

## Glossary

<b>Administrative structures</b>	The Greek law establishes four levels of the administration: general secretariats and single administrative sectors, general directorates, directorates, and departments. When considered indiscriminately, these levels are designated as “administrative structures”.
<b>Branch</b>	This designates job categories, or classifications, in the Greek public administration.
<b>Centre of Government</b>	A small set of institutions at the core of the state, which between them have the authority, responsibility and capacity to lead the development of a strategic vision and direction for public policies, and the effective implementation of this vision in practice and over time. The key function of the Centre of Government is to act as a central leadership hub in order to facilitate co-ordination, collaboration and co-operation across the public administration, with the objective of securing a strong, coherent and collective strategic vision of where the country needs to go, and how it will get there. In the current Greek system, two entities can be cited – the newly established General Secretariat of the Prime Minister and the Secretariat of the Government. The Finance Ministry and the Ministry of Public Administration Reform are also key players.
<b>Civil law</b>	Civil law traditionally emphasises the need for a comprehensive and detailed structure of laws and regulations to cover all issues. Jurisdictions based on civil law (also known as code law because it is traditionally based around codes) give less weight to precedent than common law systems. Interpretation of the legal text is paramount in civil law systems. Academic legal experts can play a significant role in the interpretation of legal texts. Civil law statutes tend to be more detailed than statutes under common law systems. The Greek legal system belongs to the continental European civil law tradition and has been especially influenced by German and French law. See also code.
<b>Clientelism</b>	This may be defined as a relationship between (political) patrons and clients, which is considered mutually beneficial, and under which the clients receive some form of benefit in return for providing political support.
<b>Code</b>	Group of related laws, under the system of civil law.

<b>Codification</b>	Consolidating all the amendments made over time to a given law which are often implemented through additional laws.
<b>Competency</b>	The concept of competency derives from the principle of legality. In Greece, an administrative body's competency is the ability provided to it by the rules of the legal system to enact legally binding rules (of an individual or general nature) or to contribute to the enactment of such rules, or even to undertake physical operations (Yannakopoulos, 1997). Thus the missions and responsibilities of the Greek state, comprising both the political class and the public administration, are defined at a very detailed level by the law and are termed "competencies". Competency is not to be confused with "competences" which in public management terms mean the capacities and skills of individual civil servants.
<b>Effectiveness</b>	The extent to which an activity's stated objectives have been met.
<b>Efficiency</b>	Achieving maximum output from a given level of resources used to carry out an activity.
<b>E-government</b>	The use of information and communication technologies (ICT), and particularly the Internet, as a tool to achieve better governance. It is more about government than about "e". E-government initiatives refocus attention on a number of issues: how to improve the efficiency, of internal government consultation, communication and decision making; how to collaborate more effectively across ministries, agencies and other entities of the public administration to address shared problems; how to enhance customer focus; how to build relationships with private sector partners.
<b>Function</b>	In this report, the terms "function" and "functional" refer to the actual (real and observed) activities and output of the central public administrative structures, as opposed to the formal competencies attributed to them by the law. See also competency.
<b>Functional review</b>	Data-driven, evidence-based analysis of the public sector, with a view to identifying and perhaps quantifying efficiency savings, and the actions necessary to improve public sector productivity. To keep the exercise manageable, functional reviews are usually carried out on parts of the public sector rather than the whole, by type of institution such as central ministries or executive agencies, or by sector programme, or by focusing on central or sub-national elements of the public sector. The objective of this functional review has been to identify the key issues relating to the central public administration which require attention in order to raise the efficiency but also the long-term effectiveness of Greek public policy making, reforms and their implementation.

<b>Government</b>	This is generally taken to define the individuals and institutions that exert political power over the state at a given time. In democracies, states are served by a succession of different governments.
<b>Indicator</b>	Quantitative or qualitative measure derived from a series of observed facts. When evaluated at regular intervals, an indicator should be able to point out the direction and pace of change, for example in a public policy area. The EU guidelines for the European funds define an indicator as the measurement of an objective to be met, a resource to be mobilised, an effect obtained, a gauge of quality or a context variable.
<b>Legal formalism</b>	Legal formalism has a formal meaning in the philosophy of law. In this report, it designates a Greek culture and framework that emphasises the pre-eminence of laws, regulations and formal processes to shape the work of the public administration.
<b>Medium-Term Fiscal Strategy</b>	The Medium-Term Fiscal Strategy was adopted by the Greek Parliament end-June 2011. The MTFS outlines a set of measures for the period 2011-15 totalling EUR 28.3 billion (12% of GDP) which are forecasted to reduce the general government deficit from 7.5% of GDP in 2011 to 1% of GDP in 2015. Government expenditure is expected to be reduced by EUR 14.8 billion and revenue is to be increased by EUR 13.4 billion over the same period. The approval of the MTFS through Parliament guaranteed the disbursement of the fifth tranche of the May 2010 financial assistance package and met the preconditions for an additional financial assistance package to cover the 2012-15 period.
<b>Mission</b>	See competency for the meaning of the term. The term mission is interchangeable with the term competency for this report.
<b>National Strategic Reference Framework</b>	The NSRF 2007-13 constitutes the reference document for the programming of European Union funds at national level for the 2007-13 period. It was elaborated within the framework of the new strategic approach to the Cohesion Policy of the European Union, according to which NSRF “ensures that the assistance from the funds is consistent with the Community Strategic Guidelines on cohesion and identifies the link between community priorities, on the one hand, and the national reform programme, on the other.” The NSRF is given practical shape through operational programmes (OPs). There are a smaller number of OPs for Greece than in the previous 2000-06 period: 8 sectoral OPs, 5 regional OPs, and 12 European Territorial Co-operation OPs. Greece has been allocated EUR 20.4 billion (current value, agreed December 2005). These funds will be used to finance interventions through the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), the European Social Fund (ESF), and the Cohesion Fund.

<b>Operational programme</b>	<p>The Operational Programme (OP) “Public Administration Reform 2007-13” is one of the sectoral OPs agreed with Greece for the NSRF programming period 2007-13, reflecting part of Greece’s strategic choices for the use of European funds in this period. One set of priority axes of this OP is “the enhancement of public policies quality through the modernisation of the regulatory framework and the operational structures of public administration”. Four specific objectives have been identified to carry this forward: strengthening the mechanisms for strategic planning, enforcement and control of public policies; improving accountability and transparency; better regulation; and improving the quality of public services to citizens and enterprises. The other set of priority axes concerns the development of human resources in the public administration. The specific objectives for this are strengthening human resource development policy through structural and institutional change; and improvement of the quality and effectiveness of the educational and training system to support the institutional and structural changes in public administration. A range of activities and projects support the achievement of these objectives. Evaluation of progress is through a set of output and result indicators.</p>
<b>Performance assessment</b>	<p>Assessment against a set of predetermined criteria for the economy, efficiency and effectiveness with which an organisation carries out a particular activity or range of activities. Organisations may be set regular targets on particular aspects of their performance – financial returns, efficiency, quality of services supplied, etc. – against which their performance is monitored and evaluated.</p>
<b>Performance budgeting</b>	<p>Performance budgeting generally refers to the use of performance information to: <i>i</i>) inform budgetary decisions (by providing contextual information or inputs to strategic planning); and <i>ii</i>) instil greater accountability throughout the budget process (e.g. by ensuring that activities are aligned with policy objectives). Performance information can be generated by both government and non-governmental organisations, and can include such information as: statistics; data from the financial and/or operational accounts of line ministries/agencies; performance reports generated by line ministries/agencies; evaluations of policies, programmes or organisations; or Spending Reviews).</p>
<b>Performance management</b>	<p>This can take different forms, but usually includes the annual elaboration of goals and targets, and the adoption of performance indicators. Performance management can be at the level of the organisation and its ability to meet objectives, and it can also be applied to individual civil servants in the context of an HR strategy.</p>

<b>Political/ administrative interface</b>	The political/administrative interface is the point through which the government's key political messages and agenda are communicated to the senior levels of the public administration for action. Some OECD member countries make a clear and formal distinction between the political level of government (appointed or elected ministers and their political advisers), and the civil service, made up entirely of non-political officials who stay in post regardless of changes in government (the United Kingdom is an example). In some other OECD member countries (such as Germany), the higher reaches of the civil service hierarchy are political appointees, who change with changes in government. In both cases, however, the senior civil service, whether politically appointed and not, sits at the critical juncture between the political agenda and civil service implementation of that agenda. It needs the credibility and competence to be effective in that role and to be the steward of sustainable policies across political cycles.
<b>Primary balance</b>	The primary balance is the difference between the government's revenues and its expenditures apart from interest payments on its debt. When this primary balance is negative, there is a public deficit.
<b>Public debt</b>	Public (or national) debt, is the total stock of government debt (borrowing) which has built up over the years and which the government has not yet paid back. It is often expressed as a percentage relative to gross domestic product (GDP).
<b>Public deficit</b>	See primary balance.
<b>Public governance</b>	The framework of institutions, policies and tools in which the different actors that affect public policy, and have a legitimate interest in public policy, find their place, under the stewardship of the state. Public governance may also be defined in terms of its component issues. For the OECD, it includes long-term political and policy stability and coherence; regulatory quality; the rule of law; integrity and the control of corruption; the framework for private initiative and economic development; effectiveness and efficiency of the public administration; trust in public institutions and government; and transparency, accountability and ethical standards. The European Commission's 2004 <i>White Paper on Governance</i> defines it as the rules, processes and behaviour that affect the way in which public power is exercised, particularly as regards openness, participation, accountability, effectiveness and coherence.
<b>Public policy</b>	A public policy defines a consistent course of action designed to respond to an issue or problem identified by the state as requiring action or reform, and implemented by a public body (ministry, agency, etc). An example might be a public policy to tackle climate change or educational reform. A public policy is often given a formal framework through legislation and/or secondary regulations, especially in countries with a system of civil law.

An important public policy subset consists of those public policies designed to respond to issues within the public administration itself and to promote the effective and efficient functioning of state institutions, such as HR management for the public administration.

**Regulatory  
impact analysis**

*Ex ante* regulatory impact assessment of new regulations is a tool that aims to assist policy makers in adopting the most efficient and effective options to support a public policy – including the “no regulation” option – using evidence-based techniques to justify the best option and identify the trade-offs involved when pursuing different policy objectives. It is usually considered that the cost of regulations should not exceed the benefits, and that alternatives to regulation (including the “no regulation” option) should be examined, alongside the “regulation” option.

**Rent seeking**

In the public administration context, rent seeking defines situations where resources of the public administration (human or other) are appropriated for political, economic or social advantage, without generating any added value for the economy or society.

**Stability and  
Growth  
Programme  
(SGP)**

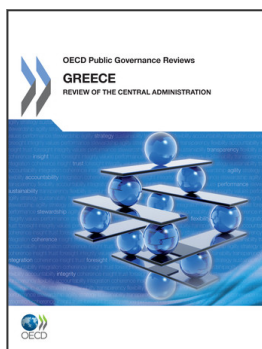
Greece’s Stability and Growth Programme (SGP) represents the government’s response to the challenges that country faces: consolidate the country’s fiscal position through effective fiscal and structural policies aimed at drastically reducing the public deficit, and lowering the overall public debt to GDP ratio.

**State**

A set of enduring institutions through which public power is distributed.

**Troika**

In the Greek context and for this report, the Troika is the term used to designate the European Commission, European Central Bank and International Monetary Fund. This review is part of the May 2010 memorandum of understanding (MOU) between the Greek Government and the Troika, which sets requirements on the Greek Government, in the form of specific actions and reforms to be completed within specified timelines, as a condition for quarterly disbursements of financial assistance. The MOU specifies, among other actions, that the Greek Government should “reform and modernise its public administration”, which includes a functional review of the central public administration.



**From:**  
**Greece: Review of the Central Administration**

**Access the complete publication at:**  
<https://doi.org/10.1787/9789264102880-en>

**Please cite this chapter as:**

OECD (2011), "Glossary", in *Greece: Review of the Central Administration*, OECD Publishing, Paris.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1787/9789264102880-3-en>

This work is published under the responsibility of the Secretary-General of the OECD. The opinions expressed and arguments employed herein do not necessarily reflect the official views of OECD member countries.

This document and any map included herein are without prejudice to the status of or sovereignty over any territory, to the delimitation of international frontiers and boundaries and to the name of any territory, city or area.

You can copy, download or print OECD content for your own use, and you can include excerpts from OECD publications, databases and multimedia products in your own documents, presentations, blogs, websites and teaching materials, provided that suitable acknowledgment of OECD as source and copyright owner is given. All requests for public or commercial use and translation rights should be submitted to [rights@oecd.org](mailto:rights@oecd.org). Requests for permission to photocopy portions of this material for public or commercial use shall be addressed directly to the Copyright Clearance Center (CCC) at [info@copyright.com](mailto:info@copyright.com) or the Centre français d'exploitation du droit de copie (CFC) at [contact@cfcopies.com](mailto:contact@cfcopies.com).