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Identity construction programmes of the state and the EU: case study phase I

Ruby Gropas, Hara Kouki & Anna Triandafyllidou
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1. Introduction

Aims and scope of the report

How are national identities affected by modernity and tradition? Are there ensuing tensions? And if so, how, where, by whom and in what ways are these expressed? What role does Europe play in this relationship? These constitute some of the overarching themes the IME research project aims to explore.

We have argued that the ambivalence and internal divisions that characterise Greece render it a particularly interesting case to study within the *multiple modernities*' perspective as defined by Eisenstadt (2000).¹ Greek national and European identity is based on a web of rival and even conflictual relations between attachment to tradition and continuity on the one hand, and desire to pursue modernity, social contestation, rationality and secularism on the other. As such, though Greece has been considered as being at the core of and having inspired modern Europe's values and identity since the Enlightenment, at the same time, it has had to undergo – and is still in the process of undergoing - repeated (and in many cases costly and painful) reforms in order to become more 'modern,' to become more Europeanised. Through our study, we propose that Greece can be viewed as proposing an alternative path to modernity: one of a peripheral post-industrial parliamentary democracy that has moved from pre-modern economic and political forms of organisation (that continue to define the structure of the Greek state, Greek society, its politics, and its economy) to post-modern ones without ever properly modernizing or industrializing and without ever replacing its own cultural traditions with those of western European modernity.

In this research report (WP5), we aim to investigate this proposition further and to examine the specific role of the state and of the EU as *actors of identity construction* related to national and European identities. Thus, our research in the Greek case, has focused on two separate levels. On the one hand we examined the identity construction programme of EU actors in Greece and specifically what dimensions of *European identity* are promoted in

¹ See Gropas and Triandafyllidou (2009) 'The State of the Art: Various Paths to Modernity. The Greek case study' <http://www.eliamep.gr/en/european-integration/publications-european-integration/%E2%80%98the-state-of-the-art-various-paths-to-modernity%E2%80%99-the-greek-case-study/>

Greece and in what ways. And on the other, we studied the identity construction programme of Greek state actors along two main axes. The first concerned the identity construction programme of Greek state actors directed inwards (i.e. towards the country's population). We therefore decided to focus on *education* and the Bologna process (launched in 1999 as a major reform programme aiming at modernizing higher education in Europe), as it proves to be one of the most fruitful hunting grounds for data regarding identity construction. The second axis concerned the priorities undertaken by Greek state actors in promoting and presenting the country's identity outwards (i.e. abroad); thus, we examined Greece's *cultural diplomacy policy*.

Description of the fieldwork and methods used

As regards the EU's identity construction programme, we reviewed the academic literature on EU studies and EU integration to find any relevant research on this subject. Subsequently, we examined the documentation and publications promoted and disseminated by the EU representative offices in Greece (the EU Commission office, the EU Parliament office and the EU direct information points that are active across Greece). We reviewed publications that are available both in print and in electronic format on the respective websites.

Regarding the Greek state's identity construction programme, a literature review of academic research and policy documents was conducted between February and April 2010. Policy documents concerning the Bologna process were collected and analysed in terms of internally-oriented identity construction programmes. Our research is based on Greek National Reports submitted by the Bologna Follow Up Groups to the Bologna Secretariat in 2000, 2003, 2005, 2007 and 2009; Declarations and Press Releases by the five Ministers of Education related to the major legislative reforms brought about due to Bologna Process during the period 1999-2009; and the Minutes of the Greek Parliamentary proceedings on constitutional reform- discussion and elaboration of article 16 (10-1-2007, 14/5-2-2007) and PASOK and New Democracy's legislative proposals on the issue.

In the sections that follow, through mapping out education reform, we attempt to explore ideas and discourses as these appear in the Greek institutional contexts through policy and legal documents. It is pertinent to note here a set of challenges associated with this task. To

avoid approaching *public discourse* on the Bologna process from a static point of view that equates institutions with external rule following top down processes, we attempt to treat them *dynamically, as structures and constructs of meaning internal to agents, who create institutions, communicate critically about them, change or maintain them.*² In this way, we gain insight into how ideas and discourses can affect policies and political action and, thus, identity formation. Moreover, we attempt to avoid treating state actors as homogenous ones. There are differences, tensions, oscillations and contradictions at all levels of policy making and within each actor. These differences may be the result of conflicting political or institutional ideologies within an institution, or may be determined by the audience towards which a policy or a statement is directed (i.e. the wider public, or the EU peers, etc). We attempt to highlight some of these differences in the sections that follow.

As regards the second axis, we examined the country's and cultural diplomacy policy. Material from the websites of Greece's cultural foundations, the Modern Greek Studies Chairs and the Cultural Olympiad were used for the analysis on the externally-oriented identity construction programmes, along with information collected about the Greek cities identified as European cultural capitals. In addition, we conducted an interview with Mr. Moustaklis, press attaché at the Istanbul Embassy and former cultural attaché (27/04/2010) in order to complement the material gathered regarding Greece's externally oriented identity construction programme.

We analysed the material collected by drawing from two methods. First, we based our study on the grounded theory approach whereby we have attempted to capture the 'emergent.' As Ichijo explains, this consists of identifying and examining the insights that emerge from the repetition of observation, note-taking and categorising.³ In practice, this consisted of reading the collected material with a set of open-coded categories (specifically: identity, Europe, nation, modernity, modernisation, reform, ancient Greek heritage). These categories were then repeatedly revised during subsequent readings in order to capture emerging concepts that were relevant to our inquiry. Second, we supported the examination of the language used in the policy documents and political speeches with critical discourse analysis.

² See Vivien Schmidt (2008: 11, pp.303-326) on discursive institutionalism, the explanatory power of ideas and discourse.

³ Ichijo A. (2010), IME WP5 Report, 'Identity construction programmes of the state and the EU: case study I. The case of Britain', <http://fass.kingston.ac.uk/research/european/ime/> and references to the work of Glaser (1992), Glaser and Strauss (1967) and Wodak (2001).

2. The EU's identity construction programme

The literature on the EU's attempt to promote European identity in Greece is scarce or even non-existent as far as our research led us to conclude.

When examining documentation published by the EU offices and services for Greek citizens, we see that the major emphasis is on information. The documentation illustrates and informs mainly on the following dimensions:

- What the EU is and what it does;
- The scope and aims of its policies;
- The achievements that have been accomplished within the Union (with particular emphasis on protection of citizens' rights, economic growth and prosperity, security and peace, social cohesion, etc);
- The achievements that have been accomplished by the EU and its member states globally (for instance humanitarian assistance, development cooperation, environmental protection, democracy building, protection of human rights);
- Services, funding, programmes and information that are offered by the EU to European citizens;
- And, on the tangible benefits for European and thus Greek citizens.

In their majority, these publications are translations of core and regularly updated information brochures produced by the European Commission and then translated in all national languages. Emphasis is on *rights* and *citizenship aspects* (consumer rights, travellers' rights, health and safety issues, equality and anti-racism issues, etc) that are essentially protected due to EU policies and directives in these areas that have set standards and priorities across the continent. The aims of these publications are two-fold. First, to inform EU citizens about EU core actions and priorities as there exists a long-held criticism that most citizens are unaware of EU activities. Such publications focus on development cooperation, humanitarian assistance, agricultural policy, climate change, education and life long learning, and other such policies so as to make citizens aware of the concrete positive improvements to one's life

due to EU integration. Second, to convince of the advantages and benefits of European citizenship and EU accession. These documents are driven by a clear effort to present the positive consequences and results of EU integration. This has been a high priority, especially on behalf of the European Commission,⁴ after the strong rise in euro-scepticism across most EU member states as a result of the pressures of globalisation; of the competition pressures and financial and institutional burdens of recent enlargements; of the various phases of enlargement and deepening fatigue that have characterised the Union since 2004; and in response to steady criticism of Europe's weak (and some argue even weakening) global political role and weight.

This approach constitutes an *implicit identity construction* effort through informing and educating on improvements that come with belonging to the EU family; through presenting the EU as a normative, or ethical actor in international relations, humanitarian matters, environmental issues and protection of biodiversity; and through presenting the EU as a security community that has invested in civil protection and in creating an innovative, research-oriented, cutting edge knowledge society that is at the forefront of technological innovation and research.⁵

In addition, the EU offices in Greece have supported events and publications marking historic anniversaries for the EEC/EU and some specifically relating to Greece's EU membership. These offer historical overviews of the membership path usually associating Greece's *consolidation of its democracy* with its EEC/EU accession and its *economic modernisation* with EEC/EU funding (for instance through the MIPs, regional policy, community support for infrastructure projects that essentially aim at bringing the periphery to the centre and improving Greece's socio-economic development, its industrialisation and its modernisation).

The recurrent themes in most anniversary publications are Europe's Greek heritage (in terms of values and democracy stemming from the Ancient Greek classical era), and Greece rejoining Europe (after overcoming the political challenges of a weak democracy that suffered a military *junta*) and thereby starting *its catching up efforts* to bridge the gaps with

⁴ The famous Plan D (Democracy, Dialogue, Debate) launched by the European Commission in 2005 (<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/05/1272>)

⁵ See for instance the relevant websites: http://ec.europa.eu/echo/index_en.htm, http://ec.europa.eu/environment/index_en.htm, http://europa.eu/pol/cons/index_en.htm, <http://eit.europa.eu/> or the site of the EP's Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/comparl/afet/droi/sakharov/default.htm>

the rest of 'modern' western Europe. In more recent publications (after 2002), themes shift to Greece having 'consolidated itself as part of core Europe,' and being at the forefront of EU enlargement to the east and southeast in order to support the further expansion of this security community. This is presented not only as a European value and achievement in itself, but also as an important national security achievement for Greece as enlargement implies good-neighbourly relations and secure borders.

In examining the kind of events the EU Commission and the office of the European Parliament have supported and sponsored in Greece over the period under study, we reach similar conclusions. Most events are fundamentally informative and educational in nature, focusing on fundamental rights and freedoms, languages, education programmes, cultural programmes, mobility, environmental protection issues, etc. A second set of events that have been commonplace are initiatives aimed at targeting specific groups in order to increase pro-Europe attitudes and increase EU related knowledge. These include public debates or conferences aimed at journalists, or public information campaigns, etc.⁶

Lastly, it is interesting to *compare Europe Day* with the way in which Greek National holidays are celebrated. The comparison is striking. Europe day is a working day and similarly to what is mentioned above, all events that tend to be organised on May 9th are either informative on issues that have been identified by the European Commission as annual priorities for the Union (ex. Consumer protection issues, or respect for disabilities, poverty issues, anti-racism and xenophobia, etc); or take an anniversary character (for instance the celebration of Jean Monnet or Robert Schuman, or EU enlargement, etc). These constitute occasions for the EU to reiterate benefits of integration and enlargement, repeatedly, in order to convince a usually uninformed, though sometimes hesitant public opinion⁷. On the contrary, national holidays in Greece (March 25th and October 28th) constitute public holiday celebrated with school and military parades. Events and programmes organised on these days include references to the past and glorious battles of liberation, the historical character and remembrance of historical figures who marked Greece's path to self-determination, liberation, and democracy.

⁶ See for example: http://ec.europa.eu/ellada/news/our_activities/index_el.htm ;
http://ec.europa.eu/ellada/news/newsletters/representation/syntagma_27_28_nov_2009_el.htm ;
⁷ http://ec.europa.eu/ellada/news/news/2009050709maiou2009_el.htm

To sum up, the EU actors' efforts in European identity construction in Greece are *educational and informative* in nature. Through this approach they implicitly *emphasise the EU's core values such as multiculturalism, equality, tolerance, security and safety, environmental protection, respect for human rights and unity in diversity.*

3. The Greek state's identity construction programme

In this section we explore the Greek state's identity construction programme along three dimensions. First, we provide an overview of the way in which the Greek state actors have approached Europe and EU identity in order to highlight both its *attachment* and *resistance* to Europe 'as modernity' or a modernisation project. The ambivalence between two competing modernity frameworks (i.e. a 'Western' framework that conforms to western rational understandings of modernity and essentially imbues all efforts and processes of Europeanisation in Greece, and an 'Eastern' one that proposes a *sui generis*, nationally authentic path towards modernity, see Gropas and Triandafyllidou 2009) is further illustrated in the *internally* and *externally*-oriented identity construction programmes that are examined in the subsequent sections on education reform in Greece in response to the Bologna Process (3.2) , and on Greece's cultural diplomacy policies (3.3).

3.1. A general overview of the Greek state actors' approach to the EU

The literature available in Greece on European identity, European history, European citizenship, European culture and the Union's multiculturalism is quite rich. It includes publication authored both by Greek academics and also books and articles by other European academics and intellectuals translated into Greek. These include academic and research publications that target the university communities, and as well as more popularised texts for interested readers.

Wide and extensive research has been undertaken on the '*Europeanisation process*' and how this has impacted, influenced, determined and changed Greece over the three decades of its EEC/EU membership. Scholarly work on Greece's 'Europeanisation' includes both

theoretical and empirically grounded research.⁸ This research spans across all sectors of public and private activity. The impact and consequences of the country's membership have been extensively analysed as regards the reforms and restructuring of the economy, public administration, the services sector, agricultural policy, regional policy, social policy, education policy, migration policy, minority policy, etc. In addition, much research has been conducted on the new institutions or legal frameworks and standards that have been instituted or inserted into the Greek political and legal system directly as a result of EU policies and directives.⁹

Against this background, over the last decade, there has been a growing discussion within the Greek academic community and increasingly in the public sphere, of the effects Greece's EU membership and the country's changing demographic characteristics have *on the way in which national identity is understood, perceived and defined*. In fact, a significant share of younger academics and researchers who are in their majority also civically active (particularly involved in equality, non-discrimination, anti-racism issues), have been arguing in favour of the *need to redefine understandings of Greek national identity* in order to render it more inclusive of:

- a) The cultural capital that the country's immigrant population¹⁰ has brought with it; and
- b) The multicultural diversity that the EU has been promoting through the elaboration of the concept of European citizenship since the Maastricht Treaty; its 'United in Diversity' campaign; and de facto through its successive enlargements and attempts at deepening the EU integration process.

This effort has been positively embraced by both main political parties that have governed Greece during the period under study in this report (i.e. 1989-2009). Political discourse across the two mainstream parties (PASOK and New Democracy) has emphasised the advantages and strengths of the country's EU membership; the Europeanisation process that has modernised and supported the country's necessary reforms; as well as the advantages of

⁸ *Inter alia* see P.Kazakos, P.K. Ioakeimidis, C. Tsinisizelis, D. Chrysochou, L. Tsoukalis, N. Koutsiaras, P. Tsaklogou, G. Pagoulatos, G. Andreou, S. Verney, D. Anagnostou, A. Triandafyllidou, D. Papadimitriou, K. Featherstone, V. Monastiriotes, D.A. Sotiropoulos.

⁹ Among these, it is worth noting the creation of the Ombudsman's office and its crucial role in independently monitoring Greek public administration; or the implementation into national legislation of the Racial, Equality and Anti-Discrimination directives.

¹⁰ Approximately 1 million migrants have steadily migrated to and settled in Greece since the 1990s.

European identity and citizenship. Both parties that have alternated in government¹¹ have been overall, undoubtedly pro-European during the period under study.

PASOK's first election into office in 1980 coincided with Greece's EU accession and was marked by a very vocal and strong anti-EEC and anti-NATO position in rhetorical terms. This anti-western positioning was strongly marked by an opposition to US and western support of (and involvement in) the Colonel's junta between 1967-1974, and by a Cold-War non-aligned ideology. Although PASOK's political rhetoric called for Greece's withdrawal from both the EU and NATO, in practice, the socialist party's successive governments throughout the 1980s actively participated in the EEC negotiating a series of financial support packages (Integrated Mediterranean Programmes followed by the Delors I and II financial packages) for Greece that enabled the country to begin its much needed structural reforms in various sectors of the economy (especially regarding agriculture and regional policy, the development of major infrastructure projects, etc). PASOK can probably be considered as the Greek political party that experienced the deepest consequences of the Europeanisation process. By the time the 1980s came to a close, its rhetoric had become decidedly pro-EEC, its political elites had been widely exposed to the Brussels political system and this was reflected in their rhetoric, and the wider leftist academic and intellectual community that supported PASOK ideologically increasingly considered the EEC more as a modernising and reform catalyst and a security anchor for Greece than an interventionist, neo-colonial instrument of Transatlantic great power politics. The end of the Cold War and the deep changes provoked by Germany's reunification and subsequently the EEC/EU effort to reunify the continent and expand the European security community to the East and the South provided the external factors that contributed to this shift within PASOK.

The beginning of the 1990s was marked by deep economic and political instability in Greece and after a few months of coalition (national unity) governments, New Democracy came to power between 1990 and 1993. New Democracy has been a pro-European party since its creation by Constantine Karamanlis who was personally responsible for successfully pushing through Greece's EEC membership application. Karamanlis, New Democracy's founder and leader until his election as President of the Hellenic Republic in 1980, was responsible for the consolidation of Greece's democratic governance after the fall of the military junta and

¹¹ Including a few months of a cross party wide coalition government between October 1989 and April 1990.

firmly argued in favour of the need to deeply anchor Greece in western European integration and the Transatlantic security community. These were clearly articulated foreign policy priorities considered by Karamanlis as strategic priorities for Greece's national security and even its political survival. His conviction that Greece's EEC and NATO memberships would guarantee the country's territorial sovereignty and integrity (from the northern Communist threat during the Cold War period and from Turkey from the east) while also supporting the country's internal democratisation and economic modernisation, defined New Democracy's pro-European stance over the past three decades whether in government or in opposition.

PASOK won the 1993 elections and governed Greece until 2004. During this decade, PASOK's governing elites were unreservedly pro-EU, particularly after 1996 under Prime Minister Simitis. The pillars of governmental policy during this period that were continued uncontested by the New Democracy governments from 2004-2009, involved:

- a) Placing Greece in the political hard-core of the EU by supporting the Union's enlargements, its institutional reform and political deepening, and the development of the EU's ESDP;
- b) Placing Greece in the eurozone and within EMU's centre (accomplished in 2001);
- c) 'Europeanising' the sensitive issues of its foreign policy by supporting Turkey's EU accession process, framing the country's bilateral relations as part of the EU's wider foreign and enlargement policies, and investing in developing closer cultural, economic and political ties between Greece and Turkey; by supporting EU's enlargement to the Western Balkans including fYROM while seeking a mutually acceptable compromise on the name issue.

Thus, since the early 1990s Greek governments have been consistently pro-EU and there has been a wide consensus across both ruling parties (comprising together approximately 77% of the electorate, <http://ekloges.ypes.gr/pages/index.html>). Undoubtedly, all Ministries have been responsible for promoting and implementing EU directives policies in their respective sectors and for defining Greek responses to European issues. However, Greece's policy towards the EU has been principally defined by the Greek Ministry of Foreign Affairs. This Ministry has been responsible for organising most public discussions and conferences on EU developments and on the implications of EU developments for Greece; publishing documentation and books on Greece and the EU; and coordinating all information campaigns on EU enlargements, on the public debates that followed the failure of the European

Constitutional Treaty and on bringing the EU closer to its citizens. Most of these initiatives have been undertaken in collaboration with the EU representations in Greece (EU Commission and the European Parliament offices) and / or with civil society organisations.

Greece's identity construction programmes, both internal and external, have therefore been primarily defined by the Greek Ministry of Foreign Affairs while the Ministry of Education, Lifelong Learning and Religious Affairs and the Ministry of Culture and Tourism have also played defining roles in the development of Greece's education policy and the promotion of its cultural and historic heritage domestically and internationally. Given the pivotal role of these ministries, we have based our analysis largely on material and documentation falling within their remit.

3.2. Internally-oriented identity construction programmes: the Bologna Process

Background on the Greek Case

Greece was among the signatory countries of the 1999 Bologna declaration with the goal of improving the quality and modernizing its tertiary education, comprised of Universities, Polytechnics and Technological Educational Institutes.¹² All education levels are overseen by the Ministry of Education, Lifelong Learning and Religious Affairs and though tertiary institutions are nominally autonomous, the Ministry is responsible for their funding and the allocation and distribution of students to undergraduate courses. The Constitution does not

¹² The Bologna process was launched after 29 Education Ministers signed a Declaration in Bologna in June 1999 to reform the structures of their higher education systems. Each signatory country committed itself to reform its own higher education system in order to create overall convergence at the European level by 2010. The objectives adopted included: a common framework of readable and comparable university degrees, as well as the introduction of two cycles of degrees, at the undergraduate and postgraduate levels in all countries, with first degrees no shorter than three years and relevant to the labour market needs. It also referred to the creation of a European Credit Transfer System (ECTS). The goal is to render higher education in Europe more compact, comparable, compatible, and to attract student migration. The process originates from the recognition that in spite of their 'valuable differences', European higher education systems are facing common internal and external challenges related to the diversification of higher education, the employability of graduates, or the expansion of private and transnational education. The Bologna process, thus, has urged member states to respond to the growth of today's challenging knowledge society and the impacts of globalization (including in the education field) by rendering 'Europe of Knowledge' internationally competitive.

allow private universities and the Greek Accreditation System only recognises degree programmes offered by state-run universities.¹³

A 2005 OECD report notes that Greece ranks third from the bottom after Indonesia and Slovakia, with only 8.4% of total public spending allocated to education.¹⁴ Additionally, the scarcity of higher education places forces Greek parents to pay exorbitant fees to privately-run preparatory schools to support their children's efforts to pass the annual qualifying exams into a public university. This cost particularly affects the lower social groups who view education as the core means of achieving upward social mobility and employment in a country in which youth unemployment is among the highest in Europe (22.3% among ages 15-24).¹⁵

Since 1999, New Democracy and PASOK governments have tried to implement the Bologna reforms aiming at 'modernizing' and improving the quality of the university system. These reforms have been confronted with highly politicised reactions on the part of the country's left and communist political forces and the student unions. These protests are rooted in the fact that educational policy has been a highly politicised issue in Greece since the fall of the junta. According to the 1975 Greek constitution, the state is responsible for providing free education to all its citizens indiscriminately; thus during the past four decades of democratisation and modernisation, free education has been associated with the basic means of upward social mobility and as a core public good. Against this background, reforms (according to the spirit of the Bologna process) are perceived as attacks against social equality and justice, driven by neo-liberal market forces leading frequently to months of anti-government and anti-globalisation manifestations and public strikes.

¹³ Although there are several private universities and colleges offering degree programmes that are validated and overseen by American, British and other European universities. For more on the structure of the Greek Education system see Ministry's official webpage http://ypepth.gr/en_ec_page1531.htm and in the Eurydice database of the European Education systems,

http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/education/eurydice/documents/eurybase/national_summary_sheets/047_EL_EN.pdf

¹⁴ "Oi epta pliges tis paideias," *Eleftherotypia*, 1 October 2005. Also confirmed by the World Bank which confirms below-average public spending on education in Greece in comparison to other EU member states.

¹⁵ Eurostat (2009) Harmonised unemployment rate by gender — age class 15–24 — % (SA) [WWW document]. URL <http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/tgm/table.do?tab=table&init=1&plugin=1&language=en&pcode=teilm021> (accessed 21 May 2010). According to Karamesini (2005, 5), 6 years after graduation one in three higher education graduates have not found some form of stable employment, while in the 20-24 and 25-29 age groups, unemployment rates are higher among those with better educational qualifications, such as university degrees. Thus, better qualifications do not necessarily lead to better employment prospects. Moreover, the Greek educational establishment is considered introvert, highly centralized and ruled by political patronage and clientelistic networks (See Tsoukalis (2006) 'Higher Education in Greece in the New European and International Environment').

With this context in mind, the present section traces the attempts made by the Greek state actors between 1999 and 2009 to introduce legislation related with the Bologna Process. Our research is based on:

- a) Greek National Reports submitted by the Bologna Follow Up Groups to the Bologna Secretariat in 2000, 2003, 2005, 2007 and 2009;
- b) Declarations and Press Releases by the five Ministers of Education related with major legislative reforms brought about due to Bologna Process (1999-2009);¹⁶
- c) The Minutes of the Greek Parliamentary proceedings on constitutional reform-discussion and elaboration of article 16 (10-1-2007, 14/5-2-2007) and PASOK and New Democracy's legislative proposals on the issue.

Analysis of the policy documents

The abovementioned reports describe the structure and specific features of the national university system (density of University per habitants and its relation to the EU average, participation rates in higher education, etc); discuss progress accomplished according to the aims of the Bologna Declaration (relating to quality assurance; the establishment of a system based on two main cycles; comparable degrees; lifelong learning opportunities; a system of credits as a means of promoting student mobility; relevance of education with employment sector); report on national trends in education as well as on the overall goal of improving the attractiveness of the European Higher Education Area.

¹⁶ Ministry of National Education and Religious Affairs, *State of the Art of the Bologna Process in Greece*, edited by Prof Dionissis Kladis, Athens, 28 June 2000, available online at www.ypepth.gr/docs/bolonia_dec_en.doc and Ministry of National Education and Religious Affairs Greece: *National Report Implementation of the Bologna Process*, available online at <http://www.bologna-berlin2003.de/pdf/Greece.pdf>, http://www.ond.vlaanderen.be/hogeronderwijs/bologna/links/National-reports-2005/National_Report_Greece_05.pdf, http://www.ond.vlaanderen.be/hogeronderwijs/bologna/links/National-reports-2007/National_Report_Greece2007.pdf, http://www.ond.vlaanderen.be/hogeronderwijs/bologna/links/National-reports-2009/National_Report_Greece_2009.pdf. Apart from these, the BFGU has contributed in the drafting of other key documents of the Bologna process, like Focus on Higher Education in Europe 2010: New Report on the Impact of the Bologna Process, March 2010, http://www.ond.vlaanderen.be/hogeronderwijs/bologna/2010_conference/documents/FOCUS_HE_2010_Highlights_EN.pdf, or Higher Education Governance in Europe, Policies, Structures, funding and academic staff, 2008, http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/eurydice/ressources/eurydice/pdf/091EN/091EN_004_C01.pdf (accessed 21 May 2010).

The following issues were discerned through the examination of the reports through the research methods described in the introductory section:

a) **Europeanization of Greece's education system is presented as a modernization project, which would improve its universities** in terms of quality and competitiveness in order to adapt to the new global societal and economic challenges and advances in scientific knowledge.

Europe of knowledge is now recognised as an irreplaceable factor for social and human growth ...and for the development and strengthening of stable, peaceful, an democratic societies... (2000).

b) The concepts of *flexibility, credibility, rationalisation, efficiency and openness* are **repeatedly underlined along with references to employability, interdisciplinarity, economic competitiveness and internationalisation of student programmes** in order for the Greek education system to be able to respond to current global labour market challenges and the Lisbon goals (2001) through incorporating best practices from other European experiences.

c) The **reports are characterised by an apologetic discourse concerning reforms that have not yet been adopted and improvements that are still to be achieved.** European peers are reassured that efforts will be upheld and gaps will be addressed in order to 'catch up' with the rest of Europe (see 2005 for instance). Political and institutional justifications are sought to explain why changes are still pending (such as elections, or ministerial changes), while the so-called 'specificities of the national context' are identified as responsible for an exceptionally strong opposition on behalf of the Universities and the student unions to government reforms. Opposition to most reforms and particularly to the privatisation of higher education, is grounded in the belief that these reforms are driven by capitalistic interests aiming at commercialising knowledge in order to serve market needs.

d) **The social dimension of the Greek educational system is underlined in a positive manner by the Greek delegates.** The national follow up group reiterate that the Greek higher education system is considered as one of the most participatory systems in Europe (2003, 2005, 2007, and 2009) (since teaching and textbooks are provided free of charge, low-income students are granted accommodation, while all students qualify for free social

security services and other financial benefits). Social cohesion, equity, equality of opportunities and education as a public good are valorised and underlined as important social achievements that characterise the modern Greek state and its democracy after 1974.

These documents communicate to the designated European authorities responsible for monitoring the relevant reforms the policy measures and programmes that have been formulated by the Greek governments in this field. Their tone and content respond to expectations of a common European-wide policy effort and as such share the common cognitive and normative ideas about the demands and requirements of a reformed European education system with their EU peers. To a large extent this was also expressed in the discourse of government representatives from 1999 to 2009 towards the Greek public.

The Political Discourse

When the Bologna Process was launched, Greece was governed by the Panhellenic Socialist Movement (PASOK) and the Minister of Education and Religious Affairs was Gerasimos Arsenis, who was quite hesitant at initiating reforms. With the appointment of Mr. Petros Efthimiou, as Minister in 2000, legislative reforms (law 3255/2004) were introduced in the field of postgraduate studies along with the launch of the National Education Council (ESYP), an advisory and introductory body on education related issues, and the establishment of the Hellenic Open University (EAP) (law 3027/2002). The most highly contention reform, however, was in relation to the law governing the functioning of Technological Education Institutes (TEI) that aimed at upgrading the validity of TEI's degrees so as to incorporate these into the European Higher Education Area.

After the 2004 elections, New Democracy appointed Mrs Marietta Giannakou Koutsikou as the Minister of Education and Religious Affairs until 2007, when she was replaced by Mr. Evripidis Stylianides. Since 2007, more intensive steps towards the establishment of the European Higher Education Area were completed in terms of legislative reforms in all the signatory countries including Greece that passed from policy making to the phase of implementation. A new Agency for Degree Recognition (DOATAP) was issued with the law 3328/2005, while law 3374/2005 introduced Quality Assurance in Higher Education both

internally through evaluations and externally through the establishment of a national quality assurance agency.

The most substantial reforms were brought forward by the New Democracy government but *with the consent* of PASOK, since in spite of domestic opposition both parties supported the implementation of the Bologna process. Indeed, when PASOK was elected back into office in 2009, the Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs was renamed Ministry of Education and *Lifelong Learning* demonstrating the government's commitment to secularizing the system and modernizing education establishment. Ministers from both governments have stressed the necessity and appropriateness of modernization and secularization policies within a rapidly globalizing world and of an educational system that is responsive to the pressures and challenges of global competition and excellence. As Giannakou stated in 2007, "*all over Europe, and especially in Greece, education is the vehicle through which the state enables citizens to shape their personalities and enter the all the more demanding labour market.*"¹⁷

Public declarations on the part of Education Ministers between 1999 and 2009 have revolved around the following axes:

a) Greece needs to implement reforms in order to catch up with the rest of Europe and modernize its national higher education yet there are structural obstacles.

There is a repeated reference to the fact that the country is lagging behind reform efforts in this area. All other signatory countries are presented as being ahead of the game (for instance: "*The new system is already functioning in every European country apart from Greece without any objection*" (Efthimiou, 8/3/2001)) having ratified laws and implemented policies that converge with changing needs of their societies, especially in terms of relating labour market demands with higher education.

It is also noted that Greece, located in the *periphery* of Europe needs to undertake speedier and deeper efforts to adapt to global *economic developments, market opportunities, scientific advances and technological innovations* (Stylianides, 2007). Greek Universities are presented as having to make additional progress in order for their graduates to compete on equal terms

¹⁷ Ministry of National Education and Religious Affairs, 'Ekdilosi EPAEEK', Press release, 12 June 2007, available online at www.ypepth.gr/docs/12_6_07_d_t.doc

with graduate students from other European institutions. The need for reform and for catching up in order to avoid becoming peripheral to European and global developments is perhaps most vividly represented in Minister Efthimiou's comments: (2000) "*we must not find ourselves always in disadvantageous position against other institutions in Europe*" and if Greece does not move forward to implement reforms, it will end up "*like Hotza's Albania within a unified Europe*" (2001). Minister Giannakou expressed the same anxiety in 2004, when she declared that "*our educational system lacks considerably in comparison to other European systems, but must not remain isolated any more from what is going on in Europe and internationally.*" Summarizing those trends, the current (2010) Minister of Education, Anna Diamantopoulou, committed her Ministry to complete the pending reforms, meet the deadlines set by the Commission, increase competitiveness, mobility and access and, thus, modernize Greek educational institutions (Budapest 2010).

The theme of lagging behind and of the constant need to catch up with the rest of Europe and meet 'European' standards, which was highlighted in Gropas and Triandafyllidou (2009, WP4) as a core characteristic of Greece's modernisation efforts, is consistent and repeated throughout the decade and across political parties.

In this light, Europeanization of the higher education area is presented as being delayed due to *structural obstacles posed by the wide pre-modern characteristics of the state and political system*. The system is described as being plagued by "*unproductive and fragmentary policies based on political patronage, lack of transparency and corruption* in stark contrast to other European countries' *mobility, adaptability, speed and innovation*" (Giannakou, 2004). In addition, an ineffective bureaucracy, political networking, cronyism, and inflexibility hinder a humanistic University from flourishing (Diamantopoulou, 2010).

The system proposed by the Bologna process is presented as a *unique opportunity to enhance material infrastructure and productivity of the domestic establishment* (Giannakou, 2004), while Greek university graduates *will be able to access broader labour markets cherishing a plurality of opportunities and experiences* (Diamantopoulou, 2009). Similarly, the creation of the International University National Academic Recognition Information Centre (DOATAP), is presented as contributing to *the modernization, acceleration, transparency, information and adaptation of Greek society to ongoing developments in the European Union, in order to effectively meet the needs of the new era*. These reforms are 'packaged' as conditions that will

enable Greek graduates ‘to be proudly recognized abroad, as they deserve to be’ (Stylianides, 2007).

b) Notwithstanding its shortcomings, the country’s educational system is linked with the country’s heritage in a transcendental manner, and presented as a source of moral inspiration for the rest of the Bologna signatory members.

Greece’s education system is directly connected to the country’s classical past and cultural traditions and presented as a means through which Greece can re-attain its ‘lost grandeur’ internationally. All Ministers, regardless of political affiliation, repeatedly emphasise: the relevance of Greece’s historical and cultural heritage for all educational reforms at the European wide level, not just for Greece; as well as the ecumenical nature of Greece’s legacy and its contribution to and connections with current modernity.

“Departing from its educational system, but also from its societal culture and historical tradition that runs through centuries, our country can make valuable interventions and contributions at the European level, while highlighting its international status and power” (Efthimiou, 2001). In numerous public statements, it is underlined that not only Greek citizens, but all EU citizens, should be ‘proud’ of this historical heritage and cultural capital that can “promote international cooperation and create stable and peaceful democracies all over the world” (Efthimiou, 2001). New Democracy Minister Stylianides adopted the same approach arguing that: “one of our main targets is to connect tertiary education with our traditions by reviving the consciousness of our civilization and promoting Olympic values while enhancing quality elements of a contemporary Greek-European education.” This is summarized in an article by Stylianides entitled ‘a comparative advantage: the policy towards a Greek/European education’ (2007). It is observed that global changes and competition challenge democratic societies and that in this context, education is key for progress. For Greece, Stylianides argues that while Greece has to transform its education system to render it more competitive, at the same time, it should draw from its heritage and continue to ‘enlighten’ its European partners in emphasizing the importance of higher education in morally and politically shaping democratic and patriotic citizens. Moreover, though achieving economic competitiveness is a core priority for education reform and modernisation, nonetheless, he underlines that this will certainly not translate into Greece retreating from its own political and cultural tradition that considers education not only as a

tool for entering the market but principally as a way to achieve true (human) progress. Thus, in the Bologna Process, Greece does not intend to act as a “*peripheral member*” that passively implements orders from above, but as an equal “*partner in drafting policies*” (2008). In line with this, Prime Minister Karamanlis underlined that “*we cannot but participate in European developments, but we must link Greek with European civilization, while promoting all the time the public nature of national education and state control over changes that take place... when faced with the anti social features of globalisation, we have the responsibility of rendering Greece the centre of education and civilization*” (2007).

c) There is consistent reference to what renders Greek education ‘unique’ in Europe: a ‘public good’, offered for free to all students irrespectively.

Greece has the highest participation ration in higher education in Europe, with 58%, as EUROSTAT reported in 2002. As Efthimiou proudly noted, “*we are ahead of countries such as Germany and Italy that have been serving as points of reference concerning their university system, or even as Sweden, the country with the most functional welfare state in Europe!*” (2002) Education is considered as a public good of significant value, crucial for societal cohesion and a core state responsibility. Throughout the decade, all Ministers have reassured public opinion that higher education will continue to be provided by the state and constitutionally safeguarded.

The foundations of the Greek higher education system are based on the post-dictatorship democratisation phase and are therefore ‘idealised’ rendering any effort to reform these politically sensitive and triggering significant public backlash. The 1975 Constitution stipulates in Article 16 ‘on academic freedom and freedom of education’ that higher education is exclusively ‘public and free of charge.’ In practice, this means that it is provided free in state institutions and that private universities are prohibited. This constitutes a fundamental difference with other European situations where private education is not constitutionally prohibited.

As part of the Bologna educational reforms, the New Democracy government proposed in 2005 a Constitutional amendment which would enable private institutions to function recognizing them as equal to public Universities and thereby aligning Greece to mainstream European educational developments. This triggered an intense public debate on constitutional

reform and was marked by violent protests, riots and universities being taken over by students demonstrations. The reactions were so politically charged that they led to the failure of the Constitutional amendment and blocked the entire legal reform regarding the internal workings of universities. Two years later, a parliamentary ad hoc committee on the Constitutional reform debated the revision of Article 16. Both the government and the main opposition submitted proposals on the issue, revealing interesting dimensions related to identity formation in Greece.¹⁸

There was a cross-party consensus in ND and PASOK, in favour of allowing the establishment of private universities; though it was clarified that the goal of education ought to be” *to develop a humanistic, social and democratic consciousness.*”¹⁹ Both the conservative and socialist parties equated modernisation and Europeanization with (neo)liberal ideological positioning (market and competition-driven values), while the foundations of Greek identity as reflected in public education are associated with more socially just values (10/01/2007). Thus, a bi-polar attitude characterised most political speeches of both ND and PASOK representatives. As an illustration, PASOK’s representative M. Chrisochoidis supported the revision of the article on the grounds that it would enable Greek citizens to adapt to global challenges, reminding however, that education in Greece was and must remain a public social good and the Greek state “*must retain the right to regulate the rules of its own educational establishment by defending the contemporary [that is, post 1975] fundamental accomplishments of its own people- equal access to free education, public character of universities, administrative autonomy and academic freedom*” (10/01/2007). This suggests that even though government representatives criticised the shortcomings of Greek public education, they felt in parallel obliged to protect Greek education against the *rules of the market* and *private capital* that would endanger the humanistic nature of national traditions and domestic institutions (see Skyllakos, 14/02/2007). This pro-nationalist cleavage seems to cut across ideological differences between conservatives and progressives and dominates discourse about Greek identity in relation to European integration and globalisation.

¹⁸ Minutes of Parliamentary committee on constitutional revision, 10/01/2007, 14/02/2007, and 15/02/2007, available at www.fa3.gr/nomothesia_2/nomoth_education and ‘Proposal submitted by PASOK on constitutional revision, 08/06/2006’, available at http://www.neosyntagma.gr/?page_id=62 and ‘Proposal submitted by New Democracy on constitutional revision, 26/06/2006’, available at <http://www.kmitsotakis.gr/documents/protasiND.pdf>

¹⁹ M. Chrisochoidis (PASOK deputy) during Parliamentary committee on constitutional revision, 10/01/2007, available at http://www.fa3.gr/nomothesia_2/nomoth_education/39-Arthro_16_Praktika_Voulis_10_1_07.htm

3.3. Externally oriented identity construction programme: Cultural diplomacy

The third dimension of our study of the role of the state as actors of identity construction related to national and European identities and modernity, involves an investigation of the discursive structure of this identity programme as conducted *externally* by state actors in the case of each country. In this context and in order to maintain a degree of continuity on the study of identity through national approaches to education and culture, we have focused on state sponsored promotion of the country abroad. This seems particularly pertinent in the case of Greece given that the narrative linking modern Greece with classical humanistic culture has been continuous and inherent to identity construction from the very foundation of the state (1830) to nowadays.

Defining Cultural diplomacy

Within the context of this report, we view cultural diplomacy as embraced in the more general area of ‘public diplomacy’. The term that has come to the fore since 1960 denotes a radically different relationship between states that the traditional term ‘diplomacy’ used to imply. The emphasis is on exchanges and interactions, it includes non-state actors in this interchange, and aims at impacting (global) public opinion; it is, thus, a deeply political matter and not a simple act of promotion. It involves ‘*the exchange of ideas, information, values, systems, traditions, beliefs, and other aspects of culture, with the intention of fostering mutual understanding*’ (Cummings, 2003).²⁰ Cultural diplomacy refers not only to issues of foreign policy, but to a broader conceptualization and promotion of the country’s image abroad by the state.

This seems to be the particularly relevant in the case of Greece and under this light we examine attempts by Greek state actors to construct and promote a national identity as blended with its European dimension abroad. Issues of cultural diplomacy fall under the supervision of the Ministry of Culture, the Ministry of Education, Lifelong Learning and Religious Affairs, and, mainly the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. According to the latter, ‘*cultural diplomacy can contribute on the one hand in promoting our country’s image at an*

²⁰ See also Leonard M., C. Stead & C. Smewing (2002), *Public Diplomacy*, The Foreign Policy Centre, London.

*international level, while, on the other is an efficient way of conducting foreign policy- especially during this era of globalization, of old borders' dismantling, rapid developments and multicultural particularities and rapprochements...Greek culture, which is unique in being beyond time and space, can function as an ideal platform on which several agents (ministries) can collaborate transforming our inexhaustible national heritage into a way to promote peace and understanding in Europe.*²¹ It is in fact a recurrent pattern in official state discourse that Greek culture is put forward as the country's 'comparative advantage' in relation to the rest of Europe (Stylianides, 2008), as well as the 'vehicle' through which Greece can consolidate and further its presence at the international level (Diamantopoulou, 2007).

In spite of numerous such confident public statements on the part of the country's governing elites, Greek cultural diplomacy as a state directed systematic endeavor, was nearly absent up to the early 1990s and still today lacks organized planning. Since 2004, we can argue that the country left behind its introvert phase and entered a more productive stage of cultural production and promotion through the establishment of new institutions, agencies and policies.

The axes of Greece's cultural diplomacy programme

Against this background, we trace the attempts made by governments of both ruling parties (during the period 1999-2009) to construct and promote to audiences beyond national borders an image of the country's contemporary cultural profile.

1) **The Foundation of Hellenic Culture (renamed Hellenic Foundation of Culture)**, <http://www.hfc.gr> and *Hellenic Foundation of Culture, 1999-2008*, Athens, 2008

The Foundation of Hellenic Culture was set up in 1992 as the main axis of cultural diplomacy. Inspired by the role and functioning of the British Council, Goethe Institut, and l' Institut Français in particular, it was established at a time of acute political crisis related with the 'Macedonia name issue' with the neighbouring former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

²¹ <http://www.mfa.gr/www.mfa.gr/el-GR/Policy/Multilateral+Diplomacy/Culture/TargetsPriorities/>

This period's (1991-1995) international and national politics directly affected the Foundation's establishment and had a strong imprint on its character.²²

Primarily due to economic mismanagement, the functions and organization of the foundation were altered in 1997. It was renamed 'Hellenic Foundation of Culture' (HFC) similarly to other related foreign institutions so as to '*avoid any one sided promotion of the Greek culture and in order to emphasise the concept of multicultural dialogue*'.²³ Since 2001, the Foundation has come under the supervision of the Ministry of Culture, but irrespectively of its dynamic relaunch, the HFC followed a decreasing path up to 2006 due to perpetual under-financing, inefficient and hesitant policies followed and an almost complete lack of interest on behalf of the state concerning its function. A striking yet telling example in this respect is that there were no attempts whatsoever to link the Foundation's activities with the cultural events organized during the 2004 Olympic Games which were undoubtedly Greece's most ambitious cultural diplomacy initiative since the country's independence.

The Foundation's first set of cultural events (1991-1994) aimed at linking Greece with '*the Europe of Renaissance and Enlightenment*' and '*restoring the country's role within the advanced and modernized Europe*'.²⁴ Six branches of the Foundation were established in strategic cities abroad: London, Berlin, New York, Paris, Odessa and Alexandria. The first four cities undoubtedly constitute cultural metropolises of the western world, while Odessa and Alexandria were selected because of their importance in terms of the historical presence of the Greek diaspora and what is commonly referred to as *Hellenism* in these regions.

The Foundation was dedicated and committed '*to the presentation of Hellenic culture throughout the ages, from ancient times and medieval to contemporary*'.²⁵ This ambitious and nationally confident vision, however, was obviously not brought to fruition, as the

²² The first president of the Hellenic Foundation for Culture was Academy of Athens member Ioannis Georgakis, a close personal friend of Konstantinos Karamanlis (President of the Hellenic Republic). He was followed by another Academy member, Michael Sakellariou, then by the professor Adamantios Pepelasis, then by the professor Nikos Economidis, professor Argyris Fatouros and music composer Stavros Xarhakos.

²³ Eleni Tzoumaka, *Elliniki Politistiki Diplomatia: Provlmata kai Prooptikes*, Forum of International Diplomacy, 20 March 2003, available at <http://icp-forum.gr/wp/wp-content/uploads//2009/03/elenitzoumaka.doc>

²⁴ *ibid*

²⁵ Information available at the organization's previous official website www.foundationhellenicculture.com, cited at www.artregister.com/fhc.html. For an overview of the foundation's work see *Idrima Ellinikou Politismou, 1992-2008*, Athens 2008

activities organized were scarce, random and fragmented, forming no coherent representation between the country's past or present culture.²⁶

However, since 2006, the new President appointed, Giorgos Babiniotis (former Rector of the University of Athens), is considered to have introduced a new era for the HFC by adopting a more coherent policy in promoting the Foundation's presence worldwide. Although state funding continues to be negligible, its activities and presence have multiplied and expanded. Under Babiniotis' presidency, the Foundation adopted a more 'aggressive' policy by attempting to penetrate into zones of 'vital importance'. As a result, the offices in London, Paris and New York were dismantled and new branches were founded across the Balkan region (Trieste, Bucharest, Sofia and Belgrade), as well as in Australia (Melbourne), while officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs were designated as HFC representatives and appointed in the London, Washington DC, Brussels, Vienna, Moscow and Beijing Greek Embassies. This structural change is noteworthy as it combines a number of strategies. First, it embraces a more globalised approach trying to maximize the outreach of its presence and activities. Second, it expands its presence to regions the Greek state has identified as politically important due to its diaspora (widened to also reach out to its migrant population in Australia and the US) and strategically and economically important for the consolidation of Greece's regional role (i.e. in Southeast Europe). Lastly, in practical terms, by using the network and structures already established by Greek Embassies in politically and strategically important capital cities it maximizes its potential while also limiting the financial costs. Since 2006, its activities include the organization of conferences, the publication of relevant material and the establishment of public libraries and it has also *integrated a Euro-Mediterranean dimension as regards the cultural capital* it promotes through the national network of the Anna Lindh Foundation.²⁷

2) Hellenic Culture Organization

(<http://www.hch.culture.gr>, <http://www.cultural-olympiad.gr>)

²⁶ Some of the events organized in 2002 in New York, for instance, included the following: the exhibition 'Greeks and the Sea: Hellenic Ships from Ancient Times through the 20th century', a 'Pandelis Karayorgis Quartet' concert, or literary evenings presenting the famous writer Menis Koumandareas, see <http://www.artregister.com/fhc.html>

²⁷ This foundation was set up by 37 member states from Europe, north Africa and the Middle East in the context of the Euro Mediterranean Partnership.

This ‘company’ was founded by the 1997 law on ‘Institutions, Measures and Actions for Cultural Development’ (amended in 2000). In 2000, within the planning of the 2004 Olympic Games, the administration and running of the Cultural Olympiad was entrusted by law to the Hellenic Cultural Heritage S.A., a legal entity under the supervision of the Hellenic Ministry of Culture renamed as the Hellenic Culture Organization. HCO became fully operational within a limited amount of time in order to meet the demands of this endeavour with the financial support of the Greek government.

After the end of the Olympic Games, the Foundation ‘*redefined its role and actions*’ so as to efficiently achieve the country’s cultural promotion ‘*through participation in international cultural networks, in information technology developments and market oriented activities*’.²⁸ Although in theory the aim was to shift attention towards ‘contemporary cultural production’, in practice things have been different. Its activities have been shrinking to cover only administrative areas such as management of museums shops and archaeological sites within the country while exhibiting minimum, if any, activity abroad. Moreover, its post 2004 expenditure account revealed a huge debt, even though the Foundation continued receiving significant financial support from the Greek state and European funds, while it continued to hire personnel that is apparently not needed given its limited responsibilities and activities.

3) Modern Greek Studies and Chairs Abroad

‘Modern Greek studies’ (MGS) refers to the study and promotion of Greek cultural identity (language, literature, history, society, anthropology) through scientific tools deriving from the social sciences and humanities. Activities include academic research, conferences, lectures, specialized seminars, editions, translations of contemporary Greek literature, and broader cultural activities like exhibitions, concerts, theatre spectacles, and film festivals.

After WWII, more than 150 chairs have been set up beyond the boundaries of the Greek state, (113 in Europe and the rest in the USA and Canada) either as professors’ chairs or in the form of relevant academic programmes. These are funded almost entirely by universities abroad and private initiatives and MGS associations.²⁹ Up to 2003, Modern Greek studies were

²⁸ <http://www.hch.culture.gr/> and http://www.cultural-olympiad.gr/st/html_files/main/English/Frameset_cat1_EN.html

²⁹ See www.eens.com and www.mgsa.org, and also other useful links, such as society for modern Greek Studies, www.moderngreek.org.uk, journal of Modern Greek Studies, http://www.press.jhu.edu/journals/journal_of_modern_greek_studies

incorporated in departments of Classical or Byzantine studies and with a special emphasis on Greek language.³⁰ However, interest in the field has been considerably declining over the past decade. This has generated debates over the Greek state's responsibility over sustaining those institutions, given that it has traditionally portrayed MGS as a matter of national interest and pride and as a way of promoting Greek culture abroad even though to date, its actual financial and institutional support has been extremely limited.³¹

The only exception to the rule is the Istituto Siciliano di Studi Bizantini e Neoellenici, in Venice founded in 1951 as a legal entity under the auspices of the Foreign and Education Ministries and funded by both. The rather restricted scope of Modern Greek Studies is illustrated in this institution that exclusively concentrates on Byzantine tradition seen as religious heritage. As it boasts, it owns '*300 icons including three by Paleologos, 250 objects and vessels of worship, the Archives of Venetian Hellenes (1498-1953), as well as a collection of manuscripts.*'³²

In 2001, an InterMinisterial Committee was established under law N. 2413/96 for Multicultural Education so as to best coordinate the bodies engaged in the field of supporting and promoting Greek Studies in universities abroad. The Secretary of Multicultural Education of the Ministry of Education, representatives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Culture, Institute of Diaspora and Inter-cultural Education and the Foundation of Hellenic Culture committed themselves to contribute financially and organizationally to the field of Modern Greek studies abroad. Since then, more texts have been produced and theoretical works published on the issue, while websites inform on universities and function as databases available through the web collecting and disseminating relevant information.³³ However,

³⁰ For instance, the most important among these are: Department of Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies, King's College, University of London/ Centre for Byzantine, Ottoman and Modern Greek Studies, University of Birmingham/ Greek Chair at Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales Paris/ Greek Chair at the Slavic and East European Department, Université Charles de Gaulle Lille III/ Byzantinisch -Neugriechisches Seminar, Freie Universität Berlin/ Griego Universidad Complutense Madrid, C. P. Cavafy Professorship in Modern Greek at the University of Michigan, Modern Greek Studies Department at Brown University and Programme in Hellenic Studies at York University, Canada, see www.isocrates.gr

³¹ For the latest updated information, see Special Section: The Status of Modern Greek Studies in Higher Education in Canada, United States and United Kingdom, *Journal of Modern Greek Studies*, May 2006, or the debate 2008 'Modern Greek Studies Abroad: a matter of progress or retreat?' that was conducted in the daily newspaper *Kathimerini*, 24 May 2008

³² Information available at the website of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs <http://www.mfa.gr/www.mfa.gr/el-GR/Policy/Multilateral+Diplomacy/Culture/>

³³ See www.isocrates.gr and eurybase information on Greek studies abroad

until now, little progress has been made concerning the financing of those institutions and programmes.

4) Greek ‘European Capitals of Culture’

The EU programme ‘**European Capitals of Culture**’ designates a city for a period of one calendar year during which it is given a chance to showcase its cultural life and cultural development. A number of European cities have used the City of Culture year to transform their cultural base and, in doing so, the way in which they are viewed internationally. Through our research, we propose that this constitutes an illustration of a rather unique *initiative that testifies to the potential of bringing together contemporary national and European elements in a rather successful way.*

This project seems of even greater importance in the case of Greece, as it was conceived in 1983 by Melina Merkouri then serving as Greek Minister of Culture. Mercouri believed that at the time, culture was not accorded the same attention as politics and economics and a project for promoting European cultures within the member states should be pursued. The European City of Culture programme was launched in the summer of 1985 with Athens being the first title-holder. Following this rationale, during the first two decades, cities were chosen primarily based on cultural history, scheduled events and the ability to provide infrastructural and financial support. Thessaloniki was cultural capital for the year 1997 holding the ‘unique privilege in the world to maintain a continuous, primary presence in the Balkan area’ and, at the same time, developing throughout the centuries a multicultural character. Later on the meaning of cultural capital was redefined and this shift in policy was reflected in the choice of the town of Patras for the year 2006 that could not easily relate its history with the country’s ancient past or the Byzantine tradition. The emphasis, instead, was on the city’s position as a ‘Gate to the West’ and revolved around the theme of ‘Bridges’ and ‘Links’ that underlined the essence of the productive interaction of culture and civilisation in Europe.

Though this may constitute an example of limited impact in terms of externally oriented identity construction/ promotion,³⁴ nonetheless, it is an interesting one as it constitutes an

³⁴ Other examples consist of initiatives to *enhance and promote Greek culture in general* (e.g. *Greek Film Days, Greek Culture Weeks with theatre, exhibitions, gastronomy, music, conferences, lectures, books, poetry, folklore exhibitions, music and dance bands, et al*) and the Directorate for European Issues of the Ministry of Foreign

initiative that breaks from a mechanical reproduction of stereotypes about Greek identity. National traits and traditions *were fruitfully blended with the country's European identity* demonstrating that there is a way out of the vacillation between a defensive nationalism and state disorganisation of an 'Ottoman type'.

4. Concluding remarks

Drawing from the material presented in this report, the following reflections summarise our research findings:

The EU actors' efforts in European identity construction in Greece are *educational and informative* in nature. Through this approach they *implicitly emphasise the EU's core values such as multiculturalism, equality, tolerance, security and safety, environmental protection, respect for human rights and unity in diversity*. This constitutes a discreet identity construction effort that propagates these values and the *importance of European citizenship* among Greek public opinion. These values are recognised by Greek public opinion as forming the foundation of a common European background and appear to have triggered overall a positive disposition towards a European identity. In effect, European identity is perceived as being still in an embryonic form, facing significant challenges. Nevertheless, it is perceived as one that is potentially *desirable in order to strengthen Europe's global participation, and certainly one that is founded on Greece's historical and cultural heritage*.

As regards the implementation of the Bologna process in Greece and the state's internally oriented identity formation efforts the conclusions that may be drawn from this overview coincide with the findings of the literature review report (WP4). According to the state of art, any attempt to construct a national and European identity in Greece has oscillated between two distinct cultures, one defending traditions and particular national characteristics related to the country's past and the other, paving the way towards modernization, secularization and reform, as this process has already been taking place abroad and Greece must not be marginalised. In effect, our preliminary conclusions suggest that:

Affairs disseminates information on contemporary cultural production and integrate the country in a broader spectrum through national and European websites.

a) When addressing entities abroad, state actors adopt an *apologetic* perspective related with delays and shortcoming in meeting deadlines and agreed changes, while reassuring that efforts are underway and commitment to meeting commonly agreed reforms is unfaltering. Greek governments are committed to ‘catching up’ and meeting the European standards in an exemplary manner as reform, quality, competitiveness and participation in a European knowledge society are strategic priorities for the country’s modernization and further Europeanisation;

b) When addressing their domestic audiences, state actors frame the same issues according to a ‘*nationalistic*’ narrative: European developments are presented as an opportunity to correct failings in tertiary education and public administration that have plagued the country’s development for long and be able to face the challenges of an increasingly globalised knowledge society and competitive labour markets. Greece must hurry to reform and keep up to speed with European developments in order to safeguard the true meaning of education and knowledge that Greece is presented as protecting and representing due to its historical heritage. Moreover, these reforms will reestablish trust in the celebrated classical heritage of the country that must serve as a paradigm to the rest;

c) There are slight, if any, differences in the rhetoric adopted by the two main political parties towards the Bologna process overall. There is a *broad consensus* between conservative New Democracy and socialist PASOK both pro European and support the Bologna reforms as necessary for the country’s modernisation. In certain cases, a more *nationalistic* perspective can be discerned particularly among politicians belonging to ND- as, for instance, Minister Stylianidies or Minister Panagiotopoulos (2007)- noted that “*reforms will be implemented while bearing in mind the Greek historical particularity, that of being, also according to the Constitution, an Eastern Orthodox Church since the very foundation of the state. Under Ottomans, it was due to orthodox faith that the Greek people managed to maintain their language, historical and national cohesion due to orthodox faith and this cannot be forgotten or changed.*” (14/02/2007).

d) Another interesting dimension is the effort to balance between *opposing understandings* of education’s role in contemporary societies. For all governments, it is acknowledged and accepted that the Bologna Process in part privatizes the education sector and defines it

according to capitalist, neoliberal and market attributes. At the same time, given that Greek society considers education as a public good (i.e. post-junta achievements that need to be remembered, protected and politically idealized) aimed at protecting social cohesion, equality and justice, the state is positioned as the guarantor of the core principles on which the Greek state (and identity) are constructed. These opposing trends act as push and pull factors to the education reform.

As regards Greece's externally oriented identity programme, we can discern the following dimensions:

a) The Greek state has been characterized by a lack of commitment to invest on its own 'comparative advantage', that is, culture. Although in its rhetoric it has underlined the importance of a structured cultural diplomacy, in practice, its activities are haphazard, lack strategic, institutional and financial planning, and are undertaken in a disjointed and ad hoc manner. This is best reflected in the policies adopted concerning Cultural Attachés in Greek Embassies around the world³⁵ or in the example of the Hellenic Foundation of Culture. In both cases attempts to adopt Western 'modernized' institutional models of cultural diplomacy (either in the form of cultural institutions or specific posts) so as to rationalize the state machine by eliminating any remains of its 'Ottoman' legacy (as clientelistic networks), were not successfully carried out due to an inability or lack of political investment to undertake the structural reforms that would render them competent and efficient. There exists a disconnect between what is actually implemented and official public rhetoric that stresses the fundamental importance of promoting Greece's cultural heritage abroad for the modern world.

b) Modern Greek identity is directly linked to the country's ancient cultural heritage.³⁶ The overwhelming majority of cultural exhibitions, events and thematic tributes that are promoted by Greek cultural foundations seem to revolve around two axes: the country's ancient

³⁵Data derived from the Association of Cultural Attaches, International Communication Policy Forum, <http://icp-forum.gr/wp/>

³⁶ See http://odysseus.culture.gr/index_en.html If one navigates through the website of the Ministry of Culture, he/she is informed on the country's cultural heritage that 'presents the thousands of years of the country's cultural production that created the path through which Western civilization in general developed so as to acquire its current form.' An interactive online timeline presents Greek history in a linear manner from the Stone Age to the Contemporary Era. The 20th century constitutes one among the eight sections pictured, while historical data and references to the country's cultural production during this century is missing (see Annex II).

Hellenic classical culture,³⁷ and its Orthodox faith and Byzantine traditions.³⁸ This persistence in connecting Greek identity to its past reproduces dated national stereotypes, and largely ignores contemporary aspects of Greek identity as it is currently being formed.

c) Apart from isolated initiatives, there has been no coherent vision or planning concerning policies abroad. At the time when attention worldwide is shifted towards interdisciplinary and multicultural aspects in education and cultural capital, more complex and nuanced views of identities are presented, Greek state cultural policy appears to be lagging behind.

The Greek state through its inability to shape a coherent cultural diplomacy policy reflects in part an inability to reflect on its identity. Hampered by stereotypes concerning national identity, it emphasises ancient classical heritage and Byzantine traditions anxious of reminding to others, and to itself, its direct linkage with it. On the other hand, there has been a limited attempt to conceptualize and promote modern achievements and European developments that actually form an integral part of the current national identity. As a result, state attempts of cultural promotion are often decontextualized from Greek society that has experienced throughout the last years the impact of post 1974 democratization, information technology revolution, European exchanges, immigration and multicultural cities, and other significant modernization changes. Lagging behind these developments, state attempts at cultural diplomacy seem to dismiss contemporary cultural achievements and all too easily refer almost exclusively to the very distant past to showcase the country's cultural capital. This testifies to a lack of a coherent vision on behalf of the governments that would critically compose experiences of the Greek state in the 20th century, not self critical as an exception to the rule, but as an exemplary case of European countries leading their own, individual path towards modernity and approaching modernity through multiple paths. We expect to be able to elaborate on these reflections further in the empirical stages of the IME research project during which non-state actors' and individuals' contribution in the process will be examined.

³⁷ See, for instance, the archaeological exhibition '*Athenian Democracy*' organised by the Hellenic Foundation for Culture in Melbourne in 2008 presenting Athens as the '*cradle of democracy for the entire world*', <http://www.hfc.gr/wmt/webpages/index.php?lid=2&pid=13&apprec=109>

³⁸ See for instance, an exhibition of Byzantine and Post-Byzantine icons '*From the Incarnation of Logos to the Theosis of Man*' organized by HFC in the National Museum of Art in Romania 2008, so as to '*promote the spirituality of the Orthodox faith as expressed in art during the zenith of the Byzantine Empire and as preserved during the difficult period of the Ottoman occupation*', <http://www.hfc.gr/wmt/webpages/index.php?lid=2&pid=13&apprec=84>

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Interviews:

Interview with Moustaklis, press attaché at the Istanbul Embassy and ex cultural attaché, 27/04/2010 – See Interview Report, Annex I.

Relevant websites:

http://ec.europa.eu/ellada/index_el.htm
<http://www.euoparl.gr/>
http://ec.europa.eu/europedirect/index_el.htm
<http://odysseus.culture.gr/>
http://odysseus.culture.gr/a/4/ga40.jsp?age_id=03
http://odysseus.culture.gr/map/CulturalMap_gr/cultural_map_gr.html
<http://www.hfc.gr>
<http://www.elladastonkosmo.gr/>
<http://www.hch.culture.gr>
<http://www.cultural-olympiad.gr>

6. Annexes

Annex I: Interview Report

Date of the interview: 28 April 2010

Name of the interviewee: Dr. Dimitrios Moustaklis

Name of interviewee's employer: Consulate General of Greece

Organizational position: Head of Press and Communication Office, Istanbul

Summary of the interview

Dimitrios Moustaklis graduated from the National School of Public Administration as a Cultural Attaché in 1988. This specialized department was established in 1984 in an attempt to institutionalize cultural diplomacy responsibilities that until then were led by non specialized staff. However, Cultural Attachés who were appointed to embassies were in many cases not very well received by those who had previously been employed/ entrusted with the role of cultural affairs delegate in these Embassies. In most cases, it appears that cultural affairs were entrusted to individuals who had personal relationships with Embassy staff and/ or who were well known authors, established academics, diplomats, and so on. Moustaklis along with his fellow students were met with suspicion and hostility by the personnel working in the consulates and were given little room to perform their duties as cultural attachés. Due to strong personal networks, and the lack of political will on behalf of the official authorities to promote this new specialisation, the specific department of the National School of Public Administration was shut down soon afterwards (1991). Dozen of graduates remained unemployed and the cultural needs of embassies were for the most part inadequately met. These young educated individuals, thus, were obliged to retreat from their original aspirations and to 'invent' ways of finding a job within public sector, without much, or any, help from the state. The majority managed to get appointments at administrative posts though in areas unrelated to their studies, whereas others went into journalism. Moustaklis became a press attaché, and at the moment is the Head of Press and Communication Office at the Greek Embassy at Istanbul.

Dimitrios Moustaklis explicitly and repeatedly expressed his disappointment with the Greek state's failure to institutionalize issues of cultural diplomacy. This unsuccessful policy adopted concerning the Cultural Attachés reflects for him the lack of consistency, rationality and willingness of the Greek State to move towards a more efficient model of administration while leave behind the heritage of inflexible bureaucracy and the weight of clientelistic relationships. Moreover, he felt there was little interest for the energy and ideas of younger employees in the Greek public administration. In 1998, the domain of cultural attachés was entirely called off and their responsibilities led by special external partners with temporary and non renewable contracts.

Annex II: ODYSSEUS, the WWW server of the Hellenic Ministry of Culture

Institutional framework:

"Upgrading and Operating the ODYSSEUS Portal". The Project is included in the Operational Program of 'Information Society' of the 3rd Community Support Framework and is part-financed at 80% from the European Regional Development Fund and at 20% from National resources. B' Phase

Aims of Odysseys: *It is not possible to appraise Greek Culture as a whole, through a computer screen. Nevertheless, being aware of the force and the potentialities of new technologies, we tried to squeeze in this program millennia of artistry, the centuries of outstanding art, the achievements of the human spirit, the routes on which the Western civilization strode in order to reach its current form.*

Examples from the official cultural website of the Ministry of Culture serve to illustrate the narrative created on the Greek identity by state actors: the only way through which to promote Modern Greek identity is to link it with its past (Ancient and Byzantine), assuming, thus, an inferior perspective towards current realities and undervaluing contemporary aspects of Greek identity and culture as it is being formed.

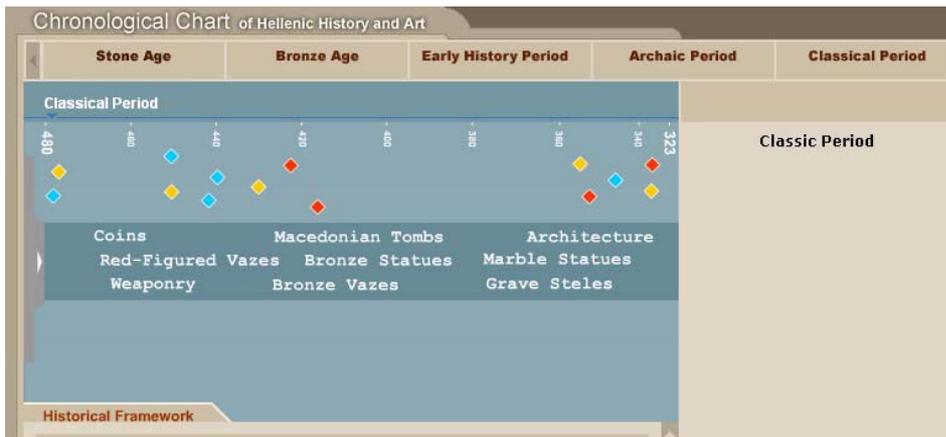
1) Chronological Chart: http://odysseus.culture.gr/a/4/ea40.jsp?age_id=01

The whole period is divided into 11 sub chronological sections, from the Stone Age to Contemporary Greek Period.

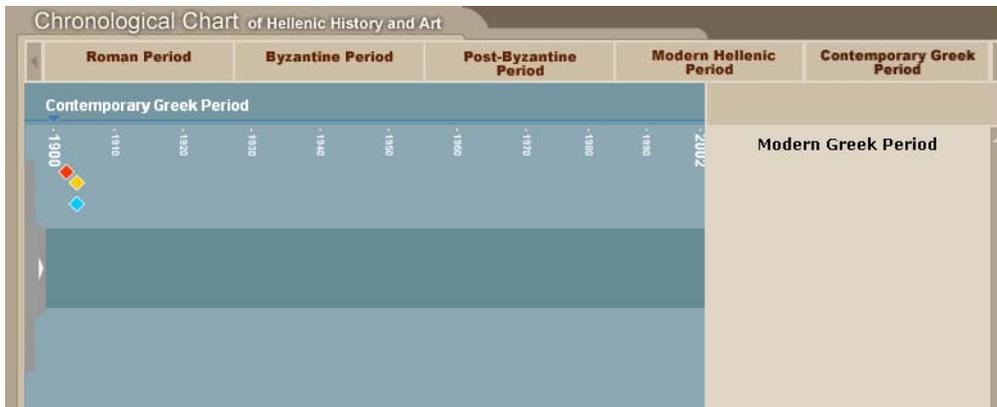
Navigate through the chronological chart of Hellenic history and art, visiting important events in Hellenic prehistory and history from the Stone Age to our day, and view images of mobile and stationary monuments of every period, grouped by subject.

Compare the points of interest in the English version of the website between:

a) **14** in the Classical period:



b) 3 in the Contemporary period:

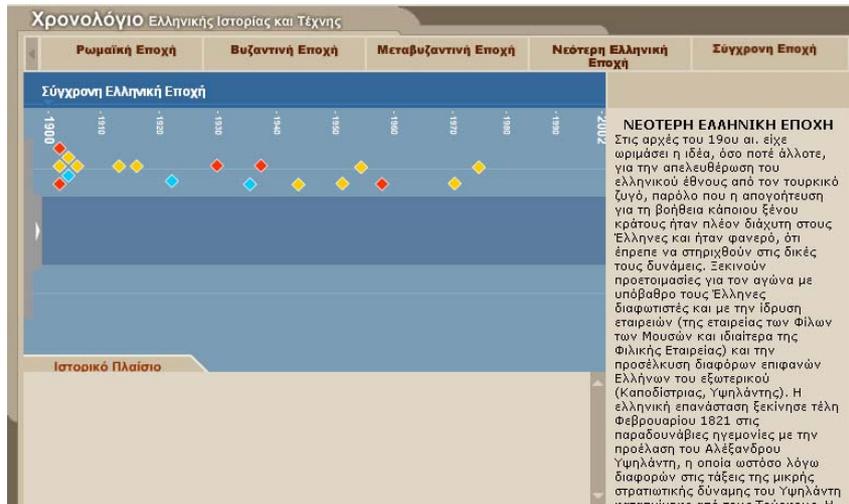


Or, also, note that in the Greek version of the website, information on the history/ culture of each period is also provided:

a) a 850 words text is available on the developments during the Byzantine period (330-1453 ac)



b) yet no information is available for the period after 1900 (!!)



2) **Photographic Archive:**

http://odysseus.culture.gr/a/3/photo_en.html

The Photographic Archive was created using images presented in the Odysseus site. It is divided into three basic chronological units, Antiquity, Byzantium and Modern-Contemporary Hellas, each of them divided into smaller subject units. Visitors are shown, thus:

a) **23 vessels from Antiquity:**



b) And only **1 modern Greek painting** (1912):

