

Annual Rule of Law Report - Council of Europe contribution

COUNCIL OF EUROPE



CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

2026

Directorate General Human Rights and Rule of Law (DG I)

Greece

I Justice System

PACE

Monitoring committee

Greece | [Doc. 16316](#)

The Monitoring Committee has appointed as co-rapporteurs Ms Miapetra Kumpula-Natri (Finland, SOC) in January 2025, alongside Ms Laura Castel (Spain, UEL) who had been appointed in March 2024.

The preparatory work started with an exchange of views with members of the Greek delegation. The members of the delegation welcomed the periodic review as an important opportunity to highlight the significant transformations that had occurred in Greece over the last years. The latest periodic review, from 2017, concluded that Greece was generally fulfilling its membership obligations and that its democratic institutions functioned in line with the Council of Europe's standards. The report nonetheless identified various concerns and made recommendations across all three pillars of the Organisation mission.

Since then, Greece has achieved significant improvements. It enjoys robust economic conditions, the asylum system has been reformed, and the democratic landscape has also strengthened. The three deficits that the country had to face – indebtedness, trade deficit and lack of trust – have been resolved. Nevertheless, significant challenges within the scope of the periodic review persisted. Corruption by governing officials, government interference in sensitive judicial investigations, draft legislation seeking to criminalize civil society organisations, violence against migrants by internal security forces and the use of Predator spyware against politicians and journalists have been mentioned. On the other hand, the plans by the ruling majority to amend the Constitution, in particular to make judicial removal procedures independent of political power and to review the method of appointing judicial officials. The rapporteurs will focus on, inter alia, these issues during a fact-finding visit to Athens on 27-29 April 2026.

CPDL

A rapid increase of prisoners from approximately 10.000 to 13.000 (capacity 10.500) in 1-2 years' time.

CEPEJ

The European Commission for the Efficiency of Justice (CEPEJ) regularly collects data on judicial systems concerning efficiency and quality of the justice system. In the framework of the CEPEJ Study for the EU Justice Scoreboard, CEPEJ prepares Country profiles annually, including [Greece](#).

The 2024 data have been collected, quality checked and sent to DG-JUST in the framework of the 2026 EU Justice Scoreboard. The publication of the country profiles based on 2024 data will depend on final acceptance of the CEPEJ Study by DG-JUST. The CEPEJ Secretariat (christel.schurrer@coe.int) remains at the disposal of European Commission for any question related to these data.

EXECUTION OF JUDGMENTS OF THE EUROPEAN COURT OF HUMAN RIGHTS

Official statistics on the execution of judgments of the European Court of Human Rights are published in the Committee of Ministers [Annual reports on the execution](#) (next edition to be published in March 2026). The Department for the Execution of Judgments can be consulted for any question on statistics: DGI-Execution@coe.int.

Accessibility (e.g. Legal aid, digitalisation), resources, use of assessment tools and standards

Tsiolis (51774/17, final on 19 February 2025) (standard supervision) concerns the violation of the right to a fair trial on account of the dismissal by the Supreme Administrative Court the appeal on point of law relating to a claim for compensation for deprivation of his property, for non-compliance with the admissibility requirements (violations of Article 6). Given that the applicant was required to put forward arguments on the case-law of the Supreme Administrative Court, the Court emphasised that judgments delivered by the administrative justice were not published in any official journal or accessible database containing the entire case-law to which the applicant or his lawyer had access. This would have significantly hindered the applicant's ability to find relevant case-law even if he had been represented by a lawyer (§ 79).

Length of proceedings

Vervele (34012/20, final on 26 November 2025) concerns the violation of the right to a fair trial on account of the excessive length of the proceedings before civil courts, that lasted between 2001 and 2020 (violation of Article 6 § 1). It also concerns the lack of an effective remedy in this respect (violation of Article 13 in conjunction with Article 6 § 1). The Court found that the compensatory remedy at issue (provided in the Law 4239/2014) did not afford appropriate redress and was not effective, as a result in part of the legal framework and in part due to its application by domestic courts (§ 83).

Enforcement of judgements

Micha and Others (13991/20, final on 8 January 2025) (enhanced supervision) concerns failure of the domestic authorities (local and regional) to comply with a final domestic judgment rendered in 2015 annulling a 2003 decision designating the applicants' property as "green area" (violations of Article 6§1). The Court also found a violation of Article 13 in conjunction with Article 1 of Protocol No. 1, due to the absence of an effective remedy to ensure the enforcement of this judgment.

The Court provided indications under Article 46 with regards to the implementation of this case. It noted that this case is indicative of the recurring problems in the respondent State's system with the legal gaps in the legislation (the domestic legal framework before the entry into force of Law 4759/2020, § 66) and administrative practice in relation to the removal of burdens and the amendment of urban plans (§ 66). The Court considered that for the purposes of implementing the Law 4759/2020, the national authorities could take ex officio initiatives capable of unblocking the assets placed in a situation such as that which the applicants in the present case complain of in respect of their land.

Presentation on Hudoc.exec: [Micha and Others](#) (See also [Kanellopoulos](#) concerning the implementation of judgments following the entry into force of Law 4759/2020)

Latest decisions of the Committee of Ministers: n/a (first examination expected in December 2026)

Latest submissions: [DH-DD\(2025\)529](#)

Kanellopoulos group (11325/05) (standard supervision) concerns non-compliance by the authorities with final domestic judgments ordering the lifting of land expropriation orders or charges on land (violations of Article 6 § 1). In a number of cases this was due to the fact that the authorities, after having lifted the expropriation, re-designated the same plots of land for the same or similar public use without paying compensation, contrary to the operative provisions of the judgments in question. In some cases, the Court also found a violation of Article 13 of the Convention due to the lack of an effective remedy to ensure the enforcement of these judgments.

Presentation on Hudoc.exec: [Kanellopoulos](#) (See also [Beka-Koulocheri](#))

Latest decisions of the Committee of Ministers: [CM/Del/Dec\(2024\)1507/H46-10](#)

Latest submissions: [DH-DD\(2024\)730](#)

II Anti-corruption framework

N/A

III Media pluralism

COMMISSIONER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

[Memorandum](#) on migration and border control from the Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights, Michael O’Flaherty, following his visit to Greece from 3 to 7 February, published on 6 May. The Commissioner observed that non-state actors, including media professionals, operate in a challenging environment in Greece and recommended that the Greek authorities ensure the effective protection of media freedom, prevent misuse of judicial proceedings to intimidate or silence media professionals, and engage in open dialogue with media in full respect of their independence.

IV Other institutional issues related to checks and balances

COMMISSIONER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

[Memorandum](#) on migration and border control from the Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights, Michael O’Flaherty, following his visit to Greece from 3 to 7 February, published on 6 May. The Commissioner recommended that the Greek authorities undertake a thorough review of existing accountability mechanisms competent for investigating and responding to human rights violations against refugees and migrants and take resolute action to address the systemic shortcomings affecting their effectiveness and independence. He called on the Greek authorities to ensure that national human rights bodies have the capacity to monitor and report on the situation of asylum seekers and migrants at borders and that their recommendations are promptly implemented. He also recommended that the Greek authorities ensure that new mechanisms set up under the EU Pact on Asylum and Migration are effective, and in particular that their independence and scope of action are in line with guidance issued by the Council of Europe Committee for the Prevention of Torture and the Fundamental Rights Agency of the European Union.

In relation to the Pylos shipwreck, the Commissioner recommended that Greek authorities refrain from using a rhetoric undermining the office of the Ombudsman and follow up promptly and adequately to the report of the Greek Ombudsman on the Pylos shipwreck, including through the adoption of appropriate disciplinary measures in relation to those found responsible for wrongdoing, at all levels.

In relation to the contribution of non-state actors, including civil society organisations and human rights defenders, to the protection of human rights, the Commissioner observed that these actors operate in a challenging environment in Greece and recommended that Greek authorities acknowledge the role and work of civil society and media and support human rights defenders protecting the rights of asylum seekers and migrants, including by creating an enabling environment where journalists, activists and other members of civil society can carry out their work free and unhindered. He also called on the Greek authorities to end any form of

criminalisation or repression of human rights defenders assisting asylum seekers and migrants, refrain from inflammatory or stigmatising rhetoric about their role, and publicly communicate that challenging government policies, including through advocacy, public campaigning and litigation, represents an entirely legitimate activity in a democratic society.

Memorandum on the human rights of Roma in Greece, by the Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights, Michael O’Flaherty, following his visit to the country from 3 to 7 February, published on 3 June. The Commissioner recommended that the Greek authorities further support the Ombudsman’s special mandate as Mechanism for the Investigation of Arbitrary Incidents, including by providing the necessary financial and human resources to perform his tasks and take measures to ensure the cooperation of law enforcement, including as regards the implementation of the Ombudsman’s recommendations.