

Greece

A new strategy and SDG-aware public service and law making process supports policy integration and coherence during the whole policy cycle. The National Growth Strategy currently under elaboration will provide the framework to implement the SDGs taking into account national circumstances. Policy coherence, integrated planning and co-ordination are recognised as critical means of implementation. Updated guidelines are being developed by the General Secretariat of the Government (GSG) to ensure that Regulatory Impact Assessment Reports, which accompany the draft laws as well as the ex post evaluation of existing legislation, systematically take into account the three dimensions of sustainable development as reflected in the 2030 Agenda and SDGs. In parallel, training seminars for public employees are held by the GSG in collaboration with the National School of Public Administration and Local Government (EKDDA) to raise awareness of the importance of integrating the three dimensions of sustainable development and for building a network of policy makers across sectors and government levels with shared responsibility for PCSD and the SDGs.

A permanent co-ordination mechanism at the highest level fosters commitment and continuity in policy coherence efforts. In December 2016, the co-ordination of national efforts to implement the SDGs was assigned by law to the GSG. As a permanent mechanism close to the political leadership and working closely with the parliament, the GSG plays a key role in promoting a whole-of-government approach, preventing and resolving overlaps and disagreements, and mainstreaming SDGs into thematic legislation and sectoral policies. An interministerial co-ordination network for the SDGs was established in 2016 to support the work of the GSG. Two ministries take key roles in the co-ordination network: the Ministry of Foreign Affairs remains responsible for the external dimension of the SDGs, while the Ministry of Environment and Energy is thematically responsible for the implementation of seven SDGs (i.e. 6, 7, 11, 12, 13, 14 partly and 15). At the regional and local levels, the GSG co-operates closely with the Association of Greek Regions (ENPE) and the Central Union of Municipalities of Greece (KEDE) with a view to localising the SDGs. The GSG also engages key stakeholders in the process (e.g. civil society and social partners, the private sector, academia) and monitors SDG implementation in co-operation with ELSTAT (the statistical authority).

Table 3.7. Institutional mechanisms for PCSD in Greece

Building Block	Greece
Political commitment	The Greek National Growth Strategy, currently under elaboration, will be fully aligned to the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs. This strategic framework will emphasise the crucial role of policy coherence in achieving sustainable development. Responsibility for the overall co-ordination and implementation of the SDGs at national level is assigned to the centre of government, i.e. the General Secretariat of the Government (GSG), to ensure commitment at the highest political level and whole-of-government involvement in SDG implementation.
Policy integration	An interministerial co-ordination network for SDGs established in 2016 supports mainstreaming of the SDGs and the integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development into thematic legislation, strategies, policies and initiatives. Two instruments are the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA), which is required for all small-scale interventions and activities, and the Strategic Environmental Assessment, for large projects. Interministerial committees are set up to identify synergies, interlinkages and obstacles and prepare relevant proposals on specific issues such as the promotion of the circular economy.
Intergenerational timeframe	The GSG is a permanent structure, thus ensuring continuity of commitment and efforts at the highest level for implementing the SDGs.
Policy effects	Potential transboundary and intergenerational effects in the design of domestic and international policies are anticipated through the elaboration of Regulatory Impact Assessment Reports that precede the adoption of new laws. In addition, ex post evaluation of existing legislation should take into

	account the three dimensions of sustainable development. Unintended negative effects during implementation are mitigated through continuous monitoring, review and reporting.
Co-ordination	The central governmental body responsible for co-ordination is the Office of Coordination, Institutional, International and European Affairs of the General Secretariat of the Government (GSG). The co-ordination work of the GSG is supported by an interministerial co-ordination network bringing together representatives from all line ministries, acting as focal points in charge of working on SDG-related issues within their respective ministries and mainstreaming them in thematic legislation, policies and initiatives. It also comprises representatives from other governmental bodies belonging to the centre of government, including the Vice-Presidency and the General Secretariat for Coordination, as well as the Hellenic Statistical Authority. It plays an important role in reconciling policy priorities, objectives and instruments. Information on financial resource allocation is shared through the Ministry of Finance, which participates along with all line ministries in the interministerial co-ordination network. In the context of implementing the SDGs across sectors and governance levels, the co-ordination mechanism takes into account both domestic and international objectives tailored to national priorities and circumstances.
Local involvement	The GSG works closely with regions and municipalities to achieve the SDGs and PCSD, such as the Association of Greek Regions (ENPE) and the Central Union of Municipalities of Greece (KEDE). In addition, representatives of local and regional governments have actively participated in a number of multi-stakeholder events on SDGs for peer learning and exchange of best practices. The inputs from local and regional government representatives feed into policy formulation.
Stakeholder participation	Consultation and high-level events are used to raise awareness, provide a space for multi-stakeholder interaction, and foster dialogue and partnerships on SDGs. Currently, two additional institutional set-ups for stakeholder participation are being considered: 1) establishment of a parliamentary committee, where all political parties are represented, to discuss SDGs and PCSD on a regular basis, and 2) an online consultation platform to provide a broad forum for participation to discuss, submit proposals and promote stakeholders' good practices on SDG implementation. Currently, the Economic and Social Committee of Greece (ESC), the constitutionally established institution responsible for conducting social dialogue on the country's general policy and in particular on economic and social issues, has assumed an important role in promoting systematic and structured consultation and dialogue on the effective implementation of SDGs at different levels and sectors.
Monitoring and reporting	The GSG monitors the implementation of the SDGs at national level in co-operation with ELSTAT (the statistical authority). A progress report on the implementation of the National Implementation Plan on the SDGs (to be elaborated in 2019) will be submitted to the parliament at regular intervals for review and political guidance. The Hellenic Parliament is envisaged to have an important role in the follow-up and review of the implementation of the SDGs.

Box 3.5. Fostering culture change in the public service in support of policy coherence

The Office of Coordination, Institutional, International and European Affairs of the General Secretariat of the Government (GSG), in co-operation with the National School of Public Administration and Local Government (EKDDA), organised in November 2017 a three-day seminar on the SDGs to train senior public employees on the international, European and national dimensions of the SDGs. Another seminar organised by the Better Regulation Office of the GSG seeks to highlight, among others, the importance of integrating the three dimensions of sustainable development (economic, social, and environmental) in the better regulation tools. Through these educational and training seminars, senior officials from line ministries and local and regional administrations become fully aware of the vision, principles and core priorities of the 2030 Agenda. The initiative is also helping to build a network of senior policy makers across sectors and government levels with shared responsibility and commitment to PCSD and SDGs.

Source: OECD (2018), "Country profiles: Institutional mechanisms for policy coherence", in *Policy Coherence for Sustainable Development 2018: Towards Sustainable and Resilient Societies*, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://doi.org/10.1787/9789264301061-6-en>.