



**HELLENIC REPUBLIC
MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
DIRECTORATE GENERAL FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT
CO-OPERATION (YDAS)**

**EX-POST EVALUATION OF THE
GREEK SCHOLARSHIPS' PROGRAMME**

Executive Summary

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1. Introduction

Development co-operation forms an inextricable part of Greece's foreign policy, as well as of other Greek policies, in a wider sense. The basic goals and principles governing Greece's development co-operation with its partner countries refer to ensuring:

- (i) effectiveness and efficiency in the delivery of aid;
- (ii) transparency and accountability;
- (iii) viability of aid actions and programmes, as well as their compatibility with the development needs of the partner country concerned; and
- (iv) consistency as regards implementation of Greece's international commitments.

Greece has been a member of the Development Assistance Committee/DAC¹ of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development/OECD since 1999, alongside 28 other states, as well as the European Union/EU. Each donor country's Official Development assistance/ODA, which contributes to and aims at economic development and prosperity of developing countries based on the relevant definition from OECD/DAC, consists of bilateral and multilateral development assistance. The former refers to the funding provided directly by a donor country to a developing country (according to DAC's list of ODA recipients)², whereas the latter is channeled through national contributions to the EU, UN agencies and other international organizations.

TABLE A
The Composition of Greece's ODA per Year
(in USD millions and as a percentage of Gross National Income/GNI)

Development Assistance	2013		2014		2015		2016		2017	
	USD millions	%GNI	USD millions	%GNI	USD millions	%GNI	USD millions	%GNI	USD millions	%GNI
Bilateral ODA	43.61	0.02%	46.10	0.02%	71.88	0.04%	159.15	0.08%	84.67	0.04%
Multilateral ODA	195.45	0.08%	201.34	0.09%	166.82	0.08%	209.38	0.11%	228.91	0.12%
Total ODA	239.07	0.10%	247.44	0.11%	238.70	0.12%	368.53	0.19%	313.58	0.16%

¹ OECD/DAC members: Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Luxembourg, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom, USA and the EU.

² http://www.oecd.org/dac/financing-sustainable-development/development-finance-standards/DAC_List_ODA_Recipients2014to2017_flows_En.pdf

In recent years, due to the economic and budgetary circumstances, Greece's total ODA has been reduced, in absolute terms. Specifically, during the period 2011-2017, the economic crisis that had already broken out, affected both the size and the composition of Greek multilateral and bilateral ODA flows. Hence, Greece's total ODA as a percentage of Gross National Income/GNI was lower in 2013 (0.10%) compared to 2012 (0.13%) but has resumed a positive trajectory since 2014, reaching the pre-crisis level in 2016 (0.19%) to be slightly reduced in 2017 (0.16%). As far as Greek ODA's composition is concerned, an increased emphasis on multilateral contributions is evident, whereas bilateral development assistance is mostly focused on "in-donor refugee costs" and the provision of scholarships to students originating from developing countries.

The competent entities for the provision of ODA-eligible scholarships that provided the necessary feedback in the framework of this evaluation include the Ministry of Education, Research and Religious Affairs, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Rural Development and Food (via the Mediterranean Agronomical Institute of Chania/MAICH) and the State Scholarships Foundation/IKY.

In 2017, the amount spent by Greece for its scholarships towards developing countries' nationals reached USD 2.18 million at constant prices of 2016 (USD 2.22 million at current prices of 2017). This represents a sharp decrease from 2010 (USD 64.64 million at constant prices of 2016), with the largest reductions in expenditure for scholarships occurring between 2012 and 2013, as well as between 2015 and 2016.

During the period 2014-2018 (i.e. for the school years 2014-2015, 2015-2016, 2016-2017 and 2017-2018), there has been a geographical fragmentation of Greece's scholarships programmes, which covered the needs of beneficiaries from a significant number of countries. The countries and territories with the highest numbers of recipients of Greek scholarships for tertiary education in the Lower Middle Income countries and territories category include Palestine, Egypt and Armenia. For the Upper Middle Income countries and territories, Albania has been in a leading position as a recipient (notably between 2016 and 2018), alongside Tunisia, Algeria and Serbia. A limited number of Greek scholarships are offered for medical residencies in Greek hospitals. Countries of origin of beneficiaries include the Central African Republic (CAR), Congo and Zimbabwe (sub-Saharan Africa), Morocco (Northern Africa), Georgia and Ukraine (the Black Sea), Moldova (Eastern Europe), Kazakhstan (Central Asia), Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia (Balkans), as well as Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, Iran, Yemen and Palestine (the Middle East).

Sector-wise, except for scholarships provided by the Ministry of Health and MAICH, that are focusing on the health sector and the agronomical sector, respectively, the scholarships provided by other entities in the Greek public sector do not target specific sectors but refer to a wide array of

scientific fields related to humanities, law and social sciences, applied sciences, medicine and Economics.

The present ex-post evaluation of the Greek scholarships' programme was conducted by YDAS-3 Directorate of Geographical Policy and Strategic Planning within the framework of the transparency and accountability principles, based on: (i) qualitative data gathered through the questionnaires³ that were sent to the competent entities and also -through these entities- to scholarships' beneficiaries and (ii) similar research that had been carried out by other DAC members (Austria, the Czech Republic and New Zealand) as regards their own scholarships' programmes.

This ex-post evaluation aims at: (i) achieving a comprehensive mapping of the Greek scholarships' programme; (ii) formulating a single and consistent scholarships' strategy; and (iii) informing the citizens on Greece's scholarships' programme, with a view to enhanced accountability as regards the use of funds from the national budget.

2. Conclusions from the Ex-post Evaluation

Based on the empirical evidence gathered from the competent entities (based on replies to the questionnaires), the following conclusions can be inferred:

1. Up to this moment, target-setting as regards the award of scholarships to specific geographical regions/countries and sectors is missing. Most of the scholarships is allocated to Lower- and Upper-Middle Income Countries. In particular, during the time period in question, the large majority of scholarships is directed mainly to the Balkans (primarily to Albania), while an important number of scholarships is being offered to Tunisian nationals through the Mediterranean Agronomical Institute of Chania/MAICH.

2. There is lack of information about the return of beneficiaries to their country of origin following completion of their studies, so as to ensure the achievement of the development impact required through the transfer of know-how to developing countries, which is one of scholarships' principal aims. Almost half of beneficiaries having responded to the questionnaires stated that they do not intend to return (or have not returned) to their country of origin, choosing either to prolong their stay in Greece or to continue their professional career in other developed countries. MAICH scholarships' beneficiaries have been a notable exception, as they have all made clear their intention to go back to their countries once they have completed their studies.

³ The content of the ex-post evaluation's questionnaires was formulated based on the following criteria: the presence of a whole-of-government approach, transparency, accountability, contribution towards the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals/SDGs, capacity building, development impact and sustainability.

3. Students from developing countries prefer the Greek educational system, as they believe that it can contribute towards their professional progress and that its quality level is high. Especially when it comes to classical studies and humanities, Greece is a popular destination thanks to its history and culture, whilst command of the Greek language is considered as an additional asset in these domains. Respondents identify specialized knowledge and skills acquired as the most crucial benefits from the education offered by the Greek educational system.

4. The majority of beneficiaries successfully complete their studies. A few cases of scholarships' interruption were due to unforeseeable factors, which are related to clearly personal reasons (e.g. health issues). MAICH is an exception, as the relevant scholarships have been interrupted for academic reasons as well (low academic performance).

5. The provision of scholarships contributes to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals/SDGs and the reinforcement of Greece's (economic, social, cultural) ties with other countries. In particular, according to the public entities' replies to the questionnaires addressed to them, scholarships undoubtedly contribute, first of all, to *SDG 4 - Quality Education* and the relevant targets, while the following SDGs are also mentioned: *SDG 5 - Gender Equality*, as beneficiaries comprise men and women in a proportional manner, *SDG 9 - Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure*, due to the transfer of know-how and specialized scientific staff and -in a wider sense- *SDG 1 - No Poverty*, since education is a key factor in fighting poverty and raising living standards.

6. As far as the value added for Greece from the provision of scholarships is concerned, the following can be highlighted: the achievement of progress in terms of co-operation between countries at all levels, the appreciation of Greek educational institutions' work, the promotion of synergies between Greek and foreign tertiary education institutions, the diffusion of the Greek culture and language abroad and development co-operation's contribution to political stability in wider geopolitical regions, to which Greece also belongs.

3. Final Conclusion

The present ex-post evaluation's outcome coincides, to a great extent, with the findings of the OECD/DAC Peer Review team. Greece's development assistance is small in absolute terms, compared to other DAC members. Its fragmentation does not contribute to the maximization of its effectiveness. In addition, as already mentioned above, in recent years, due to the economic crisis, bilateral aid has been substantially reduced (except for "in-donor refugee costs", as a result of the refugee crisis) and focuses mainly on the provision of scholarships to students originating from developing countries.

Therefore, with a view to ensuring compliance with the aforementioned observations of OECD/DAC, there is a need for scholarships:

(i) To have a strategic focus with regard to geographical and sector coverage, which must be consistent with the strategic priorities of Greece's international development co-operation in terms of geographical areas (e.g. Eastern Mediterranean, Black Sea, Western Balkans etc.) and sectors (e.g. rural development, medicine, archaeology etc.), as well as with the wider goals of Greece's foreign policy. Additional effort is needed in order to limit the number of the beneficiary countries (that are also ODA recipients) to 10-15.

(ii) To focus on issues/sectors responding to the development priorities and challenges of partner countries, within the framework of local ownership and more generally to be linked to development goals and capacity building needs of ODA-eligible partner countries. In this context, based on the relevant notices for available scholarships, beneficiaries/students should make a commitment to subsequently return to their countries of origin and stay there for at least 3-5 years (in order to address the "brain drain" phenomenon).

(iii) To stem from a "whole-of-government" approach. A holistic approach to scholarships' programme is needed, with a view to making it an effective and responsive means of development assistance which can substantially contribute to partner countries' sustainable development through capacity-building.

(iv) To be awarded with open and transparent procedures, as well as with clear and pre-defined criteria of student selection, through publication of the relevant notices.

(v) To be allocated amongst beneficiaries in an equitable way (e.g. by providing equal opportunities to women and men).

(vi) To undergo an ex-post evaluation with regard to their development impact. There is a need for conducting an impact assessment and bringing forward recommendations on future directions, in order to ensure effective management and define ways of improvement.

(vii) To be accompanied by the assignment, to the competent Greek Diplomatic Authorities abroad, of the task to maintain Registries of alumni (networks of graduates), so as to have a complete picture of scholarships' outcome and impact. The competent Ministries and entities should inform the Greek Diplomatic Authorities on scholarship recipients/students who terminate their studies in Greece and return to their countries of origin.

Finally, in the long run, Greece should aim at the formulation of a comprehensive new development cooperation framework, with the inclusion of scholarships as part of a wider plan for promoting bilateral development cooperation programmes.

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