

## Local Union of Municipalities and Communities of Attica

Greece

Type of institution	Association of Municipalities and Communities (legal status: private law legal entity of public and common utility)
President	Dimitrios Kalogeropoulos
Party	New Democracy
Minister in charge of immigration	Mr. Markogiannakis
Role	Undersecretary, Minister of the Interior
Party	New Democracy
Political mandate	January 2009-

### General Data

Area in sq km	3.808 km <sup>2</sup>
Population	4.5 million citizens
Key sectors of activity	<p>Commerce, services, tourism, shipping</p> <p>The economy of Attica is based mostly on activities related to the tertiary sector (77.7% of the GDP). 35% of the country's entrepreneurs are to be found in the Attica region. The growth of capital investment, multinational companies and the increase of tourism in Athens contribute to its remarkable economic development.</p> <p>The shipbuilding yards of "Skaramagkas" and "Eleusina", the expansion of the port of Lavrion and the continuous growth of international industries on the outskirts of Athens have led to the massive urbanization of the city, which has resulted in more employment opportunities.</p>
Unemployment rate %	6.6% (2008)

Data on the immigrant and asylum population

Number of Immigrants	In 2007, approximately 800.000 in Greece, data n.a for the region of Attica only
Number of Asylum seekers	In 2007, approximately 13.020 (93% of the total number of refugees)
Number of Refugees	Estimated between 14.000 and 15.000 (2007)
Non-EU citizens %	10% in Greece (2007) Data n.a for the region of Attica only
Are asylum seekers allowed to work?	Yes (Presidential Decree 189/98 and Presidential Decree 220/07)
Non-EU citizens employed	In Greece, 12% of the insured in the private sector were non EU-citizens (2007)  Data n.a for the region of Attica only
Sectors of activities	Mainly building, housekeeping, industry, tourism, and services.

Please, indicate to which year these data refer.

## Immigration history in the area

Composition of immigrants in Greece: After a massive emigration until the 60's, the phenomenon has reversed and Greece has experimented since 1970 several waves of immigration: from eastern countries, Philipinos, Albanians, Kurds, Pakistanis, Iraquis, Palestinians, Afghanis, Chinese, Somalians... In the 70's, the first group of immigrants came mainly from Afghanistan, Pakistan, Turkey (Kurds) and the Philippines. After the collapse of the Soviet Union in the 90's, the immigrants came mainly from Eastern Europe (Romania, Bulgaria, Moldavia, Ukraine, Poland, Georgia and Russia). However, the main influx continues to come from Albania as they count for around 60% of the total number of immigrants present in Greece.

Basic laws on Asylum and Immigration: The law voted on 23/08/2005 which entered into force in 01/2006 concerning "the entry, residence and social integration in Greece of third country nationals" has created an interministerial commission for the follow-up of the immigration policy. This law reinforces the decentralisation of the insertion policy by increasing the competences at sub-national level that is to say principally the regions and municipalities; these bodies are supported by Centres receiving immigrants. The 2005 law responds to broader European requirements in the field of integration and protection of third country nationals like language training, learning of the host society's values, social support, access to housing, access to education, employment and training. The 2005 law had as a result more than 200.000 legalizations of immigrants.

Another recent law, as important as the previous one, concerning asylum and immigration, was voted in 2007: it resulted in simplifying procedures concerning the issuing and the renewal of resident permits as well as the smoother integration of immigrants in the Greek society.

## Main problems related with immigration-integration issues

Greece occupies a geostrategic position in Europe as its border is the largest territorial external border and the longest sea-border of the E.U. The only "Schengen" country in the South-East of the continent, Greece has become the principal gateway of immigration from Central Asia, Middle East, Africa and the Balkans.

In the region of Attica, maybe more than in the other regions of the country, the main challenge appears to be the smooth integration of immigrants in the different municipalities. Access to the labour market and housing is of major importance in the integration process as immigrants face greater difficulties in this field.

## Competences shared among national, regional and local levels

### Sub-national level (regions/municipalities):

1. The immigrants submit their application for a stay permit to the municipality.
2. The Region is in charge of processing this demand.
3. The implementation of an integration policy for the immigrants (provide services like access to the labour market, housing, education, healthcare) is of the responsibility of the sub-national level (law 3386/2005 which has reinforced decentralisation in this field).

### National level (Ministry of the Interior):

1. The immigrants submit their application for asylum to the Aliens Department of the National Police - which belongs to the Ministry of the Interior- .
2. The decision for the attribution of the asylum is taken upon recommendation of the Aliens Department of the National Police and the final decision belongs to the Minister in charge of Immigration.
3. The Ministry of the Interior issues then the asylum.

In 2007, a General Directorate in charge of the Immigration Policy and the Social Integration was created within the Ministry of the Interior. This Directorate is basically responsible for the coordination, the organisation and the logistics of temporary accommodation centres for illegal immigrants and asylum seekers. The Prefectures are responsible of the good functioning of these accommodation centres in collaboration with the National Police.

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

In the region of Attica, there are four (4) administrative detention centres, one of which, the Amygdaleza detention centre, is specially conceived for minors.

In Greece, the National Police is in charge of these centres.

## European projects implemented in the area (year)

A short list of the EU projects implemented by TEDKNA is given below:

DEEP: Promoting opportunities for increasing energy efficiency in the public buildings' sector. (INTELLIGENT ENERGY)

FLEXLEARN: The use of digital technology in education. (FP7)

ALES: Art Laboratories in European Schools. (CULTURA 2007)

OPEN DOOR: Promotion of equal opportunities for minorities. (YOUTH IN ACTION)

ATHINA: Promotion of the equality in the job market for women technicians. (EQUAL)

IDEA: Raising the awareness of employment opportunities. (EQUAL)

CRESENT: Organization of a centre for regional, social and cultural entrepreneurship in tourism. (EQUAL)

MAGAP II: Mainstreaming of gender in public administrations - promotion of the participation of women in public administration. (EQUALITY FOR WOMEN AND MEN)

ANTICIPATION: Promotion of IT technologies in SMEs (ADAPT)

ODISSEIA Operational Development Integrated Strategic Scheme of Employment in Attica funded by the ESF, promoting the equality of the sexes, integrating vulnerable social groups, immigrants and refugees (2003-2005)

MEDINS "Identity is Future: The Mediterranean Intangible Space": Promotion of cultural heritage in the Mediterranean (Medocc Programme Interreg IIIB) 2006-2008

More specifically, concerning projects in the field of immigration and asylum, the following EQUAL projects were implemented in Attica.

Within the framework of DP KEMMEPAP-IFTAISTOS, an EQUAL project implemented in Attica, two support structures for immigrants and refugees were created and function. They provide legal counselling on employment issues, on issues related to the issuing of a work permit and legal presence as well as psycho-social support. These structures started to function in March 2003.

Both the DP ANADRASI-ISTOS and the DP ITHAKI are two EQUAL projects aimed at supporting asylum seekers implemented in the region of Attica.

## Regional/local strategies for immigrants and asylum seekers

Integration policy: Regional and local authorities develop actions aimed at supporting access for immigrants to the labour market, to education/training, to housing, healthcare etc...

Intercultural Communication: Regional and local authorities actively promote the prevention and fight xenophobia and racism through awareness campaigns and the organization of cultural events with the collaboration of immigrants organizations.

### Gender perspectives:

Education: Training programs to learn Greek and training programs on basic computer skills in order to facilitate their smooth integration in Greek society and more specifically employment research, search of housing etc...

Health system: All immigrants have free access to the municipal hospitals.

Strategy for minors and minors non accompanied

Housing policy

Civic Participation and Political Rights

Public-Private partnerships

Innovative policies

Any other relevant matters

## Further regional/local competences

Protection of fundamental rights: Overall and more specifically within the framework of the implementation of social policies, the regional and local administrations always develop their actions in respect to fundamental rights.

Fight against terrorism: preventive actions and identification of infringing behaviors

External borders management

Management of migration flows

Fight against organised crime: preventive actions

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