

PREFECTURE OF ILIA

GREECE

Type of institution	Public body
President	Charalampos KAFIRAS
Party	Socialist
Minister in charge of immigration	Prokopis PAVLOPOULOS
Party	PPE
Political mandate	Until 2010

General Data

Area in sq km	2.618 km <sup>2</sup>
Population	193.288
Key sectors of activity	Agriculture, tourism
Unemployment rate %	8,41%

Data on the immigrant and asylum population

Number of Immigrants	No data available
Number of Asylum seekers	No data available
Number of Refugees	No data available
Non-EU citizens %	No data available
Are asylum seekers allowed to work?	Yes
Non-EU citizens employed	No data available
Sectors of activities	Construction, house keeping

Please, indicate to which year these data refer.

## Immigration history in the area

Greece has increasingly confirmed its status as a destination country. In particular, major population inflows towards Greece during the last twenty years have included:

- co-ethnic returnees, notably the Pontic Greeks, arriving from the former Soviet Republics (Georgia, Kazakhstan, Russia and Armenia)
- immigrants of Greek descent, notably ethnic Greek Albanian citizens
- immigrants from non EU countries
- a smaller number of returning Greek migrants from northern Europe, the US, Canada and Australia

At the eve of the 1990s Greece lacked a legislative frame for the control and management of immigration. The first law 1975/1991 made nearly impracticable the entry and stay of economic migrants, seeking for jobs. In the years that followed, hundreds of thousands immigrants came to Ilia without documents or permits.

The presidential decrees 358/1997 and 359/1997 inaugurated the first immigrant regularisation programme and established the first foundations in Greece for an institutional framework able to deal with immigration. In addition, the data collected through the procedure of application for a green card, offered some insights to the socio-economic and demographic features of immigrant population.

In August 2005, the Greek Parliament adopted a new immigration bill with the objective to rationalise the co-ordination of Greece's immigration policy and simplify procedures. Nonetheless, its implementation did not reach the expectations and revealed the necessity for an adequate legislative framework in the field of immigration.

## Main problems related with immigration-integration issues

- Absence from the public sphere
- Lack of legal framework on immigration
- Local population prejudices
- Inadequate Public Services
- Language problems - lack of trained interpreters
- Finding employment
- Accommodation
- Poverty

## Competences shared among national, regional and local levels

The only competence, besides the common objectives regarding integration, is the official documentation for the legalization of immigrants. The two most important official documents, the Residence Permit and the Work Permit, are obtained respectively from the National Administration, through the Regional Authority, and the Local Authorities through the Prefecture Administration.

## Administrative detention centres (how many are they and who is in charge of them)

None

## European projects implemented in the area (year)

The Prefectural Authority of Ilia has materialized projects within the framework of European Programmes and Initiatives such as INTERREG, LIFE and LEADER. Some of the projects are:

- "Landscape Protection and Development" - Innovative Methods for Environmental Management of the landscapes of I.S.E.O. lake", as part of the INTERREG III B CADSES program (2006).
- "Ethnological Map of the eastern Mediterranean" - as part of the INTERREG III B ARCHIMED programme (2006).
- "Integral System for Control and Management of superficial aquatic resources" - in cooperation with the "Patras Scientific Park", as part of the INTERREG III B ARCHIMED programme (2006).
- Protocol of Agreement with twelve (12) other Prefectures of Western Greece, the Ionian Islands and Southern Italy with a view to the promotion of cooperation within the programme INTERREG III A: GREECE - ITALY, with special emphasis on the Exploitation of Cultural Heritage (2006).
- "European Regional and Local Authorities for the Integration of Migrants (ERLAIM)" - as part of the INTI programme (2007).
- "European Research Network on Sustainable Tourism (ERNEST)" - as part of the ERA NET actions under the 7<sup>th</sup> Framework Programme (2008).

Apart from all the above it has submitted significant suggestions and materializes projects within the framework of the programme Information Society, this placing special emphasis on the dynamics and the potential that the use of new technologies can ensure an organization.

## Regional/local strategies for immigrants and asylum seekers

### Integration policy

Although, there is certain flexibility regarding the use of public health and education services and a generally positive attitude in the greatest part of the public bodies and the population, no official policy has been formulated yet.

### Education strategies

There is no specific strategy regarding foreigners. According to the Law, foreign pupils may register at school even if they don't have proper supporting documents.

### Health system

Immigrants with official documents are treated on the same terms as Greeks. Foreigners without a residence permit are not accepted for treatment at hospitals, medical centers and clinics, except for emergency treatment. Under age children and foreigners who have applied for political asylum, and whose application has not been processed are not accepted either.

### Strategy for minors and minors non accompanied

They are cared by the same institutions as their Greek counterparts.

### Housing policy

None

### Innovative policies

- Targeted learning of the Greek language
- Promotion and valorization of the identity of the "Other"
- Training of the Public - Service personnel

## Further regional/local competences

Effective regional governance presupposes the existence of decentralization. In the case of Greece, the regional governance is still embryonic due to the lack decentralization and the consequent lack of competence. Regions do not have authorities destined to resolve the issue of integration. As the phenomenon of delocalization prevails, regional authorities do not have financial autonomy and legislative capacity.