

Country	Greece
SIGI 2019 Category	Low
SIGI Value 2019	27%

Discrimination in the family		45%
	Legal framework on child marriage	50%
	Percentage of girls under 18 married	2%
	Legal framework on household responsibilities	50%
	Proportion of the population declaring that children will suffer if mothers are working outside home for a pay	-
	Female to male ratio of time spent on unpaid care work	2.8
	Legal framework on inheritance	50%
	Legal framework on divorce	50%

Restricted physical integrity		9%
	Legal framework on violence against women	25%
	Proportion of the female population justifying domestic violence	2%
	Prevalence of domestic violence against women (lifetime)	19%
	Sex ratio at birth (natural =105)	106.7
	Legal framework on reproductive rights	0%
	Female population with unmet needs for family planning	10%

Restricted access to productive and financial resources		33%
	Legal framework on working rights	25%
	Proportion of the population declaring this is not acceptable for a woman in their family to work outside home for a pay	7%
	Share of managers (male)	70%
	Legal framework on access to non-land assets	50%
	Share of house owners (male)	-
	Legal framework on access to land assets	50%
	Share of agricultural land holders (male)	72%
	Legal framework on access to financial services	0%
	Share of account holders (male)	50%

Restricted civil liberties		17%
	Legal framework on civil rights	0%
	Legal framework on freedom of movement	0%
	Percentage of women in the total number of persons not feeling safe walking alone at night	62%
	Legal framework on political participation	25%
	Share of the population that believes men are better political leaders than women	-
	Percentage of male MP's	82%
	Legal framework on access to justice	0%
	Share of women declaring lack of confidence in the justice system	47%

Note: Higher values indicate higher inequality. Percentages range from 0 to 100, while legal variables are categorised as 0%, 25%, 50%, 75% or 100%. See data source [here](#).

Source: OECD (2019), Gender, Institutions and Development Database, <https://oe.cd/ds/GIDDB2019>.

Greece

1. Discrimination in the family

a) Overarching legal framework for marriage

The law provides women with the same rights as men to enter into marriage (Civil Code, Art. 1350 et seq., 1372 et seq. and 1386 et seq.). Consent of the spouses, meaning free and clear agreement and declaration of will, is mandated during the ceremony (Civil Code, Article 1350). In addition, Article 131 of the Civil Code stipulates that a marriage is invalid if there is any suspicion that one of the spouses is not aware of his/her acts. No specific legal provisions which prohibit forced marriage could be located.

De-facto unions are regulated under Law 3719/2008 on 'Reforms regarding the family, the child, the society and other provisions'. The Law stipulates provisions for informal forms of partnership other than civil or religious marriage, known as "cohabitation pacts" (σύμφωνο συμβίωσης).

b) Child marriage

The Civil Code stipulates that the legal age of marriage is 18 years for both sexes, but courts may allow a minor to enter into marriage 'if it is necessary to do so for a significant reason' (Greek Civil Code, s.1350). While child marriage is prohibited (Civil Code, Articles 1372 and 1378), no legal sanctions for those facilitating the marriage of an individual who is under the legal age of marriage could be located.

Sharia Law is recognized under the Greek legal system (Law 147/1914, s.4; Law 1920/1991) and the Islamic 'Mufti' have jurisdiction among Muslim Greek citizens, who largely reside in the region of western Thrace, on family issues including marriage, divorce, alimony, custody, guardianship, emancipation of minors, wills, and inheritance (Tsavousoglou, 2015). Under Sharia Law, a person can get married once they have reached puberty (Tsavousoglou, 2015). Usually for girls, puberty is established by the first menstrual cycle and when this cannot be proven, at the age of 15 years (Tsavousoglou, 2015). The minimum possible marital age is nine years for women and twelve years for men, provided that there is parental consent (Tsavousoglou, 2015).

Early and/or forced marriages reportedly occur among Roma communities and the Muslim community of Thrace for reasons including virginity, family/clan relationships and poverty in Roma communities (Tsavousoglou, 2015). However, state-appointed Muftis in Thrace reported that the marriage of children under the age of 15 was not allowed and that marriages involving minors between the ages of 16 and 18 required a prosecutor's decision (US State Department, 2016). In addition, since 2002, the Ministry of Internal Affairs requires public registrars to dismiss application for registration of Muslim marriages officiated by proxy (Tsavousoglou, 2015).

c) Household responsibilities

Women have the same rights as men to be recognised as head of the household and married women are not required to obey their husbands (Civil Code, Article 1387). The law provides for joint parental authority during marriage (Civil Code, Article 1510), and stipulates that both spouses must “contribute to spousal support, child support, and support for the family household” (Civil Code, Articles 1389 and 1390). These regulations sought to recognise women’s unpaid housework and childcare, although CEDAW noted that an ideology which saw women as the main caregivers persisted (CEDAW, 2014).

Should couples enter into a religious marriage, they formally denounce the regulation of spousal law as outlined in the Civil Code, and women accordingly accept their role of caretaker of the household, the children, and wider family (Tsavousoglou, 2015).

d) Divorce

Women and men have equal rights to initiate and finalise a divorce (Greek Civil Code, ss.1439 – 1441). Child custody is determined by the court in the best interest of the child (Civil Code, s.1513). Consensual divorces involving minor children can only be approved by the court if the parents submit a written agreement to the court regulating the children’s custody (Civil Code, Article 1441). Article 1510 of the Civil Code provides that the parents jointly exercise parental care without referring to the relations between them (i.e. if they cohabit, if they are factually separated, if their marriage has been annulled, or if they are divorced). While divorce rates are relatively low in Greece, the latter continues to carry some stigma, especially in rural areas, where women may avoid divorce due to the perceived risk of social disadvantages for themselves and their children (Lazaridis, 2012).

Under Sharia law, the right of divorce belongs to the husband (Tsavousoglou, 2015). More specifically, Muslim women in Western Thrace have the option to pursue the dissolution of wedlock by the consent of their husband (*Khul*) (Tsavousoglou, 2015). In exchange for the agreement of her husband, she must return the dower she has received (Tsavousoglou, 2015). Child custody is systematically awarded to the mother for boys aged seven years and under and girls aged nine years and under, thereafter reverting to the husband (Tsavousoglou, 2015). Before a divorce is granted, however, it is common for the Mufti to attempt to reconcile the couple (Bano, 2014). However, such efforts often take place in a male-dominated environment where customary perceptions relative to the position of women in marriage are reinforced in order to achieve a conciliation (Bano, 2014).

e) Inheritance

Greek law provides for equal inheritance rights for surviving female spouses and daughters of land and non-land assets (Greek Civil Code, ss.1813 – 1824). Any person over the age of 18 and of sound mind is entitled to make a will to secure the transfer of their land and non-land assets (Civil Code, Articles 1710-2035). If a person dies without making a will, all assets will be divided among the next of kin (Civil Code, Articles 1710-2035).

Under Sharia Law, sons inherit twice as much as daughters (Tsavousoglou, 2015). Several studies suggest, however, that the application of Islamic inheritance law in Western Thrace is limited (Tsavousoglou, 2015). The CEDAW and CRC Committees have urged Greece to ensure that such customary and religious practices are not given precedence over national law (CEDAW, 2013).

2. Restricted physical integrity

a) Violence against women

Greece signed the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence in 2011 (Council of Europe, n.d).

Violence against women is addressed through provisions in the Criminal Code and Law 3500/2006 on “Prevention and combating of domestic violence”.

A national programme to prevent and combat violence against women was adopted since 2009. Its implementation led to: (i) development of a nation-wide 24-hour helpline for female victims of violence, operating in English and Greek to help female immigrants (ii) organisation of public awareness campaigns for both sexes (iii) strengthened inter-ministerial co-operation and (iii) signing of a protocol between the General Secretariat for Gender Equality (GSGE) and bar associations to create and train a pool of lawyers to support female victims of violence. Currently, the National Action Plan on Gender Equality 2016-2020 continues the work of the previous national programmes and refers to different forms of gender-based violence including domestic violence, rape, sexual harassment and women trafficking.

The General Secretariat for Gender Equality is responsible for the implementation of the programme and the relevant actions and policies. There is no national body officially entrusted with the evaluation and monitoring of the programme (WAVE, 2016, p.4). The programme is financially supported by the National Strategic Reference Framework. The Greek National Commission for Human Rights expressed its concern that measures promoting and protecting women’s rights essentially depend on EU programs for their funding (GNCHR, 2015).

Despite these actions, violence against women remains an issue in Greece. CEDAW noted poor communication among the different levels of actors/institutions involved and limited resources (CEDAW, 2014). Moreover, government and NGO-run shelters for female victims of violence have reportedly closed, and criminal courts can take reportedly up to a year to process cases of violence against women (European Commission, 2015).

b) Domestic violence

Domestic violence is a criminal offence with penalties ranging from two to ten years of imprisonment (Law No. 3500/2006, Articles 6-9). The Law 3500/2006 on ‘Prevention and combating of domestic violence’ covers abuse from former partners and within the family, as well as unmarried intimate partners (Article 1) and covers physical (Article 6), sexual (Article 9) and psychological violence (Articles 6 and 7), but not economic violence. Sexual abuse, including those taking place within the household, is also criminalised and punished by a one-year minimum imprisonment term (Criminal Code, s.342). Article 311 of the Penal Code punishes fatal injury. The European Commission (2015) noted that most acts criminalised by the Law no. 3500/2006 were in fact already covered by the Penal Code, resulting in confusion between the two laws (GNCHR, 2015).

The 3500/2006 Law also introduced a system of penal mediation, which has been brought into question as the prosecutors entitled to implement mediation are given judicial competences which

are not incompatible with their office. Moreover, the European Commission (2015) noted that mediation was not always adequately carried out since the Prosecutor's Office often lacked necessary specialised staff such as social workers (GNCHR, 2015).

The national programme to prevent and combat violence against women specifically addresses domestic violence and includes provisions for the prevention of domestic violence, as does the Law 3500/2006.

c) Rape

Although there is no law specifically addressing sexual violence, rape is a criminal offense under Law 3500/2006 (Articles 1 and 8). Rape is defined as the coercion to intercourse or another "lewd act" or tolerance thereof, by corporal violence or threat of great and imminent danger (Law 3500/2006, Articles 1 and 8). A "lewd act" is to be understood as "an act not reaching intercourse, which offends common decency and morals and aims at satisfying or exciting sexual desire" (Law 3500/2006, Articles 1 and 8).

Until 2006, Articles 336 and 338 of the Greek Penal Code prohibited only extra-marital "rape" and "sexual abuse". Law 3500/2006 criminalised marital rape and marital sexual abuse by deleting the term "extra-marital" from these above provisions (Articles 1 and 8). Rape or sexual abuse of any other family member is punishable under Articles 336 and 338 of the Penal Code, along with incest (art. 345).

Rape is punishable by penalties from five to twenty years' imprisonment (Criminal Code, Article 338; Law 3500/2006, Article 8). Increased penalties for aggravated forms of rape is provided when the perpetrator takes advantage of the victim's "insanity [...] or incapacity to resist for whatever reason" (Criminal Code, Article 338; Law 3500/2006, Article 8). The Greek National Commission for Human Rights noted with concern that few perpetrators were prosecuted and punished (GNCHR, 2014). European Parliament observed that conviction rates for rape were low for first-time offenders, but sentences were harsh for repeat offenders (European Parliament, 2013). No applicable provisions could be found on whether perpetrators are exempt from facing criminal charges for rape if they marry the victim.

d) Sexual harassment

The law addresses sexual harassment, for which there are both civil remedies and criminal penalties (Law No. 3896 of 2010, Articles 2, 3, and 23; Criminal Code, Article 337). Penalties include fines and two months to five years in prison (Implementation of Equal Opportunities and Equal Treatment of Men and Women No. 3896, Article 23). The law covers sexual harassment in the workplace but not in educational or sporting establishments, public places, or cyber harassment or stalking (Implementation of Equal Opportunities and Equal Treatment of Men and Women No. 3896, Articles 1 and 3(2)).

The Greek Ombudsman reiterated its previous findings about the absence of a policy against sexual harassment in most businesses and private and public workplaces, emphasizing that employers were often unaware of their obligations to process filed sexual harassment complaints from its their employees (The Greek Ombudsman, 2016). The ombudsman noted, however, that an increase in

gender-equality complaints filed in 2015 indicated victims' increasing awareness and confidence in denouncing such incidents despite the difficulties in proving sexual harassment (The Greek Ombudsman, 2016).

e) Female genital mutilation

No criminal law addressing female genital mutilation as a harmful practice could be found. There is no evidence suggesting that female genital mutilation is a major matter of concern in Greece.

f) Abortion

Abortion on request can be legally obtained during the first 12 weeks of pregnancy (Law 1609/86). If the pregnancy is the result of rape, incest or seduction of a minor, abortion is permitted during the first 19 weeks of pregnancy (Law 1609/86). In the case of serious foetal abnormalities, the legal limit is 24 weeks (Law 1609/86).

The CEDAW Committee expressed its concern over Greece's 'very high rate of abortions and [...] very low use of high quality, efficient methods of contraception, which means that women resort to abortions as a method of family planning' (CEDAW, 2013). The European Parliament (2013) similarly noted rising rates of abortion, linking the latter in part to the difficulties of family-planning in times of economic uncertainty. The Committee urged Greece to subsidise contraception, reduce the practice of abortion as a method of family planning, reduce the rate of caesarean sections performed without medical necessity, and guarantee access to sexual and reproductive health services for disadvantaged groups of women (CEDAW, 2015).

3. Restricted access to productive and financial resources

a) Secure access to land and non-land assets

Married and unmarried women have the same rights as men to own, use, make decisions, and use as collateral land and non-land assets (Civil Code, Articles 999 and 1000). The default marital regime is separation of property (Civil Code, Articles 1397 and 1400) and the original owner administers marital property (Civil Code, Article 1399). However, the CEDAW Committee has expressed concern over the absence of legal provisions regulating the distribution of property in de facto unions, which may lead to discriminatory practices towards women (CEDAW, 2013). Furthermore, among the Muslim community of Western Thrace, divorce typically involves the waiver of women's dowers, often consequently leading to the deprivation of their property rights, both in terms of land and non-land assets (Tsavousoglou, 2015).

The Hellenic Ministry of Rural Development and Food has developed some strategies to foster women's entrepreneurship in rural areas via training programmes and provision of information, as well as the development of women's cooperatives (EuroGender, 2017). Moreover, institutional cooperation has been formalised since early 2016 between the Ministry and the General Secretariat for Gender Equality in order to improve the situation of women in rural areas, resulting recently in a bill on agricultural cooperatives (EuroGender, 2017).

b) Secure access to formal financial resources

Married and unmarried women have the same rights as men to open a bank account and obtain credit (Law 3769, Articles 3 and 4). In addition, the law prohibits discrimination by creditors on the basis of gender in access to credit (Law 3769/2009, Articles 3 and 4). Measures have been taken by the government to increase women's access to financial services. For example, a female entrepreneurship project for 4000 unemployed women aged 22-64 was initiated by the Greek Manpower Employment Organization (OAED) – the main body responsible for promoting employment in Greece (Eurofound, 2012).

The European Parliament reported that the persistent crisis of the agricultural sector and rising unemployment in Greece conversely resulted in a rise in women-led entrepreneurial activities, often in the form of cooperatives and small businesses in the agricultural sector (e.g. agro-tourism, agro-food production) (European Parliament, 2013). However, the Parliament also raised concern over continued ideological and cultural barriers facing women entrepreneurs and gender inequalities in accessing resources including information and credit (European Parliament, 2013).

c) Workplace rights

Greece has ratified ILO Conventions 100, 111, and 156, but not 183 or 189 (ILO, n.d.).

Law 1414/84 mandates non-discrimination on the basis of sex in employment and abolishes all forms of discrimination against women's rights to entering professions. The Law also included provisions for protection against displacement for maternity reasons. Law 3846/2010 prohibits employers from discriminating on the basis of gender in hiring, job advertisements, selection criteria, recruitment, terms and conditions, promotions, training, assignments and termination (Articles 1 and 11-14). In addition, the Constitution (article 22) ensures that all workers are entitled to equal pay for work of equal value irrespective of sex or other distinction (see also Act 3896/2010, Article 4(1)).

Female participation in the labour force remains, however, relatively low in Greece and a gender wage gaps persist (European Commission, 2016). Moreover, horizontal and vertical gender-segregation in the labour market are driven by educational choices, differential income roles and care responsibilities between men and women, as well as organisational structures and biases (European Commission, 2016).

Female employees in Greece are entitled to 119 days of paid maternity leave, which is fully financed by the Government and equates to 50% of their wages (Law 2874/2000, Article 11; Ministry of Labour, Social Security and Social Solidarity, 2016). In the Public Sector there is a five-month scheme; two months must be taken before birth and three after birth. For every child after the third, the length of post-natal leave is extended by two. A law was voted in April 2012 brings the Greek framework into alignment with that of the European Union (Law 4075/12, articles 48-54).

The law also mandates paternity leave of 2 days, paid entirely by the employer (National General Collective Labour Agreement 2000-2001, Articles 10). The law does not mandate paid parental leave, although parents can take an unpaid parental leave of up to 4 months for each child under the age of 6 (Law 4075/2012, Article 50). The Civil Servants Code, however, mandates a fully paid, transferable

parental leave of 9 months in the public sector, for each child up to the age of four (Civil Servants Code, Article 53(2)).

The CEDAW expressed concern over the extension of the period during which working mothers cannot be dismissed after their return from maternity leave for 18 months, stating that the amendment contributed to them being offered part-time and rotation work with reduced levels of pay in many cases (CEDAW 2013; CEDAW 2015; Ombudsman, 2016). The Committee also expressed concern over other gender-based challenges in employment, including a higher rate of unemployment among women, a persistent vertical and horizontal segregation of occupations and a gender wage gap (CEDAW 2013; CEDAW 2015). The Ombudsman (2016) similarly noted that despite rich and dynamic legislation, relevant implementation practices remain limited (Ombudsman, 2015; CEDAW Shadow Report, 2013). It was noted that in the private sector employers continue to view pregnancy, maternity and family as impediments to work, and illegal dismissal from employment or changes in work terms imposed by private-sector employers due to pregnancy continue to take place (Ombudsman, 2015; CEDAW Shadow Report, 2013). The public sector is however more consistent with the implementation of the relevant legislation, particularly when it comes to permanent civil servants (Ombudsman, 2016).

4. Restricted Civil liberties

a) Citizenship rights

Women have the same rights as men to acquire, change, and retain their nationality, regardless of their marital status (Constitution, Article 4). Women also have the same rights as men to confer nationality to their spouse (Law 3284/2004, Art. 5(2)). Both married and unmarried women have the same rights as men to confer nationality to their children (Law 3838/2010, Article 1).

Although the Constitution does not recognise or prohibit multiple and/or intersectional discrimination, Law 3396/2011 on the general reform of the Labour Inspectorate Body and other provisions on social insurance requires the labour inspectorate to supervise the principle of equal treatment taking account of multiple discrimination, including HIV (European, 2016). Multiple discrimination is also among the six major policies areas in the National Action Plan for Gender Equality 2016-2020 (EuroGender, 2016).

Married and unmarried women have the same rights as men to apply for identity cards and passports (Greek police, n.d.; National Passport Center, n.d.). No legal provision which restricts women's same rights as men to travel outside the country could be located.

b) Political Voice

Women have the same rights as men to vote and hold public and political office in the legislature, executive, and judiciary regardless of their marital status (Constitution, Article 51; Pres. Decree 351/2003; Law 1224/1981).

The National Programme for Substantive Gender Equality 2009-2013 sought to increase women's participation in political life through measures including the establishment of binding quotas, support for female candidates and politicians, gender mainstreaming in local governance, and stronger compliance with the minimum quota for each sex in civil service boards (Ministry of Interior,

Decentralisation and E-Government, General Secretariat for Gender Equality, National Programme for Substantive Gender Equality 2010-2013). Moreover, the organisation of public awareness-raising campaigns and regional seminars for 1000 elected women, and the creation of a Register of elected women at the local and regional levels also strengthened women's political participation (Ministry of Interior, Decentralisation and E-Government, General Secretariat for Gender Equality, 2012).

As a result of these initiatives, binding quotas were established at the national and sub-national levels (Presidential Decree 26/2012 and Law 3852/2010), obliging political parties to present at least one-third of candidates of each sex in national, regional, municipal and community elections (Quota Project, 2016). If the gender quota requirement is not met, the party list is not accepted (Article 35 of Presidential Decree 26/2012; Law 3852/2010, Article 19(6)). Of the 6 major policies areas which are the focus of the National Action Plan for Gender Equality 2016-2020, the last is 'equal participation of women in decision-making' (European Commission, 2017)

Despite such legislative advances, there are relatively few women in leadership positions within the government and judiciary. The CEDAW Committee and European Commission expressed concern over the underrepresentation of women at all levels of political and public life, the inadequacy of the quota system, and barriers to women's equal political participation, such as negative cultural attitudes, insufficient capacity-building for potential candidates and limited financial resources (CEDAW, 2013; European Commission, 2017).

c) Access to justice

Married and unmarried women have the capacity and rights as men to sue and be sued (Civil Code, Articles 5 and 7; Code of Civil Procedure, Articles 62(a) and 63(1)). Their testimonies in all types of court cases (civil, criminal, family court, tribunal) carry the same evidentiary weight as a man (Constitution, Article 20). The right to judicial protection is also enshrined in Article 20 of the Constitution. However, women rarely file claims, particularly in the private sector, for fear of being victimised and/or acquiring a 'bad reputation' in an already difficult labour market (European Commission, 2015). No legislation or measures in place to protect women from violence in public and political life could be found.

In terms of a specialized body tasked with monitoring gender equality, the Ombudsman was established as an independent administrative authority by Act 2477/1997 (as amended by Act 3094/2003). This authority is responsible for promotion the principle of equal treatment of all persons, without discrimination on the ground of gender or marital status. The Ombudsman is assisted by six Deputy Ombudsmen.

The Ombudsmen receive complaints, intervene between parties in order to achieve a solution ensuring the complainant's rights, and give non-binding opinions. They publish annual reports and propose legislative changes. The Ombudsman's Annual Reports include a Special Report on Gender Equality in Employment and Occupation. The Ombudsman emphasised an extensive discrimination against women in practice and a relatively low number of complaints, which, however, has increased in the public sector, in particular concerning parental leave. An increase in the number of complaints was not noted for the private sector where discrimination in practice is more serious and widespread (European Commission, 2015; Ombudsman, 2014). In December 2016, The Parliament adopted a law

designating the Greek Ombudsman as a national police complaints mechanism. The mechanism has the power to conduct its own investigations but its recommendations to the disciplinary bodies of law enforcement agencies are non-binding (Amnesty, 2017). Moreover, Law 4443/2016 assigns overall powers to the Greek Ombudsman to receive and examine complaints on discrimination in the public and private sector.

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