 17. In particular, the HCMR contributes to the implementation of these SDGs through the development and operation of research infrastructures and active participation in pan-European ones (EMBRC, EMSO, Euro0Argo, LifeWatch), monitoring and observing the marine and freshwater environment, the analysis of the effects of climate change in both marine and freshwater ecosystems, aquaculture and the sustainable production of healthy seafood, the exploration of the underwater cultural heritage, the integrated water resources management and the conservation and sustainable use of terrestrial and inland freshwater ecosystems and their services. It also develops and offers services, implements science-based management plans and monitoring actions, and studies the increasing appearance of invasive species in the Mediterranean, for the purpose of designing and applying measures aimed at preventing their introduction on water ecosystems by human activities. More recently is applying -omics and biotechnological approaches for the discovery and utilization of active substances from marine organisms. In addition, the HCMR offers scientific support to policy-oriented research projects and actions contributing to the implementation of European directives and long-term strategies, such as the EU Water Framework Directive, the Marine Strategy Framework Directive and the Blue Growth Strategy. It also provides guidelines to local government and competent ministries on issues relative to the integrated water resources management, the integrated coastal zone management and the marine protected areas, and submits strategic environmental impact assessment studies to the Ministry of Environment and Energy. The HCMR also provides educational services related to the aquatic environment primarily by involving undergraduate and graduate students in research projects, but also by disseminating knowledge and research results to all different levels of education and the public through its cooperation and partnership with non-governmental organizations.

#### **5. Hellenic Pasteur Institute (HPI)**

HPI actively supports SDGs 3, 4, 9, 17, by the biomedical research undertaken and by the participation in the International Network of Pasteur Institutes/INPI. Ensuring health and promoting well-being is essential to sustainable development, regardless of the age, the biological and the social gender. Health emergencies, such as COVID-19, pose a global risk, and

the HPI focuses on the research conducted to infectious diseases, and the discovering of new therapies and novel vaccines (which has been the ultimate goal of the HPI research, with the support of an operational Vaccines Unit), as well as the training provided on public and global health issues(SDGs 3.3,3.8,3.b,3.c).Sustainable development, worldwide, requires skills, which cannot be developed without quality education. The HPI cooperates with the educational community (students, teachers and parents)with multiple activities promoting the holistic approach of One Health, with emphasis on the interaction of the environment with human and animal health. It is worth noting that in conjunction with SDG 3, STEM education is promoted, with a special effort to motivate girls and young women to continue university education, breaking down stereotypes (SDG 4).The open access technology platforms of the HPI and the participation in related European and national networks enables users to implement research projects in a high-throughput technological environment(SDG 9.1).The HPI is a founding member of the INPI and a member of the Sustainable Development Solutions Network/SDSN (SDGs 17.6, 17.16).

#### **6. National Centre for Social Research (EKKE)**

EKKE is a public legal entity supervised by the General Secretariat of Research and Innovation of the Ministry of Development and Investment. Since 1959, it has been monitoring, recording and researching the socio-political, demographic, socio-economic as well as environmental and climate-related structures and trends of Greece. It has carried out surveys and secondary research on SDG related issues, including poverty, employment, income distribution, social economy, environment, climate change, migration, multiple and cross-sectional social discriminations, political culture and electoral geography, deviant behavior and incarceration institutions, cultural practices, tourism, urban and rural studies, education and training. EKKE carries out a significant number of research projects and programmes which focus on poverty (SDGs 1.2, 1.b), quality education (SDGs 4.4, 4.5, 4.7), gender equality (SDGs 5.1-5.6), elimination of exclusion and inequality, focusing on social, economic and political inclusion of all, irrespective of age, sex, race, ethnicity and religion (migration and social policy issues) (SDGs 10.2, 10.3, 10.4, 10.7), urban development (SDG 11.a), climate change mitigation and adaptation policies, strategies and planning, awareness raising and institutional capacity (climate policy and social issues) (SDGs 13.2,13.3) and protection of marine environment and biodiversity, effective management of marine protected areas, sustainable use of natural resources and reduction of overfishing (environmental policy issues) (SDGs 14.1, 14.2, 14.5). The multi and inter-disciplinary nature of implementing research ensures that issues are dealt with in a comprehensive manner that facilitates national and international cooperation and develops interlinking networks between and amongst groups of relevant stakeholders, professionals and academics, thus contributing effectively to the achievement of SDG 17. In addition, EKKE publishes a significant number of scientific articles, policy papers, working papers and books on SDG oriented issues aiming at the widest possible dissemination of activities.

#### **7. National Hellenic Research Foundation (NHRF)**

The [National Hellenic Research Foundation \(NHRF\)](#), one of the largest research centers in

Greece, consists of the following three research institutes, which pursue frontier research and acquire strong expertise, addressing some of the SDGs, as follows:

- The [Theoretical and Physical Chemistry Institute \(TPCI/NHRF\)](#) covers renewable and sustainable energy (solar, water, hydrogen) conversion and storage, efficiency, and alternative fuel technologies (SDG 7); urban development and sustainable living, including clean/green technologies and engineering, sustainable building/green buildings and waste management (SDGs 9, 11); health and well-being, including nanomedicine solutions for cancer therapy, disease diagnostics, water treatment and sustainable and productive agriculture. (SDGs 3, 2, 6, 12).
- The [Institute of Chemical Biology \(ICB/NHRF\)](#) focuses on the development of new bioactive compounds against selected therapeutic targets and the evaluation in relevant preclinical disease models, in order to utilize their potential for innovative approaches of disease prevention and treatment (SDGs 3.3, 3.4, 3.8). ICB/NHRF's research also focuses on the identification and validation of biomarkers related to disease and drugs through modern holistic approaches for degenerative diseases, such as cancer, neurodegenerative diseases but also for aging and parasitic diseases. ICB/NHRF is also involved in SDG 9 through the development of new knowledge in order to foster industrial innovation for health, food, and cosmetics sectors as well as environmental friendly technologies.
- The [Institute of Historical Research \(IHR/NHRF\)](#) is involved in research programs for the preservation, documentation and promotion of material and intangible cultural heritage (SDG 11.4), as well as in research programs for the study of environmental history and the management of natural resources (SDG 13), with the aim to produce new knowledge and improve awareness and relevant policies.

## **8. National Observatory of Athens (NOA)**

The National Observatory of Athens is a research center operating under public law rules and procedures and is supervised by the General Secretariat for Research and Technology of the Ministry of Development and Investments. The Center was established in 1842 offering since then its services to research, science, and society. The National Observatory of Athens with its highly skilled human resources and important infrastructure plays today an important role in research in the fields of Astronomy, Astrophysics, Space applications, Environment, Energy and Meteorology, Seismology, and Geodynamics, at European and international level. Main strategic objectives of NOA, are (i) the development and enhancement of Innovative Forecasting, Detection, Monitoring and Management Services and tools regarding Natural and Anthropogenic Disasters (SDGs 9, 11, 13) and (ii) the promotion of NOA as a national pole regarding Research and Services in the Fields of Data Collection, Mitigation and Adaptation to Climate Change" (SDGs 7, 9, 11, 13). A strategic pillar of NOA is the monitoring of seismicity in Greece and related research, the monitoring of the earth's surface, atmosphere and near and outer space through ground-based and satellite systems, the study of climate and meteorological conditions, as well as the transformation of the research outcome into innovative services, regarding forecasting (where possible), the location, monitoring and managing of the effects of severe natural phenomena and natural disasters. In this context, the aim is to continue developing research excellence, which has already been achieved in various

units of NOA, that provide such innovative services, based on applied research developed in-house. Another strategic objective of NOA is to further enhance the Center's R&D actions in the field of specialized data collection and study of the phenomenon and the results of Climate Change and the coordination at national level of all relevant actions to strengthen response, as well as to enhance the accuracy of information given to the State in support of its national and international obligations. In order to achieve the research actions and the further development of relevant services, there has been a significant increase in the number of NOA's ground-based stations and other tools during the last five years. The recipients of NOA services and tools are public and private sector, Greek and European agencies (Ministries, Civil Protection agencies, Fire Department, Local Government, Regional Services, Environmental Organizations, etc.).