



Democracy Not For Sale

*The Struggle for Food Sovereignty
in the Age of Austerity in Greece*



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Glossary

ATE	Agricultural Bank of Greece
AWU	Annual Work Units
CAP	Common Agricultural Policy
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CESCR	Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
CFR	Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union
CMFO	Central Markets and Fishery Organisation
CoE	Council of Europe
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
CRPD	Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
EC	European Commission
ECB	European Central Bank
ECHR	European Convention on Human Rights (formally: Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms)
EctHR	European Court of Human Rights
EEC	European Economic Community
EFSF	European Financial Stability Facility
EFSM	European Financial Stabilisation Mechanism
ELSTAT	Hellenic Statistical Authority
ENFIA	Unified Property Tax
ESC	European Social Charter
ESC rights	Economic, social and cultural rights
ESM	European Stability Mechanism
ETO	Extraterritorial Obligations
EU	European Union
EUROSTAT	Statistical Office of the European Union
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FEAD	Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived
GC	General Comment
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GVA	Gross Value Added
Ha	Hectare
ICCPR	International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
ICESCR	International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
ICJ	International Court of Justice
IFI	International Financial Institution
IGO	Intergovernmental organization
ILO	International Labour Organisation
IMF	International Monetary Fund
KfW	Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau (German Reconstruction Credit Institute)
Kwh	Kilowatt hour
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
NVA	Net Value Added
OECD	Organisation for Economic Development and Cooperation
SAP	Structural Adjustment Programme
SILC	Social Inclusion and Living Conditions
SSE	Social and Solidarity Economy
TEU	Treaty on European Union
TFEU	Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union
UAA	Utilised Agricultural Area
UDHR	Universal Declaration on Human Rights
UN	United Nations
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
VAT	Value Added Tax

Executive summary

This Report examines the impacts of austerity in Greece on the right to food. It concludes that the Greek State and the Eurozone Member States violated the Greek people's right to food as a result of the austerity measures required by three Memorandums of Understanding (2010, 2012 and 2015). In other words, the austerity packages imposed on Greece contravened international human rights law.

In August 2018, the European Council celebrated the end of the third Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), praising the Greeks efforts and European solidarity. Yet, as this Report shows, there is little to celebrate. Not only did austerity measures increase poverty and food insecurity, it further consolidated an agri-food business regime that will perpetuate inequalities in access to and control over food.

The Report examines the impacts of austerity on food producers and consumer/cooperative initiatives as well as social impacts on the Greek population in general. By focusing on the human right to food, the Report highlights the impact of the Greek economic crisis that has touched every aspect of people's lives. The focus on food producers and rural areas also draws attention to an overlooked aspect of Greece's crisis as these sectors and regions often lack voice and recognition in national politics and decision-making.

The findings are based on direct interviews and original fieldwork, supplemented by interviews (including with high-level State officials) as well as macro-economic data analysis and literature reviews of key texts.

The findings of the Report are startling.

1. Austerity measures increased rural poverty and food insecurity.

- An estimated 38.9 % of rural citizens in Greece in 2017 are at risk of poverty*.
- Rural unemployment soared from 7% in 2008 to 25% in 2013 while rural income per capita dropped by 23.5% during the crisis years (2008–2013).
- Food insecurity across Greece has also increased – with food prices increasing at faster rates than prices in the Eurozone during the crisis, despite the sharp fall in domestic incomes and labour costs. This led to a drop in food expenditure in total terms but an increase in food expenditure as a share of total monthly expenditure from 16.4% in 2008 to 20.7% in 2016.
 - The proportion of households that cannot afford a meal with meat, chicken, fish (or vegetarian equivalent) every second day, for example, doubled during the crisis from approximately 7% in 2008 to more than 14% in 2016.

* The EU defines this as someone severely materially deprived, below the poverty line after social transfers, or living in households where adults are employed less than 20% of the time.

- The share of households with children unable to afford a protein-based meal on a daily basis doubled from 4.7% in 2009 to 8.9% in 2014. EU statistics estimate that 40.5% of children in 2016 faced material and social deprivation.
- Overall the crisis prompted a noticeable change in consumption patterns with the substitution of higher cost food items with more inexpensive foods.

2. Austerity measures impacted particularly severely on small-scale food producers and traders.

The adverse measures on farmers included:

- Higher taxes and increased costs of production due to the replacement of a separate income tax regime for farmers with a standardised income tax system, higher VAT rates on agricultural inputs including on fertilizer, pesticide, feed and seed, and diesel; and the introduction of a new tax on farmland. Taxes as a proportion of agricultural net value added soared from 4% between 1993 and 2010 to 15.4% in 2016.
- The abolition of the specialised Agricultural Insurance Organisation (OGA) and its merging with a generalised system of social security has led to higher contributions for many farmers.

As well as direct impacts, a number of structural reforms significantly tipped the balance in favour of larger food retailers and private traders to the detriment of small-scale producers.

These reforms included:

- Retail trade liberalisation, such as the lifting of restrictions on particular goods sold in supermarkets, flexibilisation of labour laws, and a move towards Sunday trading.
- Wholesale trade liberalisation, specifically the privatisation of the formerly publicly administered and profitable Central Markets and Fishery Organisation, the country's prime wholesale food operator, responsible for the country's 2 major food markets and 11 fish markets.
- Privatisations, including the privatisations of the Agricultural Bank of Greece (ATE) and the major dairy cooperative AGNO. The results have been increased costs for farmers, less access to rural credit, specialised financial services, and agronomic advice.

3. The austerity measures hit an already weakened rural food sector made vulnerable by long-term trends.

Agriculture in Greece remains a significant part of the economy, making up nearly 4% of the country's GDP (more than double the EU average) and providing 12% of the country's jobs in 2016, but it has been in a state of decline since the early 1980s. Greece's entrance into the European Economic Community in 1981 and later the EU – and the Common Agricultural Policy – opened up Greece's small-scale farmers to greater competition. This led to a number of vulnerabilities in the Greek agri-food system prior to the crisis including:

- A steady fall in domestic agricultural production and an increasing reliance on food imports that led to a negative food trade balance. Between the late 1980s and the beginning of the crisis in 2008, the food trade deficit frequently exceeded 1% of the country's gross domestic product (GDP) while in the period 2005–2011, imports accounted for nearly 40% of domestic consumption.
- Increasing reliance on subsidies with subsidies rising as a share of net value added in agriculture from 23% in 1993 to 81% in 2008.
- A growing supermarket sector that intensified monopolistic conditions in relation to producers and consumers alike.

These trends have undermined Greece's food sovereignty, turning Greece from a net food exporter to a net food importer. Yet rather than remedying these vulnerabilities, the three MOUs (2010, 2012 and 2015) accelerated these trends. Examining the structural requirements of the memorandums suggests a deliberate ideological project of transforming the State and restructuring the Greek economy in favour of certain sectors of capital such as large (trans)national supermarket chains. The crisis provided a means to implement it.

4. The Greek government's social safety net was insufficient to prevent food insecurity and poverty.

The Greek government enacted a number of social programmes seeking to provide a safety net against the fallout from austerity and to address urgent food insecurity concerns. These included the passing of a humanitarian assistance law that provided food, rent and electricity subsidies for low-income individuals and families. This was later replaced by a Social Solidarity Scheme which provides low-income households with a monthly allowance.

While addressing the most basic needs, the Scheme's support has been limited in scope, providing only €30 to €200 per household per month, with an additional €100 for every adult and €50 euros per child. The strict eligibility criteria limits support to the most severe cases of material deprivation, while the means testing requirements exclude many who would be entitled due to its restrictive and bureaucratic stipulations. Coverage in rural areas has also been limited.

As a result, private foundations, charities, NGOs, and the Greek Church have had to fill some of these gaps – offering among others free school meals, food banks and soup kitchens, and 'social grocery' stores that provide food, clothing, cleaning materials, and other basic goods for low-income individuals and families.

While some of these programmes receive support from local municipalities, and in the case of the school meals programme also central government backing, they are little more than sticking plasters. Human rights-based responses, such as supporting jobs and just wages, that would deal with the root causes of hunger and food insecurity need to be much more centrally foregrounded.

5. Community-led popular responses provide real solutions and point to the emergence of a new food politics.

In the face of Troika-enforced government policies undermining food sovereignty – and a failure to adequately ameliorate its impacts - a range of grassroots community initiatives have emerged to help secure people's access to food.

These reflect different political tendencies, vary in terms of infrastructure and engage differently with States and markets. They include solidarity kitchens, food cooperatives, 'No intermediaries' markets, food self-sufficiency collectives and networks, Community-supported agriculture (CSA) schemes, as well as a range of other agricultural cooperatives, alternative farm models, and producers' ventures.

The call for a 'solidarity economy' has become a key framework within which many grassroots responses have articulated their demands and aspirations. This Social Solidarity Economy (SSE) has grown massively during the years of the crisis: in 2013, 372 social enterprises were registered while in the years 2014, 2015 and 2016 these rose to 585, 714 and 907 respectively.

In building up such counter-power from below based on innovative practices, social experimentation and people-controlled infrastructures, this movement is paving the way not only for a popular resistance to austerity, but also a new, transformative, just food system. This extends beyond demands for affordable food prices and farmer protection towards genuinely challenging the structural power of the corporate agribusiness sector and advancing popular alternatives.

6. The right to food has been violated in Greece.

The right to adequate food is strongly enshrined in international human rights law and its normative content notes several elements (availability, accessibility, adequacy, sustainability) that need to be safeguarded. The right to adequate food also correlates closely with other economic, social and cultural rights (ESCR), meaning that the violation of one right often leads to the violation of other rights. The right to health, life, water and adequate housing are underlying determinants of the right to food.

Several austerity measures - including changes to agricultural taxes and social security regimes and the drive towards privatization and trade liberalization - contributed directly to undermining the right to food in Greece. Other measures such as minimum wage reductions and pension cuts also affected this fundamental human right and contravened other economic, social and cultural rights, such as the right to work, housing and health.

States have the obligation to realize human rights. This obligation includes the progressive realization of socio-economic rights with the maximum available resources, which *prima facie* prohibits retrogressive* measures that would limit or reduce existing levels of enjoyment of enshrined rights. Retrogressive measures can only be taken under very limited circumstances and based on key conditions – such as careful monitoring and evaluation, consideration of all rights, ensuring no disproportionate impact on the most vulnerable – none of which was applied by the Greek government. The wide array of retrogressive measures taken, combined with the increasing cost of living, are sufficient proof that the right to food was violated in Greece.

7. Accountability for violations of the right to food rests both with the Greek government and the Eurozone Member States, with the latter arguably taking a greater share of the responsibility.

When a human right is violated, it means there has been a breach in the obligation to respect, protect and fulfil this human right. Many actors were involved in the negotiations leading to the three MoUs. Human rights obligations exist territorially and, under certain circumstances, extraterritorially.

As a result of the austerity measures, Greece has violated the human right to food of people living in Greece. Yet, Eurozone Member States, as direct lenders are also responsible as they signed the MoUs and likely pressured the Greek government to do so. Eurozone Member States – as States Parties to the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights and other international human rights instruments – have therefore breached their extraterritorial obligations to respect the human right to food in Greece. Not only should Eurozone States have refrained from requiring measures that affected the right to food, they should have also conducted human rights impacts assessments of the Memorandums. These HRIAs are required prior to, during, and after the passing of MoUs, but were never done.

Furthermore, all European States have failed to comply with their human rights obligations when acting and taking decisions in Intergovernmental Organisations and International Financial Institutions, such as in the International Monetary Fund. As part of the UN system, the latter is obliged to comply with the UN Charter which includes a commitment to the progressive realization of human rights. It certainly should not take any action that would constitute a human rights violation.

Troika members claim that the sole responsibility for the impacts of the MoUs lies with the Greek State. This argument is false because they, with Greece, were joint signatories of the three MoUs. Therefore, the responsibility for violations of the right to food is a shared one too. Indeed it can be argued that the responsibility of the Eurozone Member States is much bigger, given the evidence of direct interference or even coercion by the Member States of the Troika on Greece to sign the MoUs.

* Retrogressive measures means any measure that implies a step back in the level of human rights protection due to the intentional decision by a State.

The focus of this Report is on Greece, but its findings are relevant internationally. Greece is not an exception. Many other countries, in and outside of Europe, find themselves in similar situations, forced to implement austerity-driven, technocratic policies which lead to violations of economic, social and cultural rights including the fundamental right to food. Greece's experience also shows that the violations of these fundamental rights are not only issues of the global South. They are happening in the global 'North'. Hunger, food insecurity, poverty and material deprivation are European issues. Human rights are universal, which means all governments have obligations to fulfill them. It is time now for the EU to act in accordance with these obligations and put human rights above the needs of financial markets.



Foreword

Learning from Greece

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Greece has become both the symbol and the most vivid illustration of the dramatic impacts that austerity measures can have on a population. It is there that the financial and economic crisis that opened with the filing for bankruptcy of Lehman Brothers on 15 September 2008, and the successive fiscal consolidation plans implemented in its aftermath, hit the hardest. This Report provides us with a unique opportunity to learn from what happened, in order to make sure similar mistakes, leading to widespread violations of the right to food, shall never recur.

The circumstances are well known. After the Greek government revealed, in October 2009, that the public deficit had been grossly underestimated by the previous governments, the country faced speculation on the financial markets that significantly raised its costs of borrowing, to the point that the situation became unsustainable. Greece called for financial assistance on 23 April 2010. In response, the other Euro Area Member States decided on 2 May 2010 to provide stability support through a Loan Facility Agreement. Through this channel, they secured a rescue package of 80 billion euros in loans; another 30 billion would be provided by the International Monetary Fund (IMF). The disbursements, however, were made conditional upon the adoption of a series of measures listed in the 'Economic Adjustment Programme for Greece'. The austerity measures, intended to restore the fiscal balance of Greece, entailed 30 billion euros worth of cuts in spending for the period 2010-2014; the privatization of State assets, for an amount of 50 billion euros; and "structural measures", involving in particular the flexibilisation of the labour market, as a means to restore the competitiveness of the Greek economy.¹ This first set of measures however soon appeared insufficient. In June 2011, the Eurozone Member States granted a second loan for an amount of 130 billion euros for the years 2012-2014. This second bail-out was carried out through the European Financial Stability Facility (EFSF) and the European Financial Stabilisation Mechanism (EFSM). The 'Second Economic Adjustment Programme for Greece' was formally approved by the Euro Area Finance Ministers on 14 March 2012.²

1 See European Parliament, Report 2009-14 on the inquiry on the role and operations of the Troika (ECB, Commission and IMF) with regard to the euro area programme countries (2013/2277 (INI)), A7-0149/2014, 28 February 2014); Report of the Independent Expert on the effects of foreign debt and other related international financial obligations of States on the full enjoyment of all human rights, particularly economic, social and cultural rights : Mission to Greece (22-26 April 2013), (27 March 2014) (U.N. doc. A/HRC/50/15/Add.1).

2 See European Commission, Report on the Second Economic Adjustment Programme for Greece, March 2012.

The two successive adjustment plans had dramatic socio-economic impacts on the Greek population that non-governmental organisations were swift to denounce.³ Unemployment rates peaked up to 30%, with youth unemployment passing the 50% mark on several occasions. Dramatic cuts in the health sector led to hospitals closing and medical staff being reduced. As a result, average waiting time tripled, unmet medical needs rose by 50%, and diseases not seen for a long time, such as tuberculosis, re-emerged. The number of patients unable to pay for their medication substantially increased too. Pension benefits were reduced up to 40%, and the retirement age was raised to 68 years. Other sectors such as education or justice also greatly suffered from the budgetary cuts foreseen by the successive MoUs the Troika imposed on Greece.

The Greek government, led at the time by George Papandreou from the PASOK (socialist) party until he resigned from office on 11 November 2011, was trapped. It requested that the International Labour Office (ILO) send a High-Level Mission to Greece in order to assess the social impacts of the measures that had been imposed on the country. When the mission visited the country in September 2011, it was told by its interlocutors within the government that Greece had been unable to raise the question of the social impacts of the austerity measures with the Troika, and that they hoped that the ILO would be acting as a counterweight to the impositions of the European Commission, the European Central Bank and the IMF. The representatives of the Greek government were blunt: although 'approximately 20 per cent of the population was facing the risk of poverty', they said, Greece

'did not have an opportunity, in meetings with the Troika, to discuss the impact of the social security reforms on the spread of poverty, particularly for persons of small means and the social security benefits to withstand any such trend. It also did not have the opportunity to discuss the impact that policies in the areas of taxation, wages and employment would have on the sustainability of the social security system. In the framework of the obligations undertaken under the Memoranda and in order to maintain the viability of the social security system, Article 11(2) of Act No. 3863 stated that the expenditures of the social security funds had to remain within 15 per cent of GDP by 2060. A contracting GDP would necessarily lead to shrinking expenditures. Even though this did not endanger the viability of the system from a technical point of view, it did affect the levels of benefits provided and could eventually put into questioning the functions of the social welfare state. The Government was encouraged by the fact that these issues were on the agenda of an international organization and hoped that the ILO would be in a position to convey these issues to the Troika'.⁴

It is at this point that human rights bodies stepped in. These mechanisms faced the uncomfortable position of having to condemn Greece for measures the country would have preferred not to have been forced to take. The European Court of Human Rights, which was the first to intervene, could sidestep the issue. On 20 February 2012, the Greek Supreme Administrative Court had rejected two applications complaining about the significant reductions in the wages and pensions of public

3 See the report by the International Federation for Human Rights, 'Downgrading Rights : the Costs of Austerity in Greece', published in November 2014.

4 See International Labour Office, *Report on the High Level Mission to Greece (19-23 September 2011)*, Geneva, 22 November 2011, para. 88.

servants, as well as reductions in other allowances and benefits. (One application was filed by an individual public servant; the other by the Public Service Trade Union Confederation, a union of public servants). The disappointed claimants turned to the European Court of Human Rights, alleging a violation of Article 1 of the Additional Protocol (No. 1) to the European Convention on Human Rights. This provision requires that any interference by a public authority with the peaceful enjoyment of possessions should be lawful, pursue a legitimate aim “in the public interest” and be proportionate to the aim sought to be realised. According to the Court’s own summary of its case-law, it thus requires that “a fair balance [...] be struck between the demands of the general interest of the community and the requirements of the protection of the individual’s fundamental rights. The requisite balance will not be found if the person or persons concerned have had to bear an individual and excessive burden”.⁵

On 7 May 2013, the Court dismissed the applications as manifestly ill-founded, and thus inadmissible. It recalled that States parties to the European Convention on Human Rights should be afforded a broad margin of appreciation in the adoption of social and economic policies, and that it therefore in principle respects the national authorities’ judgment as to what is “in the public interest” “unless that judgment is manifestly without reasonable foundation”.⁶ Broadly endorsing the assessment of the Greek Supreme Administrative Court, which has noted that the situation of the applicants had not “worsened to the extent that they risked falling below the subsistence threshold”,⁷ the European Court of Human Rights took the view that “the extent of the reduction in the first applicant’s salary was not such as to place her at risk of having insufficient means to live on and thus to constitute a breach of Article 1 of Protocol No. 1. In view of the foregoing and of the particular context of crisis in which the interference in question occurred, the latter could not be said to have imposed an excessive burden on the applicant”.⁸

That attitude was not typical, however. Although it was embarrassed by the applications it was presented with -- leading it to suggest for the first time that whether or not a “subsistence threshold” has been crossed should be determinative in addressing the question of the interference with the peaceful enjoyment of possessions --, the European Court of Human Rights is not tasked under the European Convention on Human Rights to assess the compatibility of measures that might interfere with the right to an adequate standard of living, the right to health, or the right to work. Interference with the “peaceful enjoyment of possessions” is a rather poor lens through which the compatibility of fiscal consolidation measures with human rights can be assessed. Moreover, however much their situation may have been affected by the austerity measures denounced, the public servants were not the most vulnerable -- nor even the hardest hit -- by the adoption of these measures.⁹

5 Eur. Ct. H.R. (1st sect.), *Koufaki and ADEDY v. Greece*, 7 May 2013, Appl. Nos 57665/12 and 57657/12, § 32.

6 *Id.*, § 39.

7 *Id.*, § 44.

8 *Id.*, § 46.

9 The Court has rendered similar rulings in other cases related to the financial crisis and national austerity measures: see Eur. Ct. H.R. (2nd sect.), *Da Conceicao Mateus and Santos Januario v. Portugal*, 8 October 2013, Appl. Nos 62235/12 and 57725/12 (on the reduction of pensioners’ Christmas and holiday subsidies); Eur. Ct. H.R. (1st sect.), *Da Silva Carvalho Rico v. Portugal*, 1 September 2014, Appl. No 13341/14 (on the temporary reduction of old-age pension rights).

It is perhaps unsurprising therefore that the United Nations human rights treaty bodies and Special Procedures of the Human Rights Council were far more condemnatory in their tone. Greece in particular was regularly challenged to justify the socially regressive measures it had adopted, in the name of the restoration of the public finances, at the request of its creditors. In April 2012, referring to Article 4 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (which commits the States parties to that instrument to undertake measures for the implementation of the economic, social and cultural rights recognized in the Convention “to the maximum extent of their available resources”), the Committee on the Rights of the Child noted that “the recession and the current financial and economic crisis are taking their toll on families and on public social investment, including on the prospects of implementing the Convention, especially with regard to article 4 of the Convention”.¹⁰ In March 2013, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women expressed its concern that “the current financial and economic crisis and measures taken by the State party to address it within the framework of the policies designed in cooperation with the European Union institutions and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) are having detrimental effects on women in all spheres of life”.¹¹ The Independent Expert on foreign debt and human rights visited Greece a month later, and drew up a scathing report listing a range of rights that were under threat as a result of the adoption of the two austerity programmes of 2010 and 2012.¹² In 2015, the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights expressed its concern that, “despite the measures taken by the State party to mitigate the economic and social impact of the austerity measures adopted in the framework of the memorandums of understanding in 2010, 2012 and 2015, the financial and economic crisis has had a severe impact on the enjoyment of economic, social and cultural rights, particularly by certain disadvantaged and marginalized groups with regard to the rights to work, to social security and to health”.¹³ It recommended that:

“the State party review the policies and programmes adopted in the framework of the memorandums of understanding implemented since 2010, and any other subsequent post-crisis economic and financial reforms, with a view to ensuring that austerity measures are progressively waived and the effective protection of the rights under the Covenant is enhanced in line with the progress achieved in the post-crisis economic recovery. The State party should further ensure that its obligations under the Covenant are duly taken into account when negotiating financial assistance projects and programmes, including with international financial institutions”.¹⁴

10 Committee on the Rights of the Child, Concluding Observations on the combined second and third periodic reports of Greece (13 Aug. 2012) (U.N. doc. CRC/C/GRC/CO/2-3), para. 6.

11 Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, Concluding Observations : Greece, (1 Mar. 2013) (U.N. doc. CEDAW/C/GRC/CO/7), para. 6.

12 Report of the Independent Expert on the effects of foreign debt and other related international financial obligations of States on the full enjoyment of all human rights, particularly economic, social and cultural rights, Addendum: Mission to Greece (22-26 April 2013), (27 March 2014) (U.N. doc. A/HRC/50/15/Add.1).

13 Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, Concluding Observations: Greece, (27 Oct. 2015) (U.N. doc. E/C.12/GRC/CO/2), para. 7.

14 *Id.*, para. 8.

The clearest condemnation came however from the European Committee of Social Rights, and it is Greece again that was the focus of attention.¹⁵ The first wave of fiscal consolidation measures, adopted following the conclusion of the 2010 MoU between Greece and its creditors, led to seven complaints being filed: in all seven of these cases, the Committee concluded that Greece had not complied with its obligations under the European Social Charter. In Complaint No. 65/2011, the Committee found that, by amending its labour legislation in December 2010 - to allow, during the probation period, a permanent contract to be terminated without notice and with no severance pay - Greece had created a situation that was not in conformity with the right of workers to a reasonable period of notice for termination of contract, which forms part of the right to a fair remuneration under Article 4(4) of the European Social Charter.¹⁶ Complaint No. 66/2011, which was introduced by the same public sector unions, took issue in particular with the 'special apprenticeship contracts' that Greece had introduced in July 2010. These contracts, which could be concluded between employers and individuals aged 15 to 18, were designed without regard for most of the main safeguards provided for by labour and social security law. This, the Committee concluded, was in violation of Article 7(7) of the European Social Charter, which stipulates that employed persons under 18 years of age shall be entitled to not less than three weeks of paid annual holidays. It also was in violation of Article 10(2) of the European Social Charter, which requires States parties, as part of their duty to recognize the right to vocational training, "to provide or promote a system of apprenticeship and other systematic arrangements for training young boys and girls in their various employments". The Committee concluded moreover that the apprentices under the scheme introduced in 2010 were defined as "a distinct category of workers who are effectively excluded from the general range of protection offered by the social security system at large", in violation of Article 12(3) of the Charter, which commits State parties to "endeavour to raise progressively the system of social security to a higher level".¹⁷ The same complaint also took aim at another provision of the July 2010 reform, which allowed employers to pay new entrants in the labour market aged under 25 a rate of 84% of the minimum wage or daily wage. The Committee took the view that, insofar as this allowed the employer to pay a minimum wage to all workers below the age of 25 which is below the poverty level, this resulted in a violation of Article 4(1) of the Charter, which recognises "the right of workers to a remuneration such as will give them and their families a decent standard of living".¹⁸

15 Other bailed-out States, such as Portugal or Ireland, have not been subject to ECSR complaints. In the framework of the general reporting system of the European Social Charter, the Committee has however voiced similar concerns as to the compatibility with the Charter of some reforms implemented by those two countries under their respective financial assistance programmes. In its 2014 Conclusions for instance, the Committee found that the reduction of the minimum wage for workers in the private sector enacted in Portugal violated Article 4(1) of the Charter on the right to a decent remuneration. Similarly in the case of Ireland, the Committee found, expressly relying on the Greek case-law analysed below, that the reduction of the minimum wage for younger workers below the minimum income threshold did not comply with that same requirement. The Committee also observed that the reforms implemented by both Ireland and Portugal with regard to dismissal and termination of employment did not comply with Article 4(4) of the Charter, especially for workers in trial or probationary phase. For a more detailed analysis, see E.C.S.R., 2014 Conclusions (Portugal), 5 December 2014 ; E.C.S.R., 2014 Conclusions (Ireland), 5 December 2014.

16 E.C.S.R., *General Federation of employees of the national electric power corporation (GENOP-DEI) and Confederation of Greek Civil Servants' Trade Unions (ADEDY) v. Greece*, C.C. No. 65/2011, dec. of 23 May 2012.

17 E.C.S.R., *General Federation of employees of the national electric power corporation (GENOP-DEI) and Confederation of Greek Civil Servants' Trade Unions (ADEDY) v. Greece*, C.C. No. 66/2011, dec. of 23 May 2012.

18 *Id.*, para. 65.

But could Greece be held responsible, when the measures that allegedly result in violations of the European Social Charter were largely adopted in order to satisfy its creditors, rather than being adopted by the country on its own motion? In its responses to complaints No. 65/2011 and 66/2011, the Greek government did mention the constraints imposed by its creditors: unless it agreed with the various conditionalities attached to the provision of the emergency support it requested, it argued in substance, it would have gone bankrupt. The Committee at first ignored the argument. It did consider it, however, in the five decisions it adopted subsequently, on 7 December 2012, following complaints filed by public sector pensioners' unions.¹⁹ At issue were significant reductions to the pensioners' social protection, which were ultimately found in violation of the right to social security as enshrined in Article 12(3) of the Charter. The Greek government again insisted that these changes were "necessary for the protection of public interests, having resulted from Greece's grave financial situation, and, in addition, result from the Government's other international obligations, namely those deriving from a financial support mechanism agreed upon by the Government together with the European Commission, the European Central Bank and the International Monetary Fund in 2010".²⁰ This time the European Committee of Social Rights did respond, only to swiftly dismiss the argument raised by Greece: it took the view that "the fact that the contested provisions of domestic law seek to fulfil the requirements of other legal obligations does not remove them from the ambit of the Charter".²¹ More specifically, the Committee held: "[W]hen states parties agree on binding measures, which relate to matters within the remit of the Charter, they should – both when preparing the text in question and when implementing it into national law – take full account of the commitments they have taken upon ratifying the European Social Charter".²²

However, while the statement was clear as to the duty of the State implementing the austerity measures requested by the MoU, it begged the question whether the lenders -- the Euro Area Member States other than Greece, if not the EU itself -- might also bear a responsibility in the situation resulting from the implementation of the adjustment programme imposed on Greece. One might indeed argue that, as the disbursement of loans to bailed-out countries was generally made conditional upon compliance with the terms and conditions of the MoU, the violations of the European Social Charter could also be attributed to the other Euro Area Member States. Couldn't these States therefore be said to have coerced Greece into disregarding its obligations under the Charter?

19 E.C.S.R., *Federation of employed pensioners of Greece (IKA-ETAM) v. Greece*, C.C. No. 76/2012; *Panhellenic Federation of Public Service Pensioners v. Greece*, C.C. No. 77/2012; *Pensioners' Union of the Athen-Piraeus Electric Railways (I.S.A.P.) v. Greece*, C.C. No. 78/2012; *Panhellenic Federation of pensioners of the public electricity corporation (PAS-DEI) v. Greece*, C.C. No. 79/2012; *Pensioners' Union of the Agricultural Bank of Greece (ATE) v. Greece*, C.C. No. 80/2012. The decisions on the merits of all five complaints were adopted on 7 December 2012. Though these complaints were filed by different organisations, they all raise the same issues of substance, and may thus be considered together.

20 E.C.S.R., *Federation of employed pensioners of Greece (IKA-ETAM) v. Greece*, C.C. No. 76/2012 dec. Of 7 Dec. 2012, para. 10.

21 *Id.*, para. 50.

22 *Id.*, para. 51.

It is with this country in mind that, on 24 June 2016, just months after it reviewed the situation of Greece, the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights adopted a statement titled “Public Debt, Austerity Measures and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights”.²³ Specific paragraphs address international organisations such as the ESM providing loans, and the role of States as lenders, whether they grant bilateral loans or whether they are members of international organisations providing financial support. International organisations per definition are not bound by the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights as such, which is only open to accession by States. The Committee nevertheless recalled:

As any other subjects of international law, international financial institutions and other international organisations are “bound by any obligations incumbent upon them under general rules of international law, under their constitutions or under international agreements to which they are parties” [International Court of Justice, Interpretation of the Agreement of 25 March 1951 between the WHO and Egypt, Advisory Opinion (20 December 1980), I.C.J. Reports 1980, 73 at 89–90 (para. 37)]. They are therefore bound to comply with human rights, as listed in particular in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, that are part of customary international law or of the general principles of law, both of which are sources of international law.²⁴

As regards States as lenders, the Committee emphasized that “States parties to the Covenant would be acting in violation of their obligations if they were to delegate powers to [international organisations providing loans] and to allow such powers to be exercised without ensuring that they do not infringe on human rights. Similarly, they would be acting in breach of their obligations if they were to exercise their voting rights within such agencies without taking such rights into account”.²⁵ When States provide bilateral loans, they should keep in mind the prohibition imposed under international law of “coercing other States into violating their own obligations under either the Covenant or under other rules of international law.”²⁶ Therefore, the Committee concluded: “Both as Lenders in bilateral loans and as members of international organisations providing financial assistance, all States should [...] ensure that they do not impose on borrowing States obligations that would lead the latter to adopt retrogressive measures in violation of their obligations under the Covenant.”²⁷

It matters not whether the European Committee of Social Rights was being disingenuous in not allowing Greece to invoke that it was acting at the insistence of its creditors in defence of the measures allegedly in violation of its international obligations, or whether the Committee

23 Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, Public Debt, Austerity Measures and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (24 June 2016) (U.N. doc. E/C.12/2016/1).

24 *Id.*, para. 7.

25 *Id.*, para. 9.

26 *Id.*, para. 11 (referring to International Law Commission, Articles on the Responsibility of States for Internationally Wrongful Acts (annex to General Assembly resolution 56/83 of 12 December 2001, and corrected by document A/56/49(Vol. I)/Corr.4), Art. 18; and to Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, General Comment No. 8 (1997): The relationship between economic sanctions and respect for economic, social and cultural rights, E/1998/22, para. 51).

27 *Id.*, para. 11.

on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights goes too far in referring to the notion of coercion in that same context. What is clear is that these various bodies, established under the Council of Europe or United Nations treaties, are increasingly expressing their uneasiness at what they see happening: an unprecedented assault on social rights, launched in the name of macro-economic considerations that almost entirely ignore these impacts and the need to reduce them to the minimum inevitable.

This Report is presented ten years after the start of the financial and economic crisis, and only months after the austerity programmes imposed on Greece as a condition for the successive “bailouts” have been phased out. Greece, we are told, is now out of danger. But the impacts have been enormous on the living standards of Greek families, and on the right to food in particular. And it is essential that we draw the lessons from what has happened. I welcome this Report as an important contribution to the debate that must now take place.

Introduction

You did it! Congratulations to Greece and its people on ending the programme of financial assistance. With huge efforts and European solidarity you seized the day.

With this Tweet on 20 August 2018, the president of the European Council, Donald Tusk, celebrated the official ending of the third structural adjustment programme for Greece. But although the ‘age of austerity’ (**Box I.1**) is heralded as coming to an end in Greece, the wider implications of eight years of severe cuts to wages, incomes, and social spending will still be felt for many years: nearly 36% of the population are at risk of poverty or social exclusion (compared to an EU average of 23.5%), more than 38% live in conditions of material deprivation,¹ while 19.1% of the labour force is unemployed – the highest rate in the European Union (EU).² Moreover, the deal by which Greece will continue to be subject to the creditors’ financial supervision, with a stipulation to maintain a 3.5% fiscal surplus until 2022 and a 2.2% surplus until 2060, belie any claims of European solidarity and will effectively tie the hands of the Greek government for decades to come.

While several reports have documented the negative impacts of austerity on the Greek economy and society,³ significantly less, if any, attention has been paid to the **rural and agri-food dimension** of the crisis. This Report aims to address this gap by examining what austerity has meant for people’s right to food and food sovereignty* in Greece, including the way in which food is produced; the economic pressures, regulations and restrictions placed on food producers; the ways in which food enters the market; the methods of selling and purchasing; and the channels of consumption and access to food.

Tracing back the changes in the Greek agri-food system over several decades, this Report will show that austerity measures sharpened existing inequalities, tipping the balance in favour of certain actors at the expense of others. The way in which austerity has acted as a lever for extending the power of large players in the ongoing restructuring of the Greek agri-food system is an important story of the crisis yet to be told.

The Report is the outcome of original fieldwork across Greece, interviews with more than 100 key persons, aggregate data and survey analysis, literature reviews, legal analysis, and expert commentary (see **Annex** for details on the methodology). It aims to contribute to studies on the politics of hunger and food insecurity in Europe, in particular by looking at the intersection between debt, austerity, and their impacts on the Right to Food (**Box I.2**). It also seeks to strengthen accountability and transformative potential within agri-food systems through a deeper exploration of various social movement struggles in relation to food sovereignty, the social and solidarity economy, and anti-austerity.

* Food sovereignty is the “right of peoples to healthy and culturally appropriate food produced through ecologically sound and sustainable methods, and their right to define their own food and agriculture systems. It puts the aspirations and needs of those who produce, distribute and consume food at the heart of food systems and policies rather than the demands of markets and corporations.” From the Declaration of Nyéléni, The First Global Forum on Food Sovereignty, Mali, 2007. Retrieved from <https://nyeleni.org/spip.php?article290>

BOX I.1

The Age of Austerity

Austerity is a central feature of neoliberal economic theory which contends that state budgets should be balanced at all times regardless of any other economic or social circumstances. This is to be achieved through public spending cuts, tax increases, or a combination of both. The underlying argument is that through the exercise of this kind of 'fiscal discipline', investor confidence is restored, private investment increases, and growth that provides jobs and prosperity to the majority of society, is returned. As an economic model, austerity has been criticized by various heterodox economists (Keynesian, Marxist and others). Paul Krugman for instance argues that the notion of 'expansionary contractions' has consistently been disproven in practice.⁴

Austerity is not a new idea and has been implemented before in the 20th century across the world. However, critics accuse proponents of austerity of a failure to learn from history. As the former World Bank economist Joseph Stiglitz writes: "Austerity had failed repeatedly from its early use under US president Herbert Hoover, which turned the stock-market crash into the Great Depression, to the IMF programs imposed on East Asia and Latin America in recent decades. And yet when Greece got into trouble it was tried again".⁵ Even a recent study by the research department of the IMF itself questioned whether fiscal consolidation is effectively reducing debt ratios in the long term.⁶

We are currently living through what has been called a new 'age of austerity' following on from the 2007-2008 financial crash and the Great Financial Crisis. Since 2008, for the first time in its history, the EU imposed IMF-like austerity programmes in several Member States, with the participation of the IMF itself. These programmes were first imposed in non-Eurozone area Member States in 2008 (Hungary, Latvia) and 2009 (Romania). From 2010 onwards, the Eurozone Member States of Greece, Ireland, Spain, Portugal, and Cyprus followed. In 2011, Italy was also forced to implement an austerity programme harsher than its government was willing to accept after the European Central Bank's threat to cut off monetary liquidity. Belgium implemented many cuts under the pressure of the Stability Pact rules, while countries like the U.K and France decided to take a similar path. A number of observers questioned whether austerity was the correct response to the crash. The economist Mark Blyth has called it the "greatest bait and switch in modern history" as business leaders, bankers and European politicians have sold a private banking crisis to citizens as a sovereign debt crisis.⁷

The fiercely contested nature of these programmes was demonstrated by an outburst of rallies, strikes, and social unrest as these programmes were pushed through with little democratic consultation and with the burden of austerity falling disproportionately on the poorest segments of the population. These social impacts have led to international institutions such as the European Committee of Social Rights (ECSR) of the Council of Europe (47 member states),⁸ special UN envoys⁹ and even, timidly, the European Parliament¹⁰ to examine the human rights impacts of austerity. Individual experts¹¹ with books such as 'Why Austerity Kills' have documented the widespread social harms these programmes have caused.¹²

Specifically, the Report addresses the following **research questions**:

1. **How are austerity measures affecting the food and agricultural system in Greece?** What has been their impact in terms of control over farmland and fisheries, agricultural inputs, subsidies, the wholesale and retail food trade, etc. How have rural communities, agricultural workers, and small-scale food producers been affected by these changes?
2. **What is the impact of austerity on people's access to food?** How have people coped with rising food prices in the face of increased unemployment?
3. **What are the responses from different actors to the crisis and its impacts on people's access to food?** And how do notions of charity, solidarity, sovereignty, entrepreneurship, and identity play into this?

4. Is the Greek state upholding its international **obligation to respect, protect and fulfil the Right to Food**? And to what extent have other Eurozone and EU Member States, and international financial institutions (IFIs) violated the Right to Food in the context of austerity?

This Right to Food story of the Greek crisis is multidimensional, spanning the issue of food prices and access to food (particularly in urban areas), and the subsequent need to provide aid and support to huge segments of the population, as well as issues related to taxes, subsidies, market access, and pricing for rural food producers. A human rights-based response would call for states to comply with their human rights obligations, transparency and accountability of the public sector, and a sound social protection system. In practice, the responses have focused on weakening social safety nets, corporate consolidation and privatization, among other issues. While the duty to uphold human rights obligations lies first and foremost with the Greek state, it is critical to situate this duty within the larger question of economic and democratic crisis.

BOX. I.2

The core elements and added value of a Right to Food analysis

The Right to Food and Nutrition is recognized by international human rights instruments and clearly defined in the General Comment No. 12 by the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights: *The right to adequate food is realized when every man, woman and child, alone or in community with others, has physical and economic access at all times to adequate food or means for its procurement.* This General Comment is a fundamental contribution to understanding the Right to Food, and has inspired further normative interpretations that incorporate *women's rights and nutrition within a framework of food sovereignty.*¹³

The conceptual interpretation of the Right to Food within the framework of food sovereignty allows for a more holistic understanding of the indivisibility and interconnectedness of all human rights, especially human rights to self-determination, health, education, natural resources (land, seeds), work, water and sanitation, culture, and housing, among others. A violation of one right is intimately linked with and/or leads to violation(s) of other human right(s). The full realization of the human right to adequate food and nutrition implies more than being free from hunger, but rather it is achieved when human beings are able to live according to the highest possible level of nutritional and physical wellbeing.

The Right to Food framework used here rests within a broader framework built by the struggles against oppression, exploitation, discrimination and abuses of power by governments and other powerful economic and political actors. In this sense, the Right to Food is fully rooted in food sovereignty and putting those communities, individuals and groups that are most marginalized at the centre of the process.



The Report is structured as follows:

Chapter 1 tackles the impacts of the austerity measures on the food and agricultural system in Greece. It details the specific austerity measures, highlighting those with a particular bearing on the agri-food system, and situating their impacts within a longer-term process of structural change.

Chapter 2 looks at the responses to the crisis and austerity by different actors in Greece, including the role played by the country's central government, municipalities, the Church of Greece, the private sector, non-government organizations (NGOs), grassroots solidarity groups, and small-scale food producers. A key point of discussion is the extent to which notions of charity, philanthropy, solidarity, autonomy and agency are reshaping food politics in Greece and what this means more broadly for social justice and accountability.

Chapter 3 presents a legal analysis of the impact of austerity on the Right to Food in Greece. It outlines specific violations of the Right to Food and examines the accountability of various actors, including the Greek state, EU Member States and the Troika (the European Central Bank, the European Commission and the International Monetary Fund (IMF)).

A concluding section includes **obligations and recommendations** addressed to various actors to build a more resilient and just food and agricultural system in Greece that ensures the realization of the Right to Food for all.

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Chapter 1.

Austerity and the agri-food system

1.1 The Greek agri-food system from 1981 to 2010

In order to understand the state of agriculture and food in crisis-era Greece, it is important to take a longer-term view of the country's agri-food system and rural development. **Before the onset of the crisis, the Greek agri-food system was characterized by a number of vulnerabilities (see also Box 1.1).** Agricultural production – and food production generally – had been in decline while food imports had been growing, driven by trade deficits with certain European countries (namely France, Germany and the Netherlands). Moreover, the small size of farms and the lack of effective coordination among producer groups or agricultural cooperatives meant that farmers had little bargaining power with intermediaries and supermarkets. Finally, a growing supermarket sector was intensifying monopolistic conditions in relation to producers and consumers alike.

1.1 (a) Undermining food sovereignty: the role of EU subsidies and shifting patterns of agricultural trade and production

How did we get here? An appropriate beginning to this story is 1981, with Greece's entry to the then European Economic Community (EEC), marking a turning point in Greece's modern history. The entry of Greece into the EEC and the subsequent adherence to the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP)* uprooted the previous order. Two main aspects stand out: i) the transformation of Greece within the European single market from being a net food exporter to a net food importer; and ii) the declining value of agricultural production and increasing reliance on subsidies.

i) Patterns of agricultural trade

With the entry to the EEC, Greece's previous position as a net food exporter to the then EU-6 (Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Luxembourg and the Netherlands) shifted (see **Figures A.1 and A.2 in Annex**). Given that the CAP was structured around market unity and EEC preference, there was a substitution of food imports from non-EEC countries (principally Argentina and the United States) by EEC countries, mainly France and the Netherlands. Germany, previously a net food importer from Greece, became a sizeable exporter of food to Greece in the 1980s, and again in the 2000s (see above figures in **Annex**). While Greece is a net exporter of food to some EU countries, either consistently (Cyprus, the United Kingdom) or for certain periods (Italy in the mid-1980s to mid-1990s), **the overall food trade balance with its European partners – and globally – is negative.**

* The Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) is the EU's central regulatory framework on agriculture. It is broadly divided into two pillars. Under Pillar I, Direct Payments (subsidies) and market-related expenditures (price supports) are distributed to EU farmers to boost the viability, productivity, competitiveness, and sustainability of EU agriculture. Under Pillar II, a series of aid, training, advisory, innovation and risk-management programmes, in line with various social and environmental criteria, are designed to support rural development in the EU. Both Pillars are geared towards the promotion of the CAP's three long-term objectives: i) to ensure viable food production; ii) to stimulate sustainable management of natural resources and climate action; and iii) to foster a balanced territorial development.

BOX 1.1

Greek agriculture at a glance

Agriculture – including crop cultivation, livestock farming, fisheries and forestry – remains important for Greece, contributing 3.9% to the economy's gross value added (2016) – significantly larger than the EU-28 average of 1.5%.¹ It accounts for 12.4% of employment (compared to 4.3% across the EU-28), employing close to half a million (454,500) people (2016).² Agricultural, fishery and forestry products make up 1.8% of the country's total exports (2016).³ As of 2016, there are 684,950 farms in Greece.⁴

Over the years, Greece has seen an increasing level of agricultural specialization. The key sectors and products include olive farms, which make up 38.4% of all farms (262,850 of 684,950), followed by general field cropping farms (10.5%), specialized fruit and citrus fruit farms (8.6%) cereals, oilseed and protein crops (8.4%) and various permanent crops (7.6%). Animal farming is also important with sheep, cattle, and goat farming accounting for the majority of farms, head of livestock and standard output.⁵ Finally, for a relatively large number of farms (109,600) the associated household consumes more than 50% of the produce – most of these are specialist olive oil farms (83,430 farms). Organic production in Greece began only about 20 years ago. Land cultivated under organic methods has increased from 0.7%⁶ of the total utilized agricultural area (UAA) in 2000 to 6.5% of the total UAA today.⁷ As of 2016, there are 20,192 organic farms in Greece.⁸

As a country with a challenging topography – islands, coasts, and mountains – there are few large landholdings. Smallholdings and family farming are the main form of organization in Greek agriculture with recent estimates (2016) showing that 89% of all agricultural holdings in Greece are 10 hectares (ha) or less. The average landholding is 4.6 ha,⁹ one of the smallest in Europe, with only Romania (3.7 ha), Cyprus (3.4 ha), and Malta (1.2 ha) having smaller average landholdings.¹⁰ Perhaps because of these small plots, many farmers are multi-occupational, relying on other off-farm forms of income (which is estimated to represent as much as 40% of total rural household income). There is also a very high reliance on agricultural, especially migrant, labour.

Greek agriculture faces a number of challenges, not least the many small and fragmented landholdings that are characterized by low productivity. Greece has one of the lowest levels of agricultural productivity in Europe, with an agricultural gross value added equal to €7.58 per hour worked, compared to a value of €10.04 per hour for the EU-28 (€14.35 per hour for the Eurozone area).¹¹ Moreover, agricultural productivity, measured in constant euros per hour, has been largely stagnant over the past two decades: between 1995 and 2016, agricultural gross value added per hour worked has increased in Greece by 32.3% compared to 80.9% in the EU-28.

Greece also has a high degree of land concentration and farm size polarization. According to ELSTAT, while the majority of holdings (73%) were 5 ha or under in 2016, they occupy just 23% of the UAA. On the other hand, holdings of 50 ha or more represent just 0.9% of holdings yet occupy 15.4% of the UAA.

Similar to other countries in the EU, Greece is experiencing problems related to farm succession and an ageing rural population. Of the total farming population, the share of young farmers (those under 35 years of age) has more than halved between 1991 and 2016 (from 8.6% to just 4%) while the proportion of farmers aged 65 years and over increased from 25% in 1991 to 34% in 2016.¹²

Although it was not unusual for Greece to experience food trade deficits* (including throughout the 1960s and early 1970s), the chronic dependence on food imports following Greece's entry into the EEC and the CAP is stark. Between the late 1980s and the beginning of the crisis in 2008, the food trade deficit frequently exceeded 1% of the country's gross domestic product (GDP) while in the period 2005–2011, imports accounted for nearly 40% of domestic consumption.¹³ This situation risked undermining Greece's food sovereignty, particularly in the absence of specific protections for sustainable domestic production. **Arguably, the CAP, by increasing the exposure of Greece's predominantly small-scale farmers to competition from other EU countries and introducing policies designed to support a largely industrial and capital-intensive form of agriculture, ill-matched to the reality of Greece's agricultural system, has contributed to the steady erosion of food sovereignty.**¹⁴

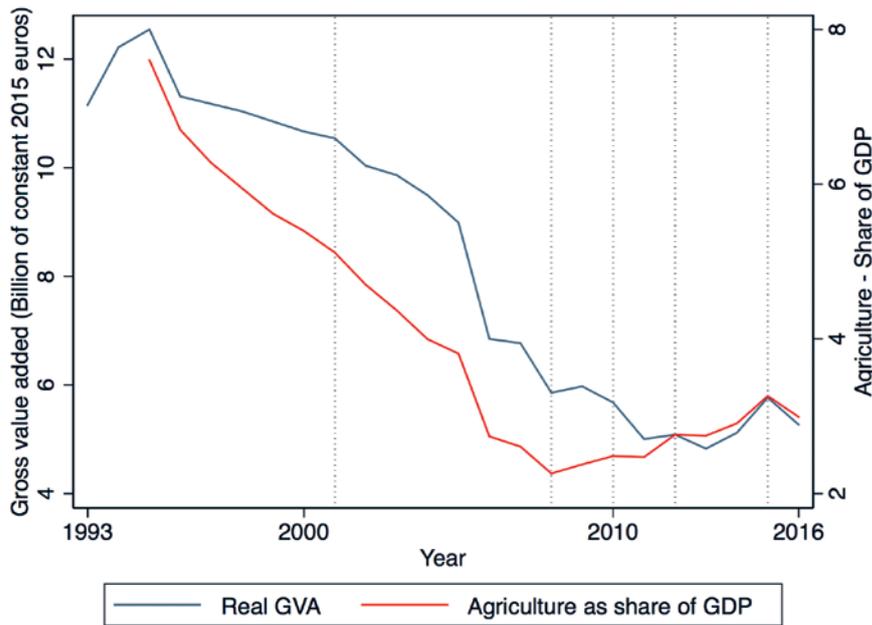
ii) Agricultural subsidies and value added

The second element to consider is **agricultural production**. Food production started falling at about the same time as Greece entered the Eurozone. Moreover, as **Figure 1.1** shows, throughout the 1990s and 2000s, gross value added in agriculture, measured both in real terms (constant 2015 euros, on the left axis) as well as a share of GDP (right axis) fell. This is particularly striking as the period between the mid-1990s and the economic crisis was – by and large – a period of economic expansion that even allowed the cultivation of a hegemonic narrative of a 'strong Greece'. Yet, during that period, both food and agricultural production were declining in absolute terms. This is also mirrored by the decline in agricultural employment which more than halved (from 1,083,000 to 500,000 people employed) between 1981 and 2012.¹⁵ Naturally, given the overall GDP growth, and the decline of gross value added in agriculture, its share of GDP fell during the 1993–2008 period. It was only after the onset of the crisis in 2008 that agriculture as a share of GDP started to grow. In fact, agricultural production during the early crisis years continued to fall less rapidly than production in other sectors of the economy (and note that agricultural production recorded a slight increase in 2015, before falling again, both in absolute and relative terms in 2016).

How are we to understand the decline in value added in agriculture even before the crisis? The answer largely lies in the role of subsidies. Originally, CAP subsidies were predominantly traditional production-oriented instruments, such as direct payments in support of specific products. Over time, however, the share of subsidies on products decreased, and other types of subsidies were introduced (e.g. payments to support converting to organic methods). In addition, after the 2003 CAP reform, direct aid was largely 'decoupled' from production: production-based payments were replaced by production entitlements, conditional on maintaining land in good agricultural and environmental stead.¹⁶ This decoupling of subsidies from production accelerated the ongoing downward trend in agricultural output as it reduced production incentives, effectively encouraging the abandonment of agricultural production.

* We define the food trade balance as the difference between food exports and imports divided by the country's GDP.

Figure 1.1. Gross Value Added in Agriculture



Source: ELSTAT data, accessed 3 February 2018, graph by Konstantinidis. The dotted lines delineate Greece's Eurozone entry (2001), the beginning of the crisis (2008), and the three MoU (2010, 2012, and 2015).

The 2003 CAP reform allowed EU Member States the option to maintain some production-linked payments (i.e. to choose between full and partial decoupling). In contrast to other European countries like France and Spain, which maintained a significant share of subsidies coupled to production targets,¹⁷ the Greek government chose to fully decouple support payments from production in 2005 and to base payments on historical payments for the 2000–2002 period, arguing that doing so would protect farmers' incomes through guaranteed income, reduced administrative costs,¹⁸ and the maximum absorption of EU funds. **When subsidies were detached from production in 2005, production fell sharply (see also Figure A.3 and A.4 in Annex), and farmers' incomes became more dependent on subsidies.**

Interestingly, the one exception to the long-term decline in Greek agricultural production levels is 'fuel crops': crops such as sunflower and rapeseed that are used for industrial purposes through the extraction of their oils. Within almost seven years, their production and cultivated land has increased tenfold (see **Table 1.1**). Although their share in total crop cultivation is small (less than 5%), their contribution is negative because they shift farmland from food production and increase farmers' dependence on industry (Hellenic Petroleum, Motor Oil) and subsidies.

Table 1.1. Rise of fuel crops, 2008–2015

Production of industrial plants in 1,000 acres								
Year	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Sunflower oil	125,1	234,3	534,8	691,4	613,8	723	763,8	936,6
Rapeseed oil*					76,2	58,7	46,2	82,2

* In the years 2008–2011 the production of rapeseed oil was too small to be registered.

Source: Hellenic Statistical Authority (ELSTAT)

1.1 (b) Intermediaries

Greece's entry into the EEC also had an impact on the organization of the food system, in particular of distribution. As with other countries, the Greek food system resembles an hourglass with a relatively small number of intermediate players (suppliers, wholesale merchants, and supermarkets) intervening between a large number of farmers and consumers. **In the case of Greece, such intermediaries (sometimes called 'middlemen') exert significant power over farmers and consumers.** Given the small size and spatial fragmentation of Greek landholdings, farmers generally produce small volumes, making it difficult to bypass intermediaries and establish direct relations with outlets.

One potential solution to these problems facing small farmers could have been the cooperative movement. However, since the 1980s the cooperatives became largely bureaucratic mechanisms, tasked with the distribution of EU subsidies. In some people's minds, cooperatives became associated with corruption and abuse. Agricultural cooperatives were further discredited due to mismanagement and indebtedness,¹⁹ stripping farmers of a prime tool for collective action and bargaining.

Similarly, producer groups are not common in Greece. It is estimated that, prior to the crisis, only 14% of fruit and vegetable producers were organized, a much lower rate than countries such as Belgium (80%), France (45%) or Spain (40%).²⁰ The lack of producer groups enables intermediaries to mediate a large proportion of fruit and vegetable sales to supermarkets, specialized fruit stores, and open-air markets.

Three characteristics of Greek intermediaries stand out:

1. **Multiple layers of intermediaries intervene between producers and consumers:** According to the Competition Committee,²¹ 19% of orange and 56% of apple wholesalers purchase their products from other wholesalers.
2. According to the Competition Committee,²² **intermediaries rarely offer substantive services in the food value chain (such as product selection or packaging) but simply resell agricultural output.**

3. **Intermediaries are the main beneficiaries of price changes**, irrespective of how price changes are passed along to consumers or producers. Notably, where farmers have developed successful agricultural cooperatives (as in the case of apple production by the Zagora cooperative or peach production by the Velvento cooperative), they have been able to bypass intermediaries and to sell directly to the supermarket chains.²³

1.1 (c) Supermarkets

In Greece there are three main channels for food retail: supermarkets; specialized stores (greengroceries, fishmongers, butchers, bakeries); and open-air markets.* Historically, specialized stores and open-air markets controlled most food sales. However, starting in the mid-1980s, spurred by the goals of greater European integration and, later, towards reaching the Maastricht criteria for joining the Economic and Monetary Union (EMU),²⁴ **financial and trade liberalization in Greece led to increased foreign direct investment (FDI) from large retailers from other EEC countries** (primarily France, Germany, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom). In the 1990s, Belgian, French and German food retailers (most prominently *Delhaize*, *Carrefour*, and *Lidl*) began operating in Greece, either through acquisitions of domestic supermarket chains (*Delhaize* acquired *AB Vasilopoulos* in 1991, in 1995 *Promodes* acquired *Marinopoulos*, which was the market leader at the time, before merging with *Carrefour* in 1999), or through setting up subsidiary operations (*Lidl Hellas* opened in 1999).²⁵ These developments led to **a rapid increase of large supermarket chains in Greece**, measured through the number of stores and the volume of sales, as well as their relative share in total sales,²⁶ allowing them to squeeze out smaller competitors and to enjoy significant market power over consumers and farmers.

Nevertheless, despite significant growth, the position of supermarkets in the Greek retail sector was still lagging behind other European countries. According to Eurostat, in 2008 the turnover of non-specialized stores in which food, beverages or tobacco predominates (the closest approximation to a supermarket category) was approximately 24.9% of total retail turnover in Greece (€15.8 billion out of a total retail turnover of €63.7 billion). In the EU-27, such stores accounted for 35.5% of retail turnover. Moreover, in Greece in 2008, supermarket turnover accounted for a little over double the turnover of specialist food stores (fruit, meat, fish, bakeries, etc.), which was €7.2 billion at the time. This was in strong contrast with the EU-27 where the turnover of supermarkets stood at a ratio of 7:1 to that of specialist food stores.²⁷

* Genuine farmers' markets (i.e. producers' markets) were largely nonexistent in Greece. According to the Competition Committee only half of the participants in Athens were producers while the rest were professional merchants. See Competition Committee. (2011). Κλαδική Έρευνα στα Νωπά Οπωροκηπευτικά. Συνοπτική Παρουσίαση Βασικών Διαπιστώσεων και Πορισμάτων. Available at <https://www.taxheaven.gr/pagesdata/EKTHESI/PERILIPSI.pdf>, accessed February 10, 2018. [in Greek]. In 2014, there were 14,000 licenses for producers and 11,000 for professional merchants. See Kathimerini. (2017). Στοιχεία παλιά και στο.. περίπου για τις άδειες στις λαϊκές αγορές. [Old and approximate data for outdoor market licenses]. Retrieved from <http://www.kathimerini.gr/932518/article/oikonomia/ellhnikh-oikonomia/stoixeiapalia-kai-sto-peripoy-gia-tis-adeies-stis-laikes-agores>, accessed February 10, 2018. [in Greek]

1.2 The introduction of austerity measures, 2010–2015

These conditions and vulnerabilities set the stage for strong policy shifts, which had a further negative impact on the Right to Food and food sovereignty in Greece. The implementation of austerity measures aimed at the food sector significantly altered the functioning of the food system, with subsequent impacts on people’s rights, dignity and sovereignty. **Neoliberal reforms outlined in the three loan agreements (Memoranda of Understanding) involve two main pillars: i) fiscal consolidation (austerity) in the form of public spending cuts (including wages, income and pensions) and tax increases; ii) broader structural reforms in the form of liberalizing, deregulating and privatizing key services, products, and markets.** We will discuss each of these pillars and component parts in turn, examining specific measures that were taken in the area of food and agriculture. **Table 1.2** provides an overview of these measures.

Table 1.2. Overview of key measures in food and agriculture

Measure	Description	Reference
1. Austerity measures		
Taxes		
Tax on land	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Unified Real Estate Property Tax (ENFIA) on properties and urban and rural land - Farmland taxed at a baseline of €10 per ha, with adjustments for location and land use²⁸ - Farmland exempted from supplementary ENFIA, pending completion of land registry and forest maps 	LAW 4223/2013
New tax regime for farmers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Replacement of previous farmer tax regime (based on imputed income), by income tax rate of 13%²⁹ - Since 2016, farmers taxed in accordance with general income tax brackets of 22%– 45%; introduction of taxes on agricultural subsidies and tax exemptions only for professional farmers³⁰ 	LAW 4110/2013; 4172/2013 LAW 4387/2016
Higher taxes on ag. inputs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increase in VAT on agricultural supplies from 13% to 23% in July 2015;³¹ increase of VAT from 23% to 24% in June 2016;³² reduced VAT on agricultural supplies, such as fertilizer, pesticide, feed and seed, from 24% to 13% in July 2017 - Increase in excise tax on farmer diesel in 2015³³ 	
Spending cuts		
Insurance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Abolition of the Agricultural Insurance Organization (OGA); merge into Unified Social Security Agency (EFKA) 	

2. Structural reforms

Liberalization		
Retail trade liberalization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lifting of restrictions on particular goods sold in supermarkets - Sunday trading allowed (modified to certain cities and periods of the year) - No intermediary markets initially banned as outdoor trading in 2014; since 2017 allowed monthly on receiving a permit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - LAWS 4177/2013; 4254/2014; 4472/2017 - LAWS 4264/2014; 4497/2017
Wholesale trade liberalization	- Deregulation of the Central Markets and Fishery Organization	
Privatization		
	- Privatization of Agricultural Bank of Greece (ATE)	
	- Privatization of dairy industry cooperative 'AGNO'	

1.2 (a) A new agricultural tax and social security regime: higher costs of production, reduced incomes and greater uncertainty

Fiscal consolidation stipulated that Greece increase taxes and reduce spending. This meant wholesale and dramatic cuts in public spending and investment through reducing the wage bill (lowering and freezing of the minimum wage and incomes; pension cuts; undermining of collective bargaining; flexibilization of work, etc.) and higher tax collection targets through increases in VAT, property tax, and a range of tax reforms.

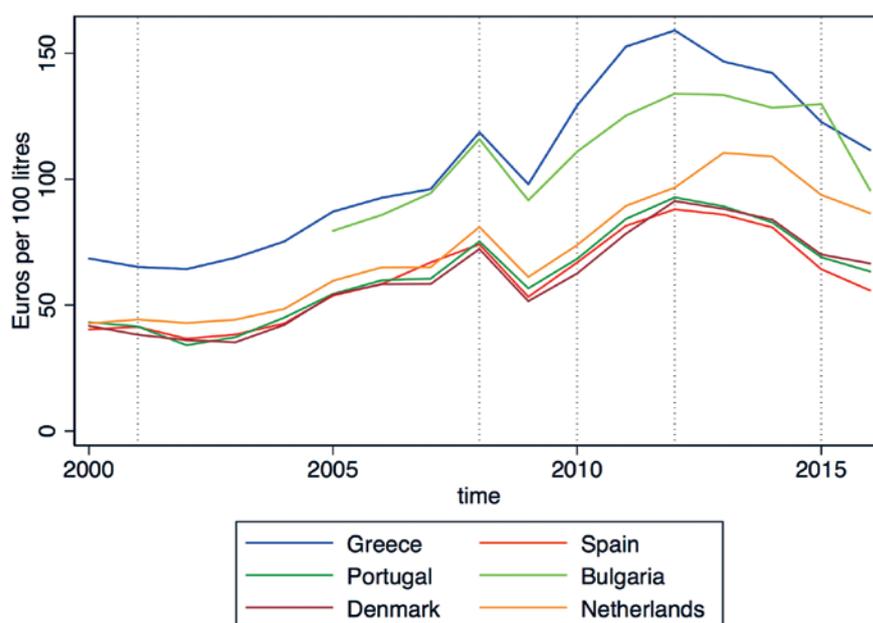
These same trends have affected the food and agricultural sector. In 2011, the Greek government committed to 'reform the system of VAT refunds to farmers' as part of the overall austerity plan to reduce public spending.³⁴ The first review of the Second Memorandum³⁵ committed the government to reduce VAT refunds to farmers to 6% of turnover (p. 27, 184, 252), and reduce the subsidy on diesel excise duty provided to farmers from €163 million to €130 million (p. 27, 160, 184, 252). Furthermore, it called for the elimination of the special (imputed income-based) tax regime for farmers (p. 36); and to move farmers to a corporate tax regime (p. 159). Accordingly, farmers were moved to a 13% tax rate on their income (Law 4110/2013 and 4172/2013).

Later, the Third Programme called for the gradual abolition of the refund of excise tax on diesel oil for farmers (p. 6); the phasing out of the preferential tax treatment of farmers, as a sign of commitment to implementing the programme (p.7); the tightening of the definition of professional farmers (p.8); and sweeping changes to the system of agricultural insurance, including the abolition of the Agricultural Insurance Organization (OGA) in 2016.

This last point on the creation of a professional farmers' register based on the categorization of 'primary occupation farmers' has been particularly contentious, especially for Greek islanders. Given the challenging topography and market conditions on the islands, there are very few primary occupation farmers and it is estimated that the overwhelming majority of those involved in farming in Greece are retired, self-employed, public servants or otherwise employed in the private sector. Pluri-activity has long been a feature of farmers in Greece where, in order to secure a decent income, they have supplemented their agricultural activities with work from handicrafts, tourism, or salaried work in urban areas. For those living on the islands, tourism during the summer months often constitutes their main income stream, supplemented as and when needed by farming activities in the other periods of the year.

The impacts of these changes to the agricultural tax code are significant as they are leading to **higher costs of production** in a country where farmers are already at a competitive disadvantage compared to those in other parts of Europe. Greece, for example, has consistently had one of the highest – if not the highest – diesel prices among European countries as can be seen from **Figure 1.2** which compares prices in Greece and several other European countries for which data is available. Note the high input prices in particular.

Figure 1.2. Price of Diesel Oil in Selected Countries



Source: Eurostat data, accessed 3 February 2018, graph by Konstantinidis. The dotted lines delineate Greece's Eurozone entry (2001), the beginning of the crisis (2008), and the three MoU (2010, 2012 and 2015).

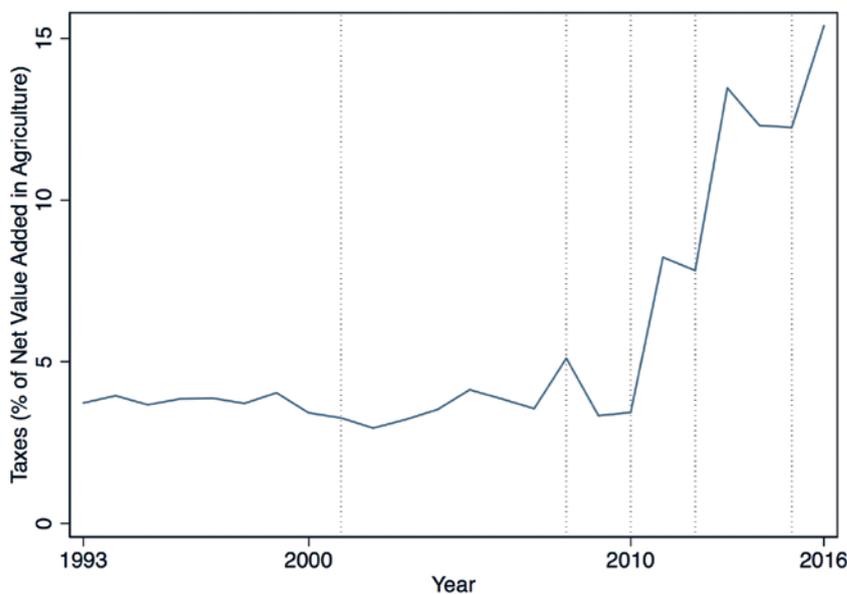
The increase in the excise tax on diesel oil from 17.5% to 24%, resulting in an increase in diesel prices from €1.58/litre to €1.70/litre (December 2017), will significantly reduce the profit margins and income-earning potential to be gained from agricultural activities. This is particularly so given that other increasing taxes, rates and tariffs are pushing up the cost of agricultural production. These include:

- a (near) doubling of VAT on certain food items from 12% or 13% to 24%
- the introduction of a tax on agricultural subsidies

These measures increase pressure on farmers and could be passed on to consumers via higher food prices.

The increase in taxes on agricultural production is shown in **Figure 1.3**, which traces the development of taxes on agricultural production as a share of net value added (NVA) in agriculture. We can see that between 1993 and 2010 taxes are approximately 4% of NVA. However, after the first Memorandum of 2010, taxes on agricultural production rise to approximately 8% of NVA; after the second Memorandum of 2012 taxes rise to 13.5% of NVA, while after the third Memorandum of 2015, taxes on agricultural production rise to 15.4% of NVA.

Figure 1.3. Taxes on Agricultural Production



Source: ELSTAT, accessed 3 February 2018, graph by Konstantinidis. The dotted lines delineate Greece's Eurozone entry (2001), the beginning of the crisis (2008), and the three MoU (2010, 2012 and 2015).

At the same time as farmers face rising VAT and production costs, changes to the agricultural insurance regime have meant that they have to deal with higher risks and uncertainty. The abolition of the OGA in 2016 is a particularly sore point. Based on the stipulations outlined in the third MoU of August 2015, this is estimated to lead to a fourfold increase (from 7% to 26.95%) in the social security contributions (for pensions and health coverage) farmers will be paying in 2022 compared to 2015. Not surprisingly, these changes to the taxation and social security regime sparked a wave of farmers' protests across Greece in January and February of 2016 and 2017 to demand their abolition.

1.2 (b) Liberalization of the retail and wholesale food trade: tipping the balance in favour of private traders and supermarket chains

Beyond austerity, the Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs) aimed to further deregulate and liberalize services and product markets. The Troika (the European Commission, the European Central Bank and the International Monetary Fund), in particular, argued that regulations such as ‘permits and licenses, health and safety rules, urban planning zoning, can unnecessarily restrict business and competition’ in sectors such as food processing or the retail trade.³⁶ Thus, a series of reforms were proposed with the help of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) competition assessment toolkit (see **Box 1.2**).³⁷ These include: retail and wholesale trade liberalization; slaughterhouse liberalization;³⁸ veterinarian clinic liberalization;³⁹ seed, pesticide and fertilizer sale liberalization.⁴⁰ In the name of competition, the Greek government also committed in August 2015 to undertake the remaining OECD toolkit recommendations,⁴¹ including allowing supermarkets to sell over-the-counter drugs and bake bread from frozen dough^{42,43} – **measures which inevitably bolster the competitive position of large supermarkets and retail chains by allowing them to extend their scope of operations.**

BOX 1.2

The OECD Competition Assessment Reviews

The OECD Competition Assessment Reviews are a service provided to countries that ‘helps governments to eliminate barriers to competition by providing a method for identifying unnecessary restraints on market activities and developing alternative, less restrictive measures that still achieve government policy objectives’.⁴⁴ Such an assessment was made in Greece in 2013 focusing on the sectors of tourism, retail trade, food processing and construction materials, and again in 2016 focusing on construction, media, wholesale trade, e-commerce and manufacturing, some of which are detailed in this Report. In the Third MoU signed in August 2015, as well as in the updates in the following years, the Troika directly stipulates the implementation of many OECD toolkit recommendations, which focus on opening up trade and deregulation.

i) Retail liberalization

Retail trade liberalization became a Troika leitmotif, especially given higher inflation than anticipated in the early programme years. Accordingly, in 2012, the government removed a number of restrictions on the retail sector. Supermarkets were now allowed to sell previously restricted goods, such as baby milk, tobacco, pre-packaged meat, cheese and fish. Together with the liberalization of trade came the flexibilization of labour with employees’ hours increasingly delinked from store hours, i.e. split shifts and short shifts around peak hours, undercutting employees’ ability to secure regular or stable employment and incomes. The stated goal of such reforms is to ‘allow a wider class of goods to be sold by more productive retailers, help reduce the sector’s operating costs,

and eventually feed into higher downward price flexibility'.⁴⁵ This puts the European Commission (EC) clearly on one side in the competition between supermarket chains and workers, as well as in the competition between supermarket chains and small, self-employed shop-workers.

Furthermore, Sunday trading became a favourite goal of the Troika, on the assumption that it would increase retail activity and employment. In July 2013, the government adopted **Law 4177/2013** which, in addition to removing restrictions on store discounts, increased the flexibility of opening days, allowing small shops (below 250m²) that were not part of a chain to remain open for at least seven Sundays per year.⁴⁶ In 2014, **Law 4254/2014** modified Sunday opening in line with the recommendations of the OECD toolkit, which had argued that the 250m² cut-off was arbitrary and was excluding large retail shops that would be more likely to be able to take advantage of extended business hours. This is unsurprising: supermarkets are better able to absorb additional labour and operating costs than small shops. For this reason, Sunday trading had been on the wish-list of large retailers in Greece since before the crisis.⁴⁷ Thus, the Greek government sought to lift all restrictions on Sunday opening in certain regions of the country in a one-year pilot programme⁴⁸ – a decision that was never implemented as it was deemed unconstitutional by the Council of State.⁴⁹ Shortly thereafter, in May 2017, **Law 4472/17** allowed Sunday trading in Athens, and in parts of Piraeus, and Thessaloniki for the period from May to October.⁵⁰

In addition to legislative changes regarding opening hours, the Greek government in May 2014 changed the legal framework in line with the OECD toolkit and lender recommendations to 'liberalize outdoor trade'.⁵¹ By passing **Law 4264/2014** the government banned the sale of products by street vendors in the vicinity of stores selling similar products and in municipalities of more than 3,000 people. This new legal framework overturned that regulating direct interactions between producers and consumers, effectively outlawing the 'no middlemen' movement (see Ch.2.2b) nationwide. At the same time, by placing restrictions on outdoor trading in the vicinity of stores, **the Greek government created a new framework protecting the interests of retail stores, in particular supermarkets that were challenged by the new types of direct producer-consumer interactions.**

Law 4264/2014 was modified in 2017 in **Law 4497/2017**. The new law provided a new framework for outdoor trade and instituted for the first time a new institution it called 'consumers' markets'.⁵² This law argued that the purpose of such markets is to foster consumer awareness and solidarity among citizens, as well as to improve the terms for small producers and food processors through their access to solidarity markets, in which farmers, small processors, and Social and Solidarity Economy (SSE) institutions can participate as vendors. To this end, consumer associations, consumer cooperatives or other collective non-profit institutions can organize such markets at most once a month, as long as municipal authorities approve their application. Even though the institutionalization of such markets may be an important step, it falls short of creating a permanent challenge to supermarkets, as for example regular farmers' markets would do.

ii) Wholesale trade liberalization

The liberalization of the wholesale food trade in Greece has followed a similar path to that of the retail trade. Here, the focus has been in particular on the deregulation of the Central Markets and Fishery Organization or CMFO (see **Box 1.3**).

BOX 1.3

The Central Markets and Fishery Organization⁵³

In Greece, the Central Markets and Fishery Organization (CMFO S.A.) is the main public administrator of the wholesale food trade, including fruit, vegetables, meat and fish. It comprises two major food markets (Athens and Patras) and 11 fish markets (Piraeus, Chalkis, Patras, Preveza, Chania, Kalymnos, Chios, Thessaloniki, Kavala, Alexandroupolis and Volos). The public framework set by the CMFO offers a number of advantages. First, it provides a basic streamlining and adjustment in the marketing system of agricultural products. Second, its operation ensures a relative degree of transparency in marketing conditions and compliance with hygiene and safety rules (HACCP, ISO 9001: 2008, etc.). Although the CMFO was liberalized in the name of competitiveness and efficiency, it was already a highly profitable body with pre-tax earnings of €1.5 million in 2016 (€600,000 in 2015) and post-tax earnings of €702,000 (€450,000 in 2015). Between 2011 and 2016, the investments made in the 11 fish markets amounted to €1.9 million.



Although the CMFO always ran a profit, having built up considerable reserves over the years, the OECD toolkit proposes abolishing the monopoly of the central markets in the wholesale trade in order to allow private companies to increase the choice for both wholesalers (supply) and retailers (demand). This is an unlikely outcome. Given the economies of scale and the workings of natural monopolies, it would require significant investment to set up such markets, especially in a metropolis such as Athens and during a period when the economy is depressed. Furthermore, privatization could in fact lead

to higher costs for consumers if the public monopoly is replaced by a private monopoly. The latter could increase rates at will, with costs passed on to consumers. Lastly, there are also concerns that deregulation will come at the expense of proper inspections and hygiene and safety standards of the kind guaranteed in the CMFO.

The question thus remains why a profitable public body should be privatized in the first place. Unfortunately, despite the current government's opposition to the dismantling of the public character of the CMFO, its liberalization was one of the measures the Greek government committed to implement as part of the Third Memorandum in August 2015.

1.2 (c) A wave of privatizations and liberalization

The SAPs mandated a wave of privatisations of public companies, services and assets with a specialised Privatization Fund (the 'Hellenic Republic Asset Development Fund') created to earmark and facilitate the sale of public assets to private bidders.⁵⁴ These privatizations were justified by the Troika as a means to service the debt while increasing the competitiveness and 'business friendliness' of the Greek economy. Often, however, this amounted to a rapid-fire sale of otherwise well-performing public companies through aggressive forms of asset stripping.

The dramatic devaluation of the dairy industry cooperative 'AGNO' is one such example. While it was worth €100 million before the crisis, today, it is valued at just €20 million with proposals for the shredding of the company and selling it piece by piece – spelling disaster for many farmers and effectively the closure of the cooperative. Interviews with workers from the cooperative reveal that the company is approximately €3 million in debt, owing more than €2 million to just 40 farmers alone and €15 million to its staff.

One of the most egregious cases of a rapid-fire sale, however, concerns the privatization of the Agricultural Bank of Greece (see **Box 1.4**).

Electricity is another prime example given that the liberalization of the energy market and the weakening of the Public Power Corporation (PPC) appear to be among the prime concerns of the country's lenders. The first Memorandum called on the Greek authorities to 'rationalize consumer tariffs', as part of the attempt to open up the electricity sector to competitors and to weaken the position of the incumbent Public Power Corporation.⁵⁵ By February 2011, the Greek government had already committed to making retail prices based on wholesale costs, except for vulnerable consumers. Moreover, the Third Review of the Second Programme calls the Regulating Authority of Energy of Greece to take steps to end the electricity cross-subsidization for farmers.

Figure 1.4 presents the development of electricity prices in Greece. We can see that the price of electricity almost doubles during the crisis: from €0.0443 per kWh in 2010 to €0.0804 per kWh in 2014. It may be the case that this remains the lowest price of electricity in Europe: however, the increase in electricity rates during the crisis means additional costs of production and makes it more difficult for Greek farmers to maintain their production or compete against imported goods.

BOX 1.4

The scandalous sale of the Agricultural Bank of Greece to Piraeus Bank

The Agricultural Bank of Greece (ATE) was founded in 1929 in order to serve the needs of the Greek peasantry and provide rural credit. It was established at the same time as the land-redistribution programme of the Eleftherios Venizelos government and is seen as part of a historically progressive reform to support small farmers and redress the balance of power with Greece's big landholding class. Until 2010, ATE had an extensive branch network across rural Greece. However, when ATE started to encounter difficulties with the onset of the financial crisis, moves were made to pave the way for ATE's eventual privatization and sale to Piraeus Bank in 2012. With this sale, control over 40% of the country's landed capital (used as collateral) was passed on to the private sector – an act that the SYRIZA party at the time described as 'scandalous'.

The official rationale for the privatization of ATE was indebtedness and non-payment of loans by farmers who were ATE's main clientele. This is, however, a cover for the non-transparent way in which the Central Bank of Greece came to classify ATE as 'unsustainable' in order to sell it to Piraeus Bank and rescue the latter. According to interviews with former ATE bank officials, of the 150,000 farmers who borrowed from ATE, only 15,000 are in arrears while of the €6 billion of non-performing /non-serviced loans, only €1 billion comes from farmers.

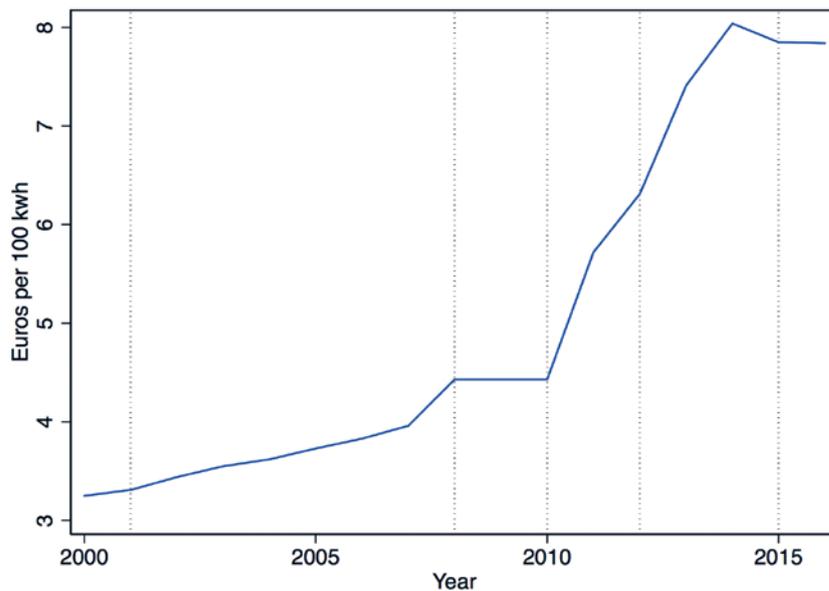
After the sale of ATE to Piraeus Bank, the special terms and conditions that previously defined a bank specialized in agricultural lending have been eliminated. For example, interviews with bank officials reveal that:

- **Cost of borrowing:** Average borrowing costs have tripled with farmers borrowing at an interest rate of 7.5% to 8%.
- **Insurance:** In order for Piraeus to issue a loan, insurance is compulsory, with mortgages on properties serving as collateral. Personal accident insurance, at a cost of up to €78 per year, is also compulsory.
- **Penalties:** Borrowers who default on their loan repayments and agree with the bank to a restructuring of their obligations are excluded for a period of at least two years from any loans from the bank.
- **Advisory services:** ATE provided not only financial services, but also agronomic advice to farmers. Now, bank employees are evaluated on whether they sell credit cards, insurance for tractors, etc. and farmers are treated as any other customer.

The sale of ATE means that the State lost a prime tool for conducting development policy in the rural sector. Moreover, the privatization of ATE has created a lever for land transfers, especially in the context of high non-performing loans* and financial liberalization (i.e. the establishment of auctions and the creation of a secondary market for non-performing loans).⁵⁶ In 2018, an out-of-court settlement mechanism was introduced for 23,000 farmers, most of them with debts to ATE. However, concerns remain about how many farmers will be able to take up and follow through with this mechanism.⁵⁷

* While no detailed data exist for agricultural activity per se, according to the latest Bank of Greece statistics (March 2018, <https://www.bankofgreece.gr/Pages/en/Statistics/loans.aspx>), 49.6% of business loans were non-performing ones.

Figure 1.4. Electricity Prices in Greece



Source: Eurostat Agricultural Cost of Production data, accessed 3 February 2018, calculations by Konstantinidis. The dotted lines delineate Greece's Eurozone entry (2001), the beginning of the crisis (2008), and the three MoU (2010, 2012 and 2015).

1.3 Impacts of austerity on food insecurity, agriculture, and rural life

The impact of the austerity measures on the Greek food and agricultural system cannot be separated from the broader social impact in the country, which has a profound effect on food security and more broadly the Right to Food and other economic, social, and cultural rights. As wages were cut, jobs were lost, and prices increased, meeting basic needs became a daily struggle for many individuals and families. The impact continues to be huge.

1.3 (a) Picture of food insecurity: What do the numbers say?

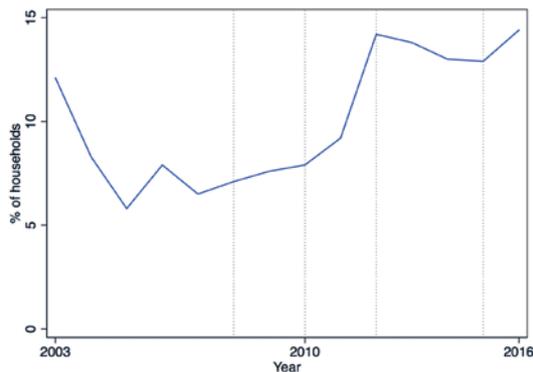
Food insecurity has historically been seen as a development issue most felt by countries in the global South. As such, countries such as Greece did not collect detailed data on food insecurity and malnutrition – however flawed and contested the methodology in this regard. Using what data is available, a deeply problematic picture emerges with respect⁵⁸ to how families and households in Greece are coping with the crisis.

Various indicators of material deprivation in Greece monitor levels of food and income insecurity. Based on information gathered from the EU Social Inclusion and Living Conditions (SILC) dataset, the increase in the share of households that cannot afford a meal with meat, chicken, fish (or vegetarian equivalent) every second day increased sharply since the crisis. As **Figure 1.5** shows, this indicator doubled during the crisis: from approximately 7% in 2008 to more than 14% in 2016, with a notable increase between 2011 and 2012. Food insecurity is particularly acute in urban Athens, rural Aegean Islands, and Crete as well as overall in northern Greece.⁵⁹ It is also likely that many households may be experiencing stress and material deprivation, as well as food insecurity, which

is not appropriately captured by the aforementioned variable as many factors such as dietary preference, quality of proteins, etc. are not taken into account, as well as short-term, but often chronic, food insecurity, which can have serious impacts on human health and wellbeing, in particular for children.

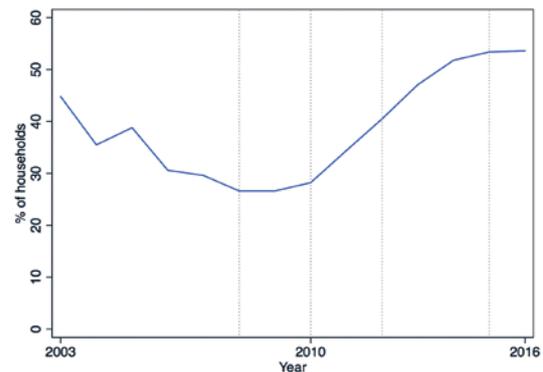
In order to attempt a broader assessment, additional measures of material deprivation are presented in **Table A.1** in the **Annex**. It is clear that some households are feeling the financial impact of the crisis deeply. The data shows sharp increases in households' inability to keep their house warm (from 15.4% in 2010 to 32.9% by 2014) (see also **Figure 1.6**) and the inability to face unexpected expenses has more than doubled, from 26.6% in 2009 to 53.6% in 2016 (see also **Figure 1.7**). **Arrears on household costs and bills doubled during the crisis, with almost one in two households being behind in their payments** (up from approximately one in four in 2008). In particular, arrears on mortgage and rent payments increased from 5.5% in 2008 to 15.3% in 2016 (see also **Figure 1.8**), although there are no figures on rates of homelessness, as these are not covered by the SILC framework.

Figure 1.5. Inability to afford a meal with meat, chicken, fish (or vegetarian equivalent) every second day.



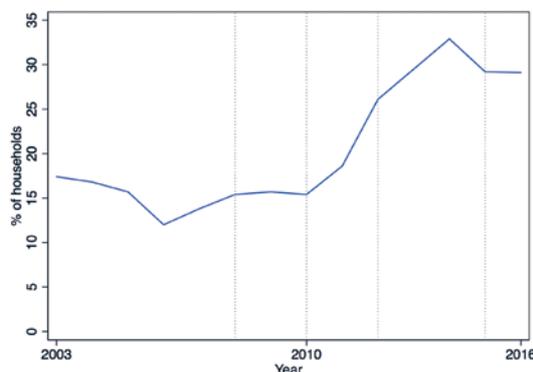
Source: SILC

Figure 1.7. Inability to face unexpected financial expenses.



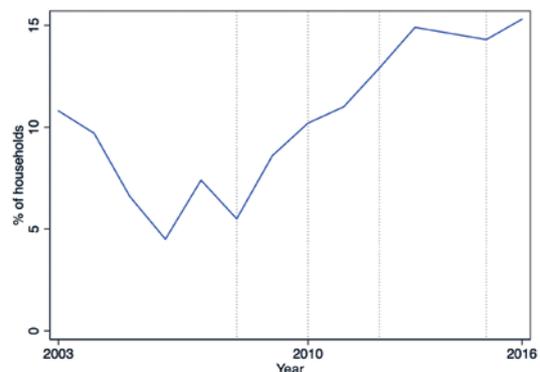
Source: SILC

Figure 1.6. Inability to keep home adequately warm.



Source: SILC

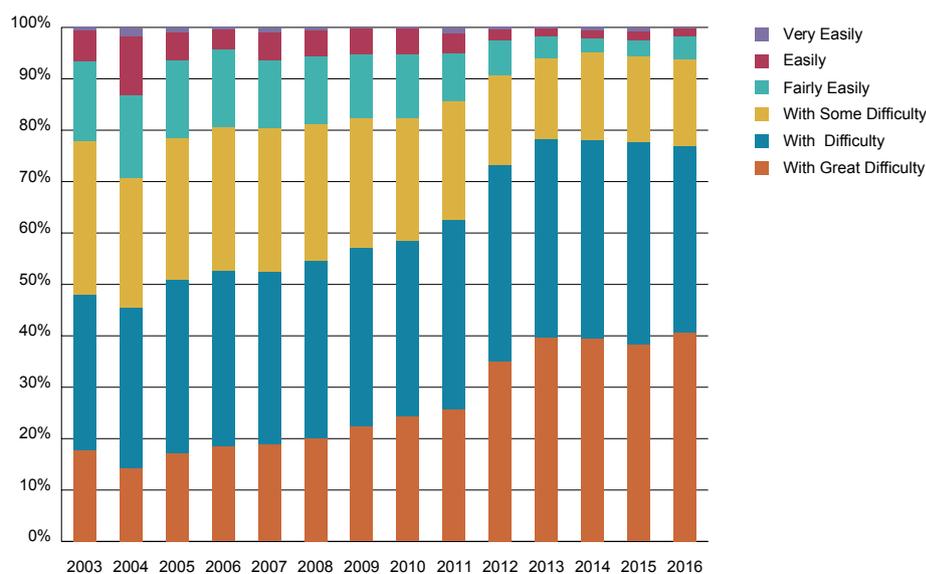
Figure 1.8. Arrears on mortgage payments



Source: SILC

These indicators clearly show that making ends meet has become much more difficult during the crisis, which is also clearly demonstrated in **Figure 1.9** (see also **Table A.1** in **Annex** for detailed data). The share of households that report difficulties in making ends meet increased from **20% in 2008 to 40.6% in 2016**. On the contrary, the share of households that report being able to make ends meet very easily, easily or fairly easily decreased sharply during the crisis: **from 29.2% in 2004 to 18.9% in 2008, 17.7% in 2010 to 6.2% in 2016 (with a low at 5% in 2014)**.⁶⁰

Figure 1.9. Making Ends Meet



Source: SILC, series *ilc_mdcs09*, accessed 14 of March, 2018.⁶¹

The long-term impact of such conditions, especially food insecurity, on children's health and wellbeing cannot be underestimated. In 2013, media attention, including from the *New York Times*⁶² and the *Guardian*,⁶³ turned to the issues of child hunger and food insecurity in Greece. Worldwide, people were shocked that such conditions were found in Europe – supposedly a region of progress and social welfare. While specific indicators for child food insecurity exist only for 2009 and 2014 – and show a significant increase in the share of households with children that are unable to afford a protein-based meal on a daily basis from 4.7% in 2009 to 8.9% in 2014⁶⁴ – SILC estimates that there are some 40.5% (2016) of children facing material and social deprivation. Moreover, the number of households that cannot afford regular protein-based meals is far higher for single-parent households, with increases **from 13.4% in 2008 to 46.9% in 2012** (2017 estimates are at 24%). A 2012 report on the state of children in Greece, with the support of UNICEF, indicates that at the height of the crisis, children faced serious hunger, as well as high levels of anxiety and psychological instability.⁶⁵ And while some measures are now being taken to address childhood food insecurity via school feeding programmes and subsidized lunches (see Ch.2.1), the root of the problem is far from being addressed.

It is not only the food security situation of Greek citizens that is at stake but also that of the refugees that have arrived in Greece – an issue which this Report cannot explore in detail but is crucial to take note of (see **Box.1.5**).

BOX.1.5

Refugees and the Right to Food

The Greek government and the European regional community have failed to adequately address either the economic crisis or the so-called refugee crisis. While this Report cannot go into the details of the refugee situation in Greece, it is important to raise the issue of violations of basic human rights – including the Right to Food – that these thousands of people fleeing war, conflict, and other hardships face every day in a country that should be offering them protection. According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), between 2015 and early 2016, more than 1 million refugees and migrants arrived in Greece, with recent estimates counting 60,000 refugees in the country, including about 14,000 on the islands.⁶⁶

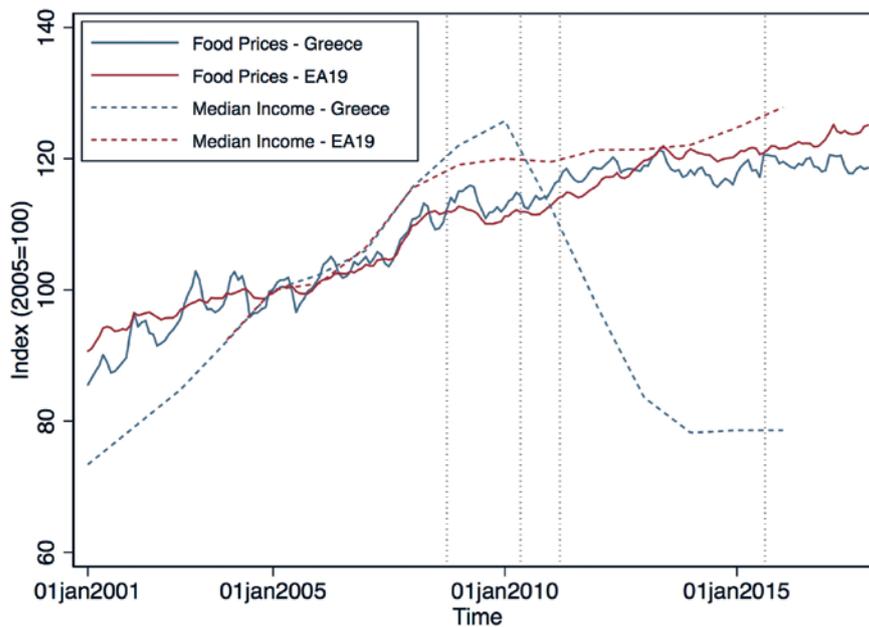
Many of the refugees and migrants are effectively now trapped in Greece due to the closed borders on the ‘Balkan route’ and the 2016 deal between the EU and Turkey which was designed to limit the flow of people into Europe.⁶⁷ In the island detention centres, or so-called ‘hot-spots’, people are unable to leave, and are forced to live in highly overcrowded and unsanitary conditions, without adequate police protection and specific dangers for women and girls.⁶⁸ The food distributed at the centres is not enough and is often of poor quality, or even rotten or expired.⁶⁹ **There is no reason why in 2018, refugees in Europe should not have their right to food, housing, clean water and sanitation, education, freedom of movement, among others, realized.**

The key question is: In a time of economic hardship, how can Greece meet the obligations to its citizens as well as the obligations to protect asylum-seekers? While it is beyond the scope of this Report to discuss specific border policies or the merits of other proposals⁷⁰ towards improvements in procedures, anti-discrimination, and reduction of death and violence, it will contribute to the debate by outlining the obligations of the Greek government to respect, protect and fulfil the right to food and nutrition (see **Chapter 3**). It is essential that the negative impacts of both crises do not perpetuate inequalities and human rights violations for all people in Greece: citizens, migrants and refugees.

1.3 (b) Food prices

In this picture of financial insecurity, the rising cost of food puts major pressure on stretched budgets, affecting choice and often sacrificing nutritional choices. As in most cases worldwide of increased food insecurity, it is not that food is not available - but that it is inaccessible. In the case of Greece, people do not have the money to purchase food. This is compounded by rising food prices which, **for a significant part of the crisis (until 2013), kept rising in Greece at even faster rates than prices in the Eurozone (see Figure 1.10) – despite the sharp fall in domestic incomes and labour costs.** This is not surprising: increases in VAT on food as part of the effort to increase tax revenue during the crisis, heavy dependence on imported food and the role of intermediaries (particularly of supermarkets) explain the discrepancy between food prices and incomes. Even though labour costs fell sharply during the crisis,⁷¹ this change did not translate into lower prices for consumers, compounding Greek people’s difficulty to meet their needs.

Figure 1.10. Food Prices in Greece vs. Eurozone, 2001–2017



Source: Eurostat data, accessed 11 February 2018. The dotted vertical lines delineate the beginning of the crisis (2008), and the three MoU (May 2010, February 2012, and August 2015).

There is evidence that, against a generalized backdrop of precarity, rising food prices have had an impact on people’s food security. According to the Hellenic Statistical Authority’s (ELSTAT) Household Budget Surveys, over the 2008–2016 period there was a drop in food expenditure in absolute terms; however, food expenditure as a share of total monthly expenditure increased from 16.4% to 20.7%, due to the reduced incomes and rising food prices. As a result, in the short term the choices people make in buying food have also changed. Interviews with employees working in food stores in Crete and Thessaloniki indicate that since 2017 there has been a drop in purchases of certain more expensive food products and a shift towards more inexpensive, low-nutritional foods such as rice and pasta. The lack of access to food appears to be more severe in large towns and cities than in rural areas, where social networks combined with more availability of food products and access to land tend to better cover this need. Household budget data⁷² corroborates these testimonies, indicating that since 2008, there has been a general decrease in food expenditures in Greece. At the same time, there are noticeable increases in the consumption of pasta, breakfast cereal, poultry, eggs and legumes (beans, chickpeas, and lentils), which are less expensive foods (see **Table A.2 in Annex**). Similarly, average consumption per capita in terms of quantity changes, with noticeable decreases in the purchase of meat, and significant increases in yoghurt, eggs, and legumes.

Food prices do not only affect consumption patterns. They also rebound on food producers who have to contend with the rising cost of production and changes in regulations as a result of the austerity measures. The system of milk pricing in Greece is illustrative (see **Box 1.6**).

BOX 1.6

Milk Pricing in Greece

According to the 2014 OECD report, the Greek definition of ‘fresh milk’ – which determines that the shelf-life of pasteurized fresh milk cannot exceed five days – makes it difficult for foreign imports to enter the market. This, it is argued, constituted a ‘strict deviation from EU practices and was therefore a protectionist barrier’.⁷³ Changing the definition of fresh milk, on the other hand, would increase competitive pressure on Greek farmers, making it hard for ‘inefficient small local farms’ to operate unless they increase their productivity.⁷⁴ In line with these recommendations, in 2014 the Greek government increased the maximum shelf-life of fresh milk from five to seven days⁷⁵ – a change that deteriorated the quality of the milk and yet yielded no noticeable drop in consumer prices. **In Greece, producer and consumer prices for milk are reported as 35% higher than the EU average, but the producer price is only 35% of the consumer price, which is also lower than the EU average.**⁷⁶ Such divergences indicate high mark-ups in the intermediate stages of processing and food retail.⁷⁷ In other words, in order to reduce consumer prices, one would have to curtail high market power of intermediaries in the Greek food chain. After the Third MoU, however, the Greek government committed to conform to the earlier OECD recommendation of letting producers set the use-by date of milk, altogether abolishing the shelf-life regulation.⁷⁸

1.3 (c) Land

Recent research has exposed the increasing concentration of farmland in Europe.⁷⁹ Over the last decade, the EU has lost a third of all its small farms with just 3% of farms now owning 52% of EU farmland. Land inequality has become worse than income inequality. What does this trend mean for austerity-era Greece?

While austerity measures have not directly dealt with the issue of farmland, there are a number of measures that are likely to have an impact on its use, distribution and control. These include:

1. A new land tax: In December 2013, the government replaced the previous property tax, which had been collected by the Public Power Corporation (PPC levy) and the wealth tax on property (FAP) with a new Unified Property Tax (ENFIA) under **Law 4223/2013**.^{*} According to the EC,⁸⁰ ENFIA would cover both properties and land in urban and non-urban areas, and farmland would be taxed at a baseline of €10 per ha, with adjustments for location and land use.
2. Increasing land size: The Supplemental MoU that accompanies the completion of the First Review of the Third Economic Adjustment Programme discusses the need to develop a law that increases the size of holdings and introduces new forms of partnership (including joint ventures and public-private partnerships – PPPs) in agriculture.⁸¹ This has not yet led to measures promoting direct land consolidation,

* ENFIA is comprised of two components, basic and supplementary. Supplementary ENFIA payments are owed by taxpayers whose total real estate (excluding farmland) is valued at 200,000 euros. See *Εκτός συμπληρωματικού ΕΝΦΙΑ τα αγροτεμάχια το 2017 και το 2018* <http://www.kathimerini.gr/911371/article/oikonomia/ellhnikhoikonomia/ektosyimplhrwmatikoy-enfia-ta-agrotemaxia-to-2017-kai-to-2018>, accessed February 11, 2018.

other than **Law 4384/2016** on agricultural cooperatives that seeks to promote farmer participation in producer groups. The supplemental MoU that accompanies the completion of the Third Review notes the adoption of a ministerial decree that facilitates the organization of farmers into producer groups and notes the need to incentivize producers to join such groups.⁸²

Some analysts⁸³ have argued that the financial crisis and austerity measures have led to the emergence of a new land regime in Greece, characterized by the following features:

- The privatization, devaluation and sale of land (and related resources such as minerals, water, biological diversity, landscapes and more) to pay off the public debt. A prominent example here includes the sale of 31,000 ha of land in Calkidiki in Central Macedonia to a Canadian company for exploitation as an open-cast gold mine. This was justified on the basis of bringing in needed foreign investment despite fierce local opposition and environmental and public health concerns.⁸⁴
- The rise of new elites and land deal brokers, including large developers and banks, along with the facilitation of land transactions through fast-track measures and extraordinary planning rules supervised by the Hellenic Republic Asset Development Fund (HRADF). The controversial land development around the old airport of Helleniko in Attica is one such example (see **Box 1.7**).

Some of these features are of course not necessarily new and have a longer historical precedent. For this reason, one can speak of both a **'continuation and rupture' with previous land regimes**. What can be considered new, however, is the way in which such processes of devaluation and dispossession are captured and justified under the framework of austerity, debt repayment, and financial supervision.

So far, these processes have mostly affected urban land and real estate rather than farmland. However, **there is a danger that the crisis, in combination with farmer indebtedness and farm abandonment, is creating conditions for 'farmland grabbing'**. This is not visible yet – small holding size is probably an impediment and, in the absence of active measures to engender consolidation of adjacent holdings, outside investors may not have ready access to the types of holdings that would trigger a process of grabbing farmland. However, the fact that this has not happened does not mean it won't (especially given changes in the legal framework regarding non-performing loans, taxation and indebtedness etc.). The crucial issue (see **Recommendations**) would be to make provisions to prevent or stop such a process of land grabbing.

BOX 1.7

Contested spaces and community resistance: the emblematic case of the community garden of Helliniko

The self-organized garden of Helliniko in Athens is a community garden of less than 0.5 ha, located inside the contested area of its former airport. This area of Helliniko is a very large space of 550 ha but has in the last ten years been the focus of a struggle of local people who want this space to be publicly accessible, open and managed according to community needs, and who stand against the multinational development plans (which include a consortium of Greek, Chinese and Arab investors who are seeking to convert the space into a posh, recreational zone three times the size of Monaco to bring in rich tourists).⁸⁵ While the communal gardening in Helleniko, given the small plot size, is not so essential with respect to providing food, it has a symbolic character as it unifies various struggles, such as for food, traditional seed preservation, protection of public space and the environment, as well as the fight against enclosures and privatizations. Since privatizations (especially in some key areas such as Helliniko) have been an important part of the austerity agenda, initiatives flourishing there (including the vegetable garden and the social clinic) are an important part of people's efforts against these policies.

1.3 (d) Rural life

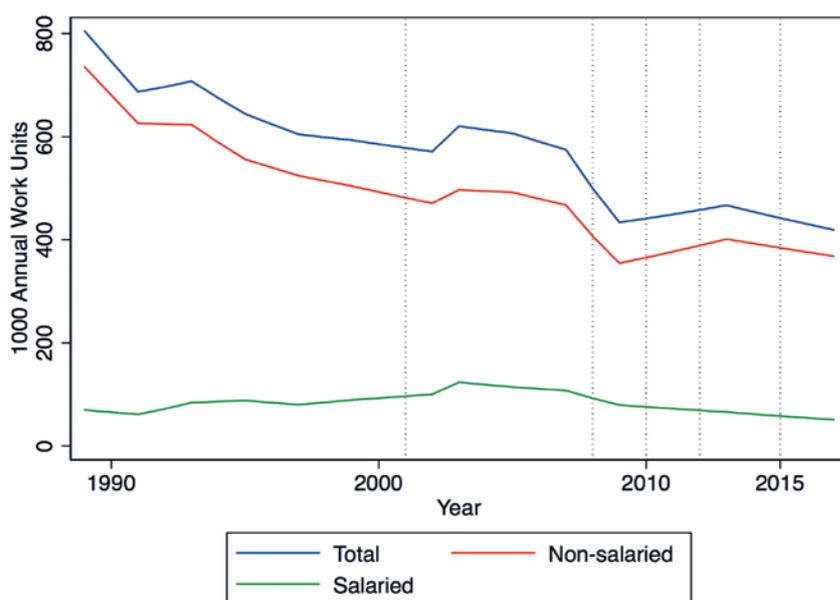
The impact of austerity on rural life is rather difficult to measure. Following the crisis, the media reported a sweeping wave of Greek city dwellers 'returning to the land' as urban life became unaffordable. Without jobs, access to decent housing or adequate food, many, especially young people, were ready to leave the cities. Exact data on how many returned permanently to rural villages, as well as those who left the country to seek opportunities elsewhere, are hard to come by. One study estimates that between 2008 and 2011, 17,000 urban people moved to the countryside.⁸⁶ Further data collected through KAPA Research carried out in 2012 among a representative sample of 1,286 people in Athens and Thessaloniki found that more than 66% had thought about leaving the city to live in rural villages or small towns.⁸⁷

These findings have played into stories of 'rural resilience' and defiance in the face of a hostile socio-economic environment as well as narratives of a 'new rurality' through processes of counter-urbanization and rural transformation.⁸⁸ While these kinds of mobility are certainly now more evident across rural and urban areas, what this means for rural life related to the Greek food and agricultural system is still not clear. It is important to note, for instance, that the majority of respondents to the Surveys indicated above said that they were interested in seeking employment in non-agricultural industries such as tourism, culture, and communications – perhaps not so surprising in a context in which agriculture is no longer the main source of rural employment.

i) Agricultural employment and labour conditions

In terms of general employment, statistics show that rural areas had lower unemployment rates both before and after the crisis. Rural unemployment in 2008 was 7% against 8.2% in cities, while during the crisis years it soared up to 25% in 2013, but still remained below that of urban areas (28.9% in 2013).⁸⁹ In relation to agricultural employment more specifically, the analysis must take into consideration longer-term trends in the decline in agricultural labour, measured in annual work units (AWUs, full-time work equivalents) so that by 2011, the number of people employed in agriculture, hunting, forestry and fisheries has fallen sharply (**Figure 1.11**). What is striking is that during the crisis, in particular, non-salaried labour in agriculture has fallen only slightly (from 406,990 AWUs in 2008 to 368,430 AWUs in 2017), while salaried labour has decreased significantly (from 92,460 AWUs in 2008 to 51,040 AWUs in 2017).⁹⁰ After 2009, family labour in Greek agriculture increased both in absolute and relative terms, while wage labour fell in absolute and relative terms. This indicates that land may act as an absorption mechanism of family labour, but also that the crisis reduced reliance on wage labour.

Figure 1.11. Labour input in agriculture (1000 AWUs)



Source: Eurostat database, series aact_ali01, accessed 13 July 2018.

This is particularly the case for migrant workers who, based on the 2011 Census, were estimated to make up just under a fifth (19.2%) of the total employed in the primary sector.⁹¹ They include 'older' waves of migrants such as those from Albania as well as newer arrivals, principally from Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Egypt and Pakistan. Already subject to irregular, low-paid, and uninsured employment, the crisis has added an extra level of precarity to what are often blatantly exploitative conditions. While stories of abuse abound,⁹² the case of strawberry production in Manolada is perhaps the best-documented case of the exploitation of migrant agricultural workers in Greece. Already in 2008, reports surfaced of migrant land workers living in conditions effectively akin to

shantytowns.⁹³ In April 2013, farm supervisors opened fire against a group of Bangladeshi workers who had gone on strike demanding seven months of unpaid wages for their work in challenging physical conditions and under the supervision of armed guards.⁹⁴ In 2017, examining the case, the European Court of Human Rights held that the workers' situation was one of human trafficking and forced labour, and that Greece had failed to uphold its obligation to offer protection against such conditions.⁹⁵

ii) Falling incomes and contraction of public services and funds

Rural areas have been hit by falling incomes. According to Eurostat, between 2000 and 2009, agricultural income per working person was reduced by 16.9%, while in the crisis years (2009–2012), income dropped by 10.8% (compared to an EU-27 increase of 7.5%).⁹⁶ While urban poverty and problems facing cities have been highlighted throughout the Greek crisis, rural citizens also face many obstacles with 38.9 % at risk of poverty (compared to 32.7 % in cities).⁹⁷

Austerity policies have further exacerbated these issues. In the spirit of cost-cutting, for example, grants to farmers' organizations were on the chopping block before the First Review of the second SAP. Meanwhile, severe pension cuts are applied if retirees engage in agricultural activities, even though pensioners face some of the worst poverty problems in rural areas. While some people see villages as a cheaper alternative to city life, there are few opportunities for them there. Already small budgets have forced schools⁹⁸ and public transport to be cut, as well as limited or inadequately equipped medical facilities,⁹⁹ among other issues which make life difficult or impossible for many people, especially young families. These rural villages, which rest at the heart of the large Greek agricultural economy, cannot sustain their own livelihoods, let alone provide meaningful employment for

others. However, as stated previously, the new tax obligations placed on food producers, combined with higher production costs, puts additional financial pressure on food producers in the country.



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Chapter 2.

Responses to austerity

With the implementation of austerity measures in Greece, the economy further crumbled, pensions were cut, jobs lost, and food prices continued to rise. The response to the Right to Food impacts of the crisis grew out of necessity from all actors including the government, religious institutions, charities, civil society/NGOs, and grassroots initiatives. The government has been largely unable to provide the necessary support, not least due to the cuts in social spending. Some eight years later, the situation has not changed as people continue to face difficulties in meeting their basic food needs and food producers struggle to make ends meet.

Many of the various 'people's responses' thus emerged from an identified need and inadequate State support. As a result, they often find themselves in a complicated relationship with the State. This is not surprising given that the Greek government, under severe duress from its creditors, is still acting as a primary implementer of austerity measures. At the same time, one can also identify certain public policies that have sought to meet people's basic needs, provide some degree of support to a (limited) number of these bottom-up initiatives, and otherwise mitigate the worst effects of the crisis.

2.1 Government and institutional responses

Following the signing of the three MoU and the subsequent measures, the Greek government's ability to respond to the real daily crisis felt by the population has been limited. Even when the left-wing party, SYRIZA, was brought to power in January 2015, it faced harsh restrictions imposed by the lenders and proceeded to implement austerity measures, disappointing many who hoped that the election would send a strong signal that austerity was coming to an end.

Official responses to the Right to Food impacts and violations related to the crisis focus mainly on direct aid and assistance more akin to emergency responses, rather than long-term interventions that address more structural issues affecting the population. Coverage in rural areas is weak and almost no interventions explicitly address the issues faced by agricultural communities.

With approaches to social welfare policy that limit eligibility and coverage, the Greek State is not only failing to address the problems faced by the population, but is also in some ways exacerbating the problem or creating the space for new problems. Churches, charities, food banks, and other responses have sought to fill the gap as the government is unable to meet the full and universal needs of the population. While these do not represent a public-sector response, they do reflect the gaps in current social programmes.

Table 2.1 provides an overview of the responses that have been attempted so far that seek to address food insecurity, and to an extent the right to food:

Table 2.1. Responses and measures by government and other institutions to support people with a low-income.

Response	Coverage	Who is involved
Law to face the 'humanitarian crisis' (Law 4320/2015)	Food, rent and electricity subsidies for low-income individuals and families	Government of Greece
Social Solidarity Scheme (2017-present)	€100 per household per month, with limited/low-level eligibility, provided gross income does not exceed €1200 for the six months prior to application for benefit	Government of Greece
School Meal Programmes	Free school meals	NGO/ Private foundations (early intervention), Government of Greece (since 2017)
Food Banks / Soup Kitchens	Providing food and free meals for those in need	Church of Greece; NGOs; FEAD (European non-profit association); private companies
Social Groceries	Providing food, clothing, cleaning items, and other basic goods for low-income individuals and families	Municipalities, churches, NGOs, political organizations

2.1 (a) Eligibility Criteria for Benefits

With austerity there has been an overall attempt not only to reduce the size of the State but also to transform State benefits. Early on in the crisis, in addition to calls to reduce social spending, both the OECD¹ and the Troika identified the lack of means-testing as a problem in the design of social programmes and pushed for its expansion as a strategy to reduce government spending. This lack of means-testing is presented by the OECD and the Troika as allocating benefits to groups that do not face severe social hardship, while leaving those with the least income unprotected.² Similarly, the IMF calls for the introduction of a 'targeted guaranteed minimum income (GMI) programme while means-testing other welfare benefits' and argues that 'other welfare programmes should be means-tested to reduce duplication and further increase progressivity'.³ The third MoU also presents means-testing as the key to social fairness by arguing that '[a] fairer society will require that Greece improves the design of its welfare system, so that there is a genuine social safety net which targets scarce resources at those who need it most'.⁴

There is no reason why expanding social programmes should leave the poor unprotected, other than assuming that the size of the welfare state needs to be limited and that extra benefits to one group mean fewer benefits for other groups. It has been shown that **means-testing erodes social solidarity and reduces public support for social programmes:** in the United States, for example, universal programmes (such as Medicare) are consistently more popular than means-tested programmes (such as Medicaid).⁵ Means-tested programmes are also more vulnerable to being scaled back with political shifts, as they rely on support from non-participants, which is at jeopardy in times of reduced government expenditure. Moreover, since being a recipient of means-tested programmes is often associated with stigma, potential beneficiaries do

not always claim their benefits, thus losing much-needed social benefits and diminishing the potential positive impact of those programmes on those whom they are, in principle, designed to help.

In the wake of the crisis, the government did manage to implement some programmes intended to address some primary concerns with regard to the realization of the Right to Food. However, the call for stronger means-testing changes the character of the assistance and prevents it from fully reaching all those in need.

2.1 (b) Social and Solidarity Income Scheme

Despite calls to reduce social spending, one of the first acts of the SYRIZA-ANEL government after being elected in January 2015 was to enact **Law 4320/2015** to address the so-called 'humanitarian crisis' (Ρυθμίσεις για τη λήψη άμεσων μέτρων για την αντιμετώπιση της ανθρωπιστικής κρίσης, την οργάνωση της Κυβέρνησης και των Κυβερνητικών οργάνων και λοιπές διατάξεις), in defiance of the country's lenders. This law introduced measures of assistance to low-income households, including food and rent subsidies, and electricity support. Food subsidies, in particular, took the form of an electronic card starting at €70 a month for a single person with an additional €30 euros a month for each household member, to a maximum of €220 euros a month. Initially, 145,359 households (349,826 individuals) were approved for food aid; 89,288 households received electricity aid; and 30,575 received rent subsidies.⁶

Since 2017, a Guaranteed Minimum Income scheme (or Social Solidarity Income scheme – SSI) is being introduced to replace the earlier measures (European Commission, 2016; European Commission, 2017). The support is given on a monthly basis, half in cash and the other via a pre-paid credit card format. This format is also aligned with attempts to increase electronic transactions and receipts in order to increase tax collection in Greece. Since 2015, all shops in Greece, including food shops, are required to have an electronic point of sale system (POS) in order to accept credit cards. It should be noted, however, that transaction fees associated with use of the system have a disproportionate impact on the profitability of small businesses.

The SSI benefit is dependent on income and ranges from €30 to €200 per household per month, with an additional €100 for every adult and €50 euros per child, with the exception of single-parent households for which the amount set for the first child is €100 euros. However, **the low level of income support falls short of guaranteeing a dignified existence,**⁷ and thresholds restrict the eligibility for this benefit to those facing severe material deprivation: for a single person, **total gross income may not exceed €1,200 for the six months prior to the application**, and the value of their property may not exceed €90,000.

In spite of the multiple criteria set to ensure that SSI is directed to those who really need it, there are cases of some who are entitled to it being excluded, even for people from 'vulnerable groups', such as single-parent families, people with disabilities, or long-term unemployed. In particular, the inability to submit an application for people who are not

living in their registered home (renting or owning, many people are staying with family or friends as they are unable to make ends meet), or applying the income criterion to the last six months prior to submitting the form, has resulted in excluding people living in great poverty and in desperate need of assistance.

I applied for this one (SSI) last year, but there were a lot of traps in that application form that no one had informed us about. For example, for me, as a single parent, the amount was supposed to be 300 euros per month. When I applied through the platform I received the answer that I was only entitled to €70, because I worked for three months as a seasonal worker in the summer... It was absurd what they were saying to you, in my own case, that I had earned €2,000 during a whole year and that this money is enough for a family to live on, and especially a single parent family ... My brother, for example, could not get this social benefit, who is in a worse situation than me... he was being hosted in a nursing home and as a guest he was not entitled to the allowance. Really, this guy has so many health issues and no income at all, and he couldn't get it.

(Interview from a single mother and former beneficiary of SSI)

Given that the introduction of SSI coincides with the end of the 'emergency' measures on food, housing, and electricity, its meagre size is likely to increase hardship for households that were receiving both food aid and rent subsidies under the previous scheme. **The scheme does not provide support to enable families to overcome poverty. Moreover, in some cases it may exclude people who are genuinely in urgent need of support from meagre State benefits that fall short of reflecting the real needs of a dignified life and realization of basic human rights.**

2.1 (c) Food Aid Programmes

i) School Meals

As stated previously, children are deeply affected by the crisis and the standards set out in the austerity measures (see **Ch.1.3a**). According to Deloitte (2014), 60% of schoolchildren in low-income districts are food-insecure and 25% are experiencing hunger.⁸ This condition is exacerbated by the lack of institutions providing meals and food. Since 2012, there have been efforts to fill this gap, first through the development of a school lunch programme by an NGO (Prolepsis Institute) and a private foundation (Stavros Niarchos Foundation) aimed at high-need districts across the country.⁹

Such efforts were later expanded and institutionalized. In 2017, the Greek government expanded a pilot school meal programme to include 130,000 primary schoolchildren across Greece, covering approximately 20% of the country's primary school pupils.¹⁰ The

selection of schools benefiting from this programme was based on social indicators, such as unemployment and poverty. Furthermore, the programme was universal, covering all pupils in selected schools, irrespective of family income. As a result, according to interviews, the majority of families and students seem to be willing to participate in the intervention irrespective of their economic situation. A teacher interviewed in Thessaloniki said that approximately two-thirds of the pupils in the school where she works participate, while a teacher in Athens said that almost all pupils participate (120 out of 125 children). Interviews suggest that the quality of the food varies, but that most comes from catering companies.

ii) Food Banks

Reliance on food aid for many families, in particular in urban areas, has resulted in an increasing number of food banks. In 2016, in the prefecture of Attica, there were at least 200 organizations providing free meals to those in need. Some of these are public entities, and many are linked to the church. All are charitable initiatives.

Since 2014 the Church of Greece has been providing statistical data every year due to its role in the Joint Committee on Social Welfare, which has seen a constant increase in the use of soup kitchens since 2014.¹¹ Information provided by parishes of Thessaloniki about the daily soup kitchens (meals) and monthly food packages offered to people living in their areas is quite revealing. Data¹² indicate both a change in the number of people in need of food between 2007 and 2017 and in the social composition of the beneficiaries. More specifically, the number of people asking for meals has considerably increased, while in previous years the meals were predominantly used by migrants. There is also now a rise in entire families whose members are in need of daily meals.

A number of parishes (not all) have since included giving out monthly food packages as ever more people, and especially families who are in need, prefer to cook their own food. According to the parishes, this is less embarrassing and does not stigmatize them in the neighbourhood. The receipt of food packages once a month is much less visible than the participation in daily soup kitchens. In one case, the number of beneficiaries for the meals dropped from 200 in 2012 to 140 in 2017, coinciding with the parish introducing food packages in 2016, which now (2017) amounts to 40 packages per month. The food packages are usually intended to cover a family's food needs for one month. In other instances, where a fall in the number of soup kitchen meals has occurred in the last two years, this is attributed by people from the parishes to the government's introduction of social allowances. However, in the vast majority of cases, these numbers have considerably increased over the last decade, as shown in **Table A.3** in the **Annex**.

In times of emergency, food aid can be an important measure. The **Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived (FEAD)** is a programme at European level that provides assistance to countries in order to increase social inclusion – with provisions such as food, clothing and other essential personal items. Recognizing that food insecurity was a serious issue following the crisis, Greece is projected to receive some €281 million

from FEAD between 2014 and 2020. Together with national participation, the scale of the operational programme in Greece is €331 million, of which €276 million (83.5%) is allocated for food aid.¹³

In Greece, the use of these resources suffers, however, from significant delays: “In the first two years of the seven-year programme, only 0.8% of its expenses were approved and 0.7% of the total budget was paid to beneficiaries that implement actions.”¹⁴ According to the Foundation for Economic and Industrial Research (IOBE), within the first two years, **no food assistance seems to have reached the intended beneficiaries**. This could be due to the lack of distributional capacity and the need for additional support. While food aid is not a long term solution to poverty and food insecurity, it can be an important part of an emergency strategy, and it is fundamental that the public sector is well funded and has capacity to meet these needs, in coordination with community-based organizations. More active and meaningful participation of civil society organisations and community groups in the design and management of food assistance through FEAD can help ensure that assistance reaches those who need it, and that those who are most impacted can participate in the design and implementation of delivery methods - while at the same time, maintaining a key role for the state and avoiding the “privatization of aid services”. The primary service provider linked to this programme is a public non-profit food bank which focuses on using waste in the food system to feed hungry families.¹⁵ The food banks linked to FEAD are primarily in Attica and Thessaloniki with little to no coverage in rural areas or on the islands – a gap which seems to be recognized by the food bank.

iii) Social groceries

Research also shows collaboration between municipalities and NGOs in the form of **social groceries**, a direct response to the crisis and run in a similar fashion to food banks. In Thessaloniki, the two initiatives visited are each helping about 150–300 families (i.e. about 400–700 people), aimed at those with no family income and giving priority to those who are in special situations such as those under 18 years of age, or with physical or mental health problems, as well as single-parent families and families with many children. In order to benefit from these groceries, you must register in a municipality and complete an application. The applicants are then assessed according to various criteria such as their employment status, the presence of children, disabilities, etc.

*We get to hear of families with children without electricity at home, that is, you give them some things and they tell you I cannot cook it, I do not have a refrigerator ...
I do not have electricity. (Social grocery employee)*

Some people even criticize them as a measure of austerity politics:

At the beginning of austerity and economic difficulty they [Troika] emphasized, in parallel, the need for a financial support policy, like the social solidarity income, (which was) a memorandum command. It is a bit absurd...on the one hand you sink a country into the economic crisis and on the other you try to help the poor with small injections. This [the function of the social grocery] is also an austerity policy (...) the pursuit of a policy which is blocking the holes as far as you can...I am not sure...it is not the best.

(Social grocery employee)

In many cases, social groceries, which mostly exist in the cities, started as collaborations of the municipality with NGOs, but continue as structures run by the municipality, often adopting top-down processes and decisions being taken at the municipal or regional level. The management operations are funded by the NSRF or the municipality. Similar to the food banks, the products offered are primarily from donations from individuals, political and religious institutions, and private companies. Items include food, personal hygiene and household items and sometimes books, clothes, and toys. Some data¹⁶ suggests that there are 181 social groceries from 51 prefectures, but the data is unreliable since, in the absence of a clear definition of what constitutes a social grocery, it relies largely on self-identification. It is also based on data from 2013.

The challenge, as with all institutions, is the increasing need for food due to continued wage and pension cuts and fewer resources. More specifically, the measures envisaged in 2018, like the decrease in tax-free income and a further reduction in pensions, are expected to further increase the need for food which, coupled with shortages in capital and means such as infrastructure (refrigerators, staff, facilities, buildings), is expected to create difficulties for these structures. Moreover, bureaucracy, linked to donations and corporate 'sponsorship' for available items continue to prevent or delay their receipt by those who need them.

Now, in this situation, people want to offer something (...) to help the community, even the local one, and they get involved in such a procedure that almost forbids it.

(Social grocery employee)

(iv) Charity vs. Solidarity

While food waste is a problem and families desperately need assistance, these issues are not unique to Greece. Hunger is a problem that is deeply political and entrenched not in the availability of food, but rather in access to it. Diverting food waste to food banks is a means to close the gap but will do little to address the root causes of hunger and malnutrition. According to Andy Fisher, 'the charitable food system exists at the intersection of waste and want...Driven by inefficiencies in the supply chain, it was invented as a morally preferable alternative to throwing away 'perfectly good food'.¹⁷ Concern about the emergence of charity and emergency approaches in Greece (as opposed to those rooted in social justice) has also been raised by other researchers.¹⁸

Economic inequality rooted in low wages is a main contributor to food insecurity and violations of the Right to Food in Greece and is an old story in other countries, such as the United States, in which food banks were introduced as an emergency provision that never went away, and indeed increased, as did the intimate links and benefits to large private corporations. The food banks' links to the private sector in Greece, including large supermarket chains and international food companies, are the same actors which contribute to the root problem and benefit the most from the MoU in relation to market retail concentration, food pricing, and dependence on food imports – affecting the country's food consumers and producers, as well as small food retailers. Furthermore, the top-down structure of operations imposes a strict context in which it would be difficult to address issues other than simply access to food delivery, preventing programmes and services that might better address the root causes of the problem.

This is not to say that food banks and social groceries are not needed in Greece – in fact it is very important that assistance and provisions are available to those who need them. Rather, it is a sign of concern about the lack of real solutions to long-term problems of hunger and food insecurity, compounded with the cuts to social programmes and the prioritization of profit and business over the rights of people, as discussed above. An additional concern is the lack of civil society participation in policy responses to social issues that have resulted from the crisis, as well as the dominant role of private consulting companies and the gradual erosion of public deliberation.¹⁹

2.2 People's Responses

2.2 (a) A typology of people's responses

There is a discernible rise of new bottom-up initiatives, infrastructure, ventures, cooperatives, practices and social arrangements (broadly categorized and referred to in shorthand as 'people's responses') that have multiplied from 2011 onwards. While some of these initiatives have deeper historical roots, there is no doubt that the onset of the crisis and the context of austerity has imbued many of them with a new sense of urgency and political and social significance.

These initiatives cut across urban, peri-urban and rural areas and are notable for their diversity as much as anything else. They are motivated by different reasons (humanitarian, survivalist, socio-political); embody different political tendencies (reformist, radical, apolitical, incumbent); with different profiles among producers, members and clientele; and with different modes of operation according to their decision-making processes, methods of financing, work structures, pricing policies, types of products/goods offered, and strategies for collaboration, networking and solidarity.

Box 2.1. attempts to bring some structure to these diverse initiatives by offering a typology of people's responses along with some key examples.

BOX 2.1

A typology of people's agri-food initiatives²⁰

1. Solidarity kitchens

These concern groups of citizens and volunteers offering communal meals to people with no access to food. They have increased in the last few years in order to respond to the ongoing needs of destitute and homeless local people as well as to the large waves of migration. They differentiate themselves from charity organizations by involving people who receive their services in a network of activities, solidarity and volunteering, in order to encourage them to gain access not only to food, but also other kinds of services and support. Notable examples include 'Solidarity of Piraeus' and 'The Other Human' in Athens.

2. Food cooperatives

These are networks of consumers and producers joining to form food cooperatives. They take the form of either large cooperative supermarkets or, more commonly, small grocery stores. Their intention is to provide high quality food products to their members and/or the wider society, ensuring fair and reasonable prices for both consumers and producers. They have multiplied in the last few years all over Greece, especially in larger towns.

3. 'No intermediaries' markets

These started in 2012 when a self-organized initiative among consumers and producers in Pieria set about taking big collective orders of potatoes, bypassing intermediary distribution channels, such as supermarket chains and conventional traders. It quickly spread to other regions of the country in what later, as the food distributions diversified beyond potatoes, was to become known in Greece as the 'no intermediaries' or 'without middlemen' movement. In many instances, the movement became the target of attacks from conventional shops and police authorities* and gradually became less important, with a few markets still happening regularly in some places (see next section). In some other cases these networks evolved into other structures, adopting legal forms such as food cooperatives.

4. Collectives and networks for self-sufficiency

These groups may function in a formal (in collaboration with the municipalities) or informal way (self-organized) and their objective is to promote food self-sufficiency for their participants. They include communal gardens and peri-urban farming groups, such as the self-managed field in the area of Helliniko in Athens, PER.KA in Thessaloniki and municipal vegetable gardens in many regional cities, as well as the network for the preservation of traditional seed varieties, Peliti based in Paranesti of Drama in Northern Greece. Another example is of eco-communities that are interested in a more integrated plan for self-sufficiency, covering access to land and other resources.

5. Community-supported agriculture (CSA) schemes

These are networks of consumers and producers, fostering a much closer, self-organized and personal interconnection between the two. They encourage greater awareness of the food production process and the quality of food that is being consumed, as well as the development of relations based on reciprocity and solidarity. Producers and consumers share the benefits and costs of the production process and secure access to high quality food without market intermediaries.

6. A range of other agricultural cooperatives, alternative farm models, and producers' ventures

Lastly, a range of other initiatives span the spectrum from more conventional/reformist types of responses affecting one part of the production process or mainly aiming at improving market conditions for producers and more radical responses that seek an entire restructuring of the food chain and the relations of production, distribution and consumption. Indicative examples include the agricultural cooperatives in Karditsa, THESGala in Larissa, the EcoGaia Farm in Trikala, and Apo Koinou social cooperative on the island of Crete.

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- As the no-intermediaries markets, starting as a spontaneous movement by farmers and citizens, operated in most cases without authorization from the municipal authorities, they were often subject to clearances from the streets, fines, and in some cases, arrests.

2.2 (b) Towards a new food politics?

As already noted, these new initiatives and people's responses have been driven by a number of motives. These include principally:

- facilitating access to more affordable food than can be found in conventional markets and outlets;
- escaping unemployment and poverty by increasing livelihood opportunities, especially in a cooperative context;
- answering the need for social contact, human dignity, a sense of purpose and finding a way out of loneliness;
- pushing forward a political agenda based, to a greater or lesser extent, on principles of direct democracy, self-organization, cooperation, social and solidarity economy, and moral consumption as vehicles for a transition to another model of socio-economic and socio-ecological production, distribution and consumption.

While these are represented here as distinct, often many of these goals coalesce and intertwine in the various responses and initiatives. We now seek to explore the extent to which the various types of people's responses amount to a new type of food politics, even if this is not necessarily the stated objective or ostensible reason why people have engaged in such ventures. **To what extent do these ventures practise and point in the direction of a new food politics defined by different modes of production, distribution and consumption? And what is their transformative potential – materially and symbolically – in terms of addressing the root causes of the crisis and allowing for new subjectivities and economic realities to emerge?**

These questions will be examined through a case study of the ‘**no intermediaries**’ or ‘**without middlemen**’ movement. This case study is chosen not just because it is one of the most widely known and emblematic examples of people’s responses to the crisis, but also because it shows how a set of concrete practices became – at least for a period of time – a mass movement with the potential to move beyond the current conjuncture and prefigure a new set of social, economic and political arrangements centred around food. **Box 2.2** offers some of the background to the rise of the ‘without middlemen’ movement and its main features.

BOX 2.2

The rise of the ‘without middlemen’ movement

Before the crisis, there were few direct producer-to-consumer food circuits. Austerity transformed these rather isolated and marginal practices into a broader, political movement made up of a network of ‘anti-middlemen’ groups. In this sense, food became a powerful vector for protest, mobilization, the reclaiming of sovereignty and the expression of solidarity.

The first signs of these dynamics started in 2012 in Pieria in North-Central Greece when farmers – as an act of resistance against stubbornly high food prices and the power of merchants and retailers – began to distribute potatoes at low prices in the central squares and streets. These initiatives were replicated in other parts of Greece in what would later be picked up by the press and become known as the ‘potato movement’. As the movement gained ground, groups of farmers and activists became more organized, diversifying their products and introducing common pricing strategies, delivery arrangements, and solidarity actions. In places such as Athens, Thessaloniki and Katerini in Central Greece, a broader ‘without middlemen’ movement emerged defined by the following characteristics:

- the delivery of a range of products such as potatoes, flour, olive oil, legumes, honey, and cheese
- the sale of products at prices 20– 50% lower than in retail markets
- higher and on-the-spot payments to farmers
- the selection of producers according to quality, price and proximity
- a pre-ordering phone and online system where consumers have to commit to the purchase of minimum quantities
- a high degree of autonomy through the self-organization of ‘without middlemen’ groups with open assemblies and consensus-based decision making
- a logistical operation that relies on the combined efforts of activists and volunteers to help in the distribution and the issuing of receipts
- a commitment to solidarity by giving away 2–5% of their goods for free to families facing hardship

In challenging the power of merchants and retailers and overturning the conventional food chain from production, to distribution, to consumption, there is no doubt that the ‘without middlemen’ movement points towards a new food politics. In its forms of self-organization and ‘applied grassroots democracy’,²¹ the movement became a galvanizing force for farmers, with many expressing the common sentiment that ‘I have a movement today’.

Moreover, in bringing farmers to the city and involving active citizens in organizing these informal distributions, it is argued that the 'without middlemen' movement also acted as a rural-urban 'bridge', breaking down the perceived divide between the rural hinterland and the city. As Rakopoulos (2017) comments, 'Within the pressured frameworks of time and space in crisis, activism exposes what is assumed to be an urban and village divide for what it is: a continuum'.²² With farmers spearheading the 'without middlemen movement', the 'urban positionality' of many Greek citizens is also challenged as they are confronted in a direct way with food producers, intensifying and rejuvenating rural-urban linkages in the process.

However, the 'without middlemen' movement has also faced a number of significant challenges – both internal and in the policy environment - that have hindered its transition towards a more sustainable and transformative project. For example, while the model of 'applied grassroots democracy' practised by the movement through open assemblies and collective decision-making is a source of inspiration, there is also concern about the groups' dependence on volunteer and free labour and the inevitable 'activist fatigue' that sets in. Some groups have expressed their desire to become formally recognized cooperatives over time. However, given the rather poor track record of cooperatives in Greece, this strategy is far from universally shared and is riven with ambiguities. Proposals for how to strengthen the movement, and to bring more coordination and legal certainty to its members, are thus diverse and often contested – particularly in relation to public policy and the meaning of solidarity.

This is based on concerns that '[the distribution of food through without middlemen-inspired initiatives] was picked up not only by grassroots solidarity groups but also by "smart" mayors (of various political allegiances) as a costless way to exhibit some concern towards the economically pressurized voters-citizens of their towns'.²³ This is indicative of the way in which bottom-up initiatives can be co-opted and instrumentalized for special interests and different political purposes. Moreover, 'without middlemen' distributions have also clashed with authorities and faced repression, particularly with regard to obtaining municipal permits for occupying public space and the issue and collection of receipts for tax purposes. Special mention should be made here of the **itinerant trade law (Law 4264/2014)** which was passed in May 2014 and has become a major pretext for shutting down 'without middlemen' markets. As Calvário and Kallis (2016) explain, this law:

- forbids itinerant trade near shops with similar products and in municipalities with more than 3,000 inhabitants;
- requires that stationary markets be proposed and approved by municipal or regional authorities;
- adds obstacles to farmers who want to obtain permits to sell directly;
- increases the fines and includes an imprisonment penalty for those who prevent controls from the authorities or have no permit.

As a result of these challenges, the ‘without middlemen’ movement has unfortunately largely faded away. In the few remaining cases where the markets still take place they will gradually have to operate under the new legal framework of producers and consumers markets (Law 4497/2017), of which Article 37 allows for the organization of a monthly ‘no intermediaries’ market per region. While this provides legal cover to some of the markets, it also transfers power into the hands of municipalities and government officials who have the authority to select who can organize such a market. In this sense, there are fears that the movement will lose its grassroots character.

Nevertheless, the articulation of this project at a symbolic level, along with the material practices that underpin it, mean that the movement has been a powerful force, not just in grappling with hardship but also as a political response to the sovereign debt crisis and the social fallout from austerity. As Giovanopoulos (2017) argues, ‘In the context of the “shock doctrine” and austere recession imposed on both Greek economy and people, the provision of alternatives that produced savings for the latter and outlets for producers, constituted a concrete practice of resisting and outsmarting the bondages of the market and of the consequences of the memoranda’.²⁴

2.2 (c) State–society interactions and new models of solidarity in times of crisis

The relationship between these people’s responses and the State is complicated. On the one hand, the rise of these initiatives has, in part, been due to the failure of public authorities to meet people’s basic needs and respond to the corrosive impacts of the crisis. It has also been fuelled by the identification of the State with the policies driving austerity. On the other hand, another set of responses has emphasized increased collaboration between various levels of government and civil society based on diverse engagement strategies, political objectives and channels of accountability.

i) Mapping of political tendencies

These diverse political tendencies mark out a **complicated terrain of relationships during the crisis era in Greece, influencing not only the dialogue between people’s responses and government responses, but also between people’s responses themselves.** Table 2.2 presents some structure to this dialogue, identifying a diverse spectrum of ‘people’s responses’ which imply a different set of relationships with the State, the agri-food system, and austerity.

This broad spectrum shows that the broad categorization of ‘people’s responses’ requires further nuance and elaboration. What is striking, for example, from both the fieldwork findings and a broader literature review, is how **many of these so-called people’s responses have emerged without any government help or support** (and at times have emerged even in the context of a hostile State). This emphasis on self-organization and self-management most identified with the autonomous and transformative positions can most accurately be described as being truly **grassroots responses** to the crisis. This stands in contrast to the **civil society and NGO responses** that underpin the reformist

position, which not only differ from grassroots responses in their institutionalization and social, political and economic arrangements but are also far more prone to co-optation and elite capture. **This distinction thus helps us move away from the simplistic States–markets–civil society triangulation for understanding the causes and consequences of austerity towards a more profound analysis of the way in which power has been organized and mobilized to either enable or counter austerity.**

From this perspective, the grassroots responses aligned with tendencies 1 and especially 2 (autonomous and transformative) in **Table 2. 2** are the most politically exciting. This is not just because they have in fact formed the main thrust of ‘people’s responses’ to the crisis, but also for the promise they hold for accountability and social justice. Similarly, examples that are geared towards convergence, focusing on collaboration between different actors and mobilizing networks and resources to provide an alternative to a ‘business as usual approach’, can serve as models of inspiration (see **Box 2.3**).

Table 2.2 Different political tendencies*

Tendency	Relationship with the State	Relationship with agri–food system	Relationship with austerity	Examples
1. Autonomous	Not interested in engaging with State/central/ government authorities	Total transformation based on the practices/ materiality of food sovereignty	Opposed; focus on building up people’s- controlled infrastructure to combat impacts on the ground	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Some eco-communities - SSE structures in squats or social centres
2. Transformative	Sceptical; interested in building up power from below in order to ‘reclaim the State’	New form of food politics based on the principles of food sovereignty and the Right to Food	Austerity opposed within a broader counter-hegemonic project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ‘No intermediaries’ movement - Social and Solidarity Economy - Community Supported Agriculture
3. Reformist	Working with/ pressure on the State to enact supportive public policies	Transition towards a more sustainable system to ensure food security	Concerned with harm caused by austerity; obligation of the State to meet the needs of the poorest and most vulnerable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Social groceries - School meals - Food banks

* This table functions as a heuristic device for understanding some of the different dynamics within the broad umbrella of ‘people’s responses’. As such, these categories represent ‘ideal types’ and examples do not conform perfectly or exclusively to these tendencies. In reality, many of these examples cut across different tendencies and are characterized by a high degree of nuance and complexity.

BOX 2.3

Karditsa's 'ecosystem of collaboration'

Karditsa, a region situated in the heart of rural Greece, is one of the best known for agricultural production. While the ravages of austerity have perhaps not reached the levels observed in Athens or Thessaloniki, the crisis has nevertheless been felt acutely: in the city of Karditsa, a local soup kitchen has seen the number of people it serves rise to 130 (up from 80 people before the crisis). And similar to elsewhere in Greece farmers in the Karditsa region have been hit by dramatic increases in their cost of production, higher taxes, and stagnant or even declining incomes. In total, there are 9,000 people living below the poverty line in the region.²⁵

The Karditsa municipality has also been hit, as all sources of investment for development dried up, with banks closing, investment from central government being withdrawn, and local businesses suffering. As Vassileios Bellis, head of the Karditsa Development Agency, describes it: "Our turnover reduced to 1/3 of the one before the crisis. So, the two thirds of well-trained young colleagues stopped their cooperation with the agency. The year 2011 was the worst of our history. Our balance sheet was negative for the first time".²⁶

Despite these very difficult circumstances, one of the strengths of the response to the crisis in the Karditsa region has been a commitment to partnership, cooperation, and the mobilization of collective funds in a strategy called 'the ecosystem of collaboration'. This ecosystem approach seeks, in the framework of a 'Social Economy', to activate local resources and activities, establish new cooperatives and social enterprises, and encourage citizens to work together in areas such as rural tourism, agricultural production, and the marketing of local products.

One component of this strategy has been the cooperative banks, some of which such as the Karditsa Cooperative Bank have gone against the grain and managed to successfully expand and increase their loans to farmers for the purchase of farm equipment, light processing units, rural development plans, etc, despite a very harsh economic climate in which many other standard commercial banks were closing. The Cooperative Bank of Thessaly has, for example, been supporting ThesGALA, a large dairy cooperative based in Larisa with automatic vending machines and more recently corner shops (run without intermediaries) in Larisa, Athens and Thessaloniki.

The rest of this chapter will look at some of the challenges and opportunities facing these grassroots responses in terms of countering austerity and violations of the Right to Food. Two stand out in particular: i) the mobilization of people within the framework of 'solidarity'; and ii) the building up of real material power, infrastructural capacity, and organized resistance to challenge the status quo.

ii) Contested meanings of solidarity in times of crisis

Solidarity has become a key mobilizing framework within which many grassroots responses have articulated their demands and aspirations. This is closely interwoven with the broader movement for a social and solidarity economy (SSE). * At its most transformative, the SSE

* There is a vast and rich literature on the concept and practices of the social and solidarity economy. In this report, the SSE is understood as economic arrangements that rely on social or peer-to-peer services that embody a critique of conventional economic imperatives and instead put emphasis on principles of reciprocity and on combatting fragmentation and exclusion. The SSE encompasses a range of initiatives such as time banks, social clinics and pharmacies, anti-middlemen markets, etc.

movement offers a notion of 'solidarity' that is distinct from charity as it explicitly seeks a reorientation of the social relationships and logics underpinning capitalist market economies. It is also distinct in that, rather than seeking to replace the State and fill its gaps, many SSE activists (although not all) seek directly to engage, challenge and thereby transform the State based on a clear vision, political agenda and set of 'institutional weapons'. This is a very different understanding – particularly in a time of austerity – than that of a third sector, 'Big Society' volunteerism acting in between the State and the market.

In developing new forms of mutuality outside the traditional orthodoxy of States and markets, the SSE movement is both a reaction to reality, as well as pointing the way for what might be. Rakopoulos (2014) identifies here a type of dialectical relationship between crisis and solidarity as 'solidarity economies in Greece arise in the midst and against markets in crises'.²⁷ This points to the revolutionary and emancipatory potential of the SSE movement and its ability to prefigure a new and transformative set of economic and social arrangements that transcend the present period of austerity. **Box 2.4** gives a broad sketch of the range and scale of SSE initiatives related to food and agriculture in Greece.

Despite this clear framework afforded by the SSE movement, this has not stopped others from hijacking the meaning of solidarity. Food distributions which may at first glance appear similar to those carried out by the 'no intermediaries' movement have, for example, also been carried out by the church, private capital, and the neo-Nazi party 'Golden Dawn'. While drawing on a superficial (and false) notion of 'solidarity', these kinds of distributions are more accurately viewed through the lenses of charity, entrepreneurship and xenophobia. This speaks to the 'symbolic battlefield' regarding notions of solidarity and food sovereignty, and who is and who is not in solidarity with whom.²⁸ **Boxes 2.5 and 2.6** below give two very different snapshots of how this symbolic battlefield is playing out.



BOX 2.4

An overview of the social and solidarity economy related to food and agriculture in Greece

According to the General Register of SSE Entities (which registers all SSE initiatives that conform to the criteria set out by law 4430/2016 on SSE), there are currently **1,053** SSE entities in Greece (data valid as from 31 August 2017).^{*} More than **240** (23% of the total) are involved in producing, processing and distributing food or providing services supporting these operations. The number of SSE initiatives has significantly risen during the years of the crisis: in 2013, **372** social enterprises were registered while in the years 2014, 2015 and 2016 these rose to **585**, **714** and **907** respectively. Another SSE mapping report (2018)²⁹ commissioned by the General Secretariat for SSE (Ministry of Labour, Social Security and Social Solidarity) put the number slightly lower, estimating active SSE entities with legal form between **836** and **936**. It confirmed, however, the findings that most SSE initiatives were created in the past five years, and that the most common sectors of their activity are food processing and commerce.

Data about initiatives with no legal form (referred to as informal initiatives) are more difficult to find and are generally the least reliable. According to the same mapping report, there are **400–600** informal SSE initiatives throughout the country. Another mapping of the broad SSE field (both formal and informal) in the agri-food sector was initiated by the news site Enallaktikos.gr in 2013. These results^{**} show the following types and numbers of initiatives:

Type of SSE activity	No. of estimated initiatives
Women's cooperatives (agri-food sector)	140
Seed banks	75
Soup kitchens (self-organized/informal, churches, municipalities)	463
Social groceries	179
Eco-communities	79
Eco-festivals	37
No-intermediaries markets	121

* Data about the officially recognized SSE entities as stated in the law 4430/2016 are taken from the 'Annual Report 2017 & Action Plan for the Development of the Ecosystem of Social and Solidarity Economy 2017-2023', Special Secretariat for Social and Solidarity Economy, Ministry of Labour, Social Security & Social Solidarity, August 2017, and from the General Register of SSE. The data do not reflect the multitude of SSE initiatives in Greece, as they exclude all initiatives with no legal status such as CSAs and 'no intermediaries' markets, as well as initiatives that do not fulfil the criteria set out in the law.

** These findings should be treated with a considerable degree of caution given that they are based on forms of self-reporting and self-identification by the SSE initiatives. The volatile times that these initiatives have had to endure also mean that since 2013 many of these initiatives have disappeared or are no longer active.

BOX. 2.5

Solidarity for some, but not for others: Food distributions and the rise of ‘Golden Dawn’

Solidarity is not an uncontested term and with the deepening of human suffering in the midst of severe economic hardship and the migrant crisis, it is perhaps not surprising that its meaning became narrowed and highly politicized. The rise of the far-right, neo-Nazi party ‘Golden Dawn’ in Greece – which won 7% of the vote in the national elections of July 2012 – can in many ways be seen as a darker expression of a solidarity that is extended to some, but not to others. Using food distributions as a political tool, Golden Dawn set about organizing soup kitchens and ‘solidarity’ trading initiatives. These were, however, exclusively intended for the Greek poor and contingent upon registration of their ID numbers. It is clear that this kind of ‘from-Greeks-for-Greeks-only’ racist populism is markedly different from the universal solidarity model of the SSE initiatives in which solidarity is based on reciprocity, active involvement and has a deeply rooted non-discriminatory character. Nevertheless, it is evident that solidarity (or at least its appeal) does not necessarily channel itself automatically into politically progressive realms, particularly during times of political radicalization driven by austerity and the economic crisis.

BOX 2.6

Solidarity with refugees: the case of ‘Solidarity Farmlands’

Solidarity Farmlands is an initiative started by a group of refugees and local Greeks who have reclaimed abandoned plots of land, after an agreement with the owners, in an area 70 km northwest of Athens, known as Kaparelli. The land is either provided to them for free or they rent it by paying in kind with their products (for example 50% of the oil produced from the olive trees). This collective effort serves three purposes:

- To cover the basic food needs of refugees living in housing squats in Athens (five buildings currently hosting 800 residents). Refugees from the housing squats can work in the fields in order to produce food for the squats. Through this initiative, the housing squats now cover all their needs in potatoes, olive oil, onions, tomato sauce and legumes/pulses, as well as some needs in seasonal vegetables.
- To create a sustainable economic activity and a source of income for refugees who can work in the fields and sell their products in self-organized (weekly and fortnightly) markets without intermediaries in Athens. In one market they usually make approximately €80–90 but sometimes as much as €180 or even €250.
- To create a circular economy with a cooperative store and a restaurant collective where products can be sold or served. This way they can self-manage the entire food chain from the field to the plate and create cooperative jobs throughout the food chain for refugees and local people who don't own land.

In addition, they are also involved in humanitarian work, by offering food products to soup kitchens like ‘The Other Human’ and a church in Athens, and by generally supporting families in need in the village where the farmland is located. They currently support seven Greek families in Kaparelli, by offering food and clothing.

The two contrasting examples provide a cautionary note against the over-simplification and romanticizing of the term 'solidarity' (which risks becoming something of a catch-all phrase to describe the flip-side to austerity). It is therefore perhaps more useful to situate solidarity initiatives as one of many distinct and often antagonistic projects of remaking society that have emerged in austerity-era Greece. In 'unpacking solidarity' (as opposed to romanticizing or professionalizing it), one can better appreciate the way in which solidarity organizes a particular response to austerity, functioning as a 'conceptual bridge' between society and understandings of the self in times of crisis and so offering an 'alternative horizon' aimed at combating alienation and atomization.³⁰ This also helps guard against the misappropriation of the concept of solidarity by actors such as Golden Dawn or in the conflation of solidarity and charity-based initiatives.

iii Towards social justice and accountability: building up counter-power from below

It is clear that the contested terrain of austerity and the responses to it, pose many questions, not only for the future of the Greek agricultural and food system, but also for Greek and even European society at large. In this arena, notions of solidarity, redistribution, and social justice vie with models of charity and social welfare while projects for 'reclaiming the State' to make it more accountable, representative, and democratic must compete with strategies for active distancing from the State based on a desire for popular sovereignty, autonomy, and radical self-determination.

There is no easy answer to these complex and open questions. As different impulses have prevailed at different times, a whole array of voices have emerged to shape the response to austerity – 'From NGO's, religious institutions, charities, start-ups, corporate responsibility schemes etc. who in collaboration with local and central government authorities gradually give shape to the (neo-liberal) "civil" or "big society", to a new generation of self-managed cooperatives, grassroots solidarity structures, eco-communities, refugee squats,... commons etc. that attempt to challenge the domination of the capitalist organization of life'.³¹

This Report aims to bring some structure to this broad spectrum of responses by identifying different impulses: from State, non-State actors and civil society (e.g. humanitarian, philanthropic, solidarity-based) as well as different political tendencies (in terms of their positioning regarding austerity and the agri-food system). While it would be too simplistic to align solely with any one particular impulse or tendency, **among the most promising responses are those that have managed to not only build a popular resistance to austerity but also, through innovative practices and social experimentation, generate new infrastructures and ways of doing things.** In this regard, the responses shaped by the grassroots SSE movement have, arguably, been the most profound for 'It consisted the means devised by a society in its effort to stand on its feet, to stand up against the memorandums' dictates, policies and effects of (financial, social, political) exclusion and, most importantly, to experiment with building its own collective answers and structures'.³²

In creating this counter-power from below based on people-managed infrastructures, it is possible to also imagine a **new politics of convergence** emerging whereby the autonomous and transformative grassroots responses (types 1 and 2 in Table 2. 2 above) can combine forces, aligning tactically with the reformist (type 3) tendencies, to help push for a truly regenerative food politics that would extend beyond demands for affordable food prices and farmer protection towards genuinely challenging the structural power of, for example, dominant retail chains.

While progress, change, and transformation of the food system are seen at the grassroots, these have unfolded against a backdrop of public policies that have largely failed the people of Greece. The right to food is the right to feed oneself in dignity. It is clear from the SSE initiatives, and many of the people's responses and alternatives, that there is no expectation that the government hand out free food and support everyone, but rather to create the possibility for people to meet their own needs, their own resources, and in conditions which make sense for their lives – whether through community and solidarity initiatives and markets, producing food, or simply having a job, that provide sufficient income to pay rent and feed one's family.

The lack of trust in government programmes stems from a lack of accountability to rights-holders. The way in which public money is spent and the decisions regarding how public programmes are managed should be determined transparently, based on participatory processes, and most importantly allow for monitoring and mechanisms for redress. Such mechanisms cannot exist when domestic policies are dictated by external economic agencies.

Satisfying the long-term needs of the population while also meeting the demands of the Troika and the 'free market' have led the Greek government to focus on responses that fail to provide long-term solutions, offering occasional assistance to some low-income people while slashing pensions and public jobs, leaving non-State actors to try to fill the gaping holes with charity. Needless to say, the economic transformation promised through austerity did not work.

Decisions which have had a huge impact on people's incomes and pensions, jobs, education, and health care have largely ignored the real issues and experiences of the people of Greece. If we look at what is working, it is clear that there are spaces of transformation and change, and practices which can be scaled up to better meet the needs of the Greek people – rooted in solidarity and horizontal decision-making. And while these models will not work for everyone or every circumstance, it is important that State actors better understand what people require of policies that address their needs, in particular those groups and people who are often most marginalized in policy making. Changing the reality for people's lives requires processes by which these realities are reflected in policies, and where spaces of accountability are created.

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Chapter 3.

Violations of the right to food

Chapters 1 and 2 examined some of the specific measures taken within the scope of the various MoUs and their impact not only on the people in Greece, but also on the re-shaping – and partial destruction – of the country's food sector, and the resulting effects on the rural population. These measures included agricultural taxes and social security regimes, the push towards privatization and trade liberalization (affecting the retail and wholesale food trade and including the sale of the Agricultural Bank of Greece), a new land tax, agricultural labour conditions and income, among others.¹ This Report outlines the impact of austerity measures on the Greek food and agricultural system, and how these have impeded the enjoyment of the human right to food in Greece. It exposes how access to and control over natural resources have been affected, thus impeding the realization of the right to food.²

The impact of austerity measures on the rights enshrined in the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), has been acknowledged by the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR):

The adoption of fiscal consolidation programmes may be necessary for the implementation of economic and social rights. If such programmes are not implemented with full respect for human rights standards and do not take into account the obligations of States towards the rights holders, however, they may adversely affect a range of rights protected by the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. Most at risk are **labour rights**, including the **right to work** (Art. 6), the **right to just and favourable conditions of work**, including the **right to fair wages and to a minimum wage** that provides workers with a decent living for themselves and their families (Art. 7), the **right to collective bargaining** (Art. 8), the **right to social security**, including unemployment benefits, social assistance and old-age pensions (Arts. 9 and 11), the **right to an adequate standard of living**, including the **right to food** and the **right to housing** (Art. 11), the **right to health** and access to adequate health care (Art. 12) and the **right to education** (Arts. 13-14).³

The CESCR further commented on groups most likely to be affected by these measures:

Low-income families, especially those **with children**, and **workers with the lowest qualifications** are disproportionately affected by measures such as job cuts, minimum wage freezes and cutbacks in social assistance benefits, which potentially result in discrimination on the grounds of social origin or property (Art. 2 (2)). Moreover, reductions in the levels of public services or the introduction of or increase in user fees in areas such as childcare, and preschool education, public utilities and family support services have a disproportionate impact on **women**, and thus may amount to a step backwards in terms of gender equality (Arts. 3 and 10).⁴

In relation to the disproportionate impact of austerity measures on women and hence the exacerbation of gender-based inequality, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) also affirmed that:

[...] legislation addressing gender-based violence against women is non-existent, inadequate or poorly implemented. An erosion of the legal and policy frameworks that aim to eliminate gender-based discrimination or violence, often justified in the name of tradition, culture, religion or fundamentalist ideology, and *significant reductions in public spending, often as part of so-called “austerity measures” following economic and financial crises*, further weaken States’ responses.⁵

Almost 20 years earlier, the CESCR had already pointed out that economic sanctions can negatively affect economic, social and cultural rights.⁶

According to the CESCR, an important obligation is to use ‘maximum available resources’ for the realization of the rights and the proportionality of measures being taken. If a government decides to undertake significant public spending cuts, it must be able to prove that these are vital for the general welfare. This means that any retrogressive measure ‘must be necessary and proportionate, in the sense that the adoption of any other policy, or a failure to act, would be more detrimental to economic, social and cultural rights’⁷. This principle is derived from the provisions in the ICESCR⁸ and was further interpreted by the CESCR⁹, as is clear from the earlier discussion on retrogressive measures.¹⁰

Eurozone Member States and the so-called Troika – the European Commission (EC), the European Central Bank (ECB) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) – have been key actors in negotiating the austerity measures with Greece and, in view of the harm these measures have caused, they bear explicit human rights responsibilities.

This chapter first explains the international obligations of the Greek State with regard to the right to food. As austerity is generally characterized by retrogressive measures (e.g. cuts in social spending), this section also looks more closely at the prohibition on such measures and the underlying obligations. It then goes on to examine the lenders’ obligations in terms of the realization of the right to food and other economic, social and cultural rights, including the extraterritorial obligations of the Eurozone Member States and the Troika. Finally, referring to the measures described in **Chapters 1 and 2**, it identifies breaches of these obligations in the context of austerity.

3.1 Greece’s international obligations on the right to adequate food: the prohibition on retrogressive measures

As Article 1 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) affirms, ‘[all] human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights’. Human dignity is the cornerstone of human rights instruments. By ratifying them, or simply because these are by now customary (or *jus cogens*), Greece is obliged to realize these human rights. These obligations include the progressive realization of socio-economic rights with the maximum available resources, which *prima facie* prohibits retrogressive measures.¹¹ Second, all measures should be underpinned by the principle of non-discrimination. Third, Greece must comply with its obligation of international cooperation whereby States must jointly create an enabling environment for the realization of human rights.¹² Austerity measures affect this environment.¹³

Furthermore, States have a threefold obligation to respect, protect and fulfil all human rights enshrined in these instruments.¹⁴

As a State party of several international human rights instruments,¹⁵ in particular those enshrining economic, social and cultural rights, Greece has the obligation to respect, protect and fulfil such rights.¹⁶ With regard to economic, social and cultural rights, dimensions demanding specific administrative and financial capacity for their implementation – especially regarding those related to the obligation to fulfil the right to food and related economic, social and cultural rights – allow States Parties to realize them progressively, but require them to do so as fast as possible.¹⁷ According to Art. 2 of the ICESCR and as part of its international obligation, Greece is obliged to take steps to achieve progressively the full realization of the economic, social and cultural rights of the people under its jurisdiction. Other dimensions, such as the obligation to respect, protect and non-discrimination, are of immediate application.¹⁸ Under Art. 2.1 of the ICESCR, Greece is prevented from adopting retrogressive measures that either limit or reduce existing levels of enjoyment of the enshrined right. Such measures may be undertaken only in very specific conditions, as explained in CESCR General Comments No. 18¹⁹ and No. 3.²⁰ The prohibition of retrogression is a critical principle in the context of austerity and is therefore analysed in depth.

As illustrated in **Chapter 1**, a wide set of austerity measures have this retrogressive character, which amounts to a violation of the ICESCR, as extensively emphasized by the CESCR.²¹ The prohibition of retrogression is intrinsically linked to the principle of progressive realization. Whereas States Parties to the ICESCR are to aim for the full, quick and effective realization of economic, social and cultural (ESC) rights (progressive realization), conversely, the prohibition of retrogression forbids any measure impeding the realization of entrenched rights. As further argued by Magdalena Sepúlveda, a deliberate retrogressive measure refers to 'any measure that implies a step back in the level of protection accorded to the rights contained in the Covenant which is the consequence of an intentional decision by the State'.²² The CESCR furthermore specifies that States Parties must be able to demonstrate that retrogressive measures are compatible with the Covenant. In its General Comment No. 3, the CESCR specifies that the State taking deliberate retrogressive measures must prove that, first, the measures were considered carefully, second, the evaluation of the impact of retrogressive measure complied with all rights enshrined in the ICESCR, and, third, that all available resources have been included or considered.

Furthermore, retrogressive measures may not have any form of discriminatory scope, which implies that they must not negatively affect (the most) vulnerable groups.²³ In this sense, if such measures have a discriminatory impact, the State must take specific measures to *avoid or counterbalance* such impacts. The failure to do so violates the obligation of non-discrimination. The CESCR specified that these measures 'must *not be discriminatory* and must comprise all possible measures, including tax measures, to support social transfers to mitigate inequalities that can grow in times of crisis and to ensure that the *rights of the disadvantaged and marginalized individuals and groups* are not disproportionately affected'.²⁴

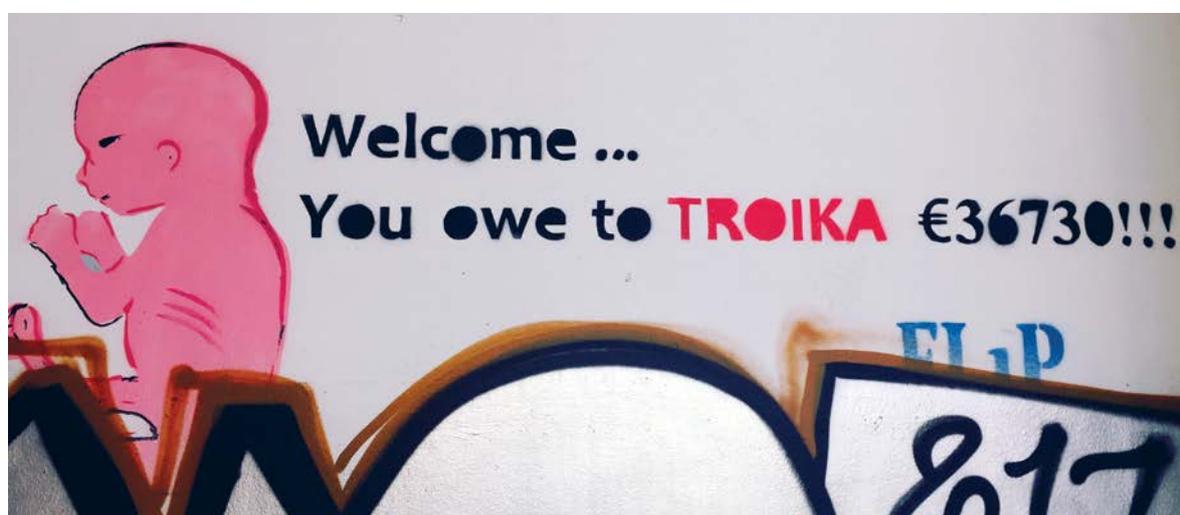
The CESCR has recognized in different General Comments the prohibition of retrogressive measures that interfere with the minimum essential levels of ESC rights,²⁵ and described the conditions for their justification even more distinctly in its General Comment on the Right to social security:

The Committee will look carefully at whether: (a) there was reasonable justification for the action; (b) alternatives were comprehensively examined; (c) there was genuine participation of affected groups in examining the proposed measures and alternatives; (d) the measures were directly or indirectly discriminatory; (e) the measures will have a sustained impact on the realization of the right to social security, an unreasonable impact on acquired social security rights or whether an individual or group is deprived of access to the minimum essential level of social security; and (f) whether there was an independent review of the measures at the national level.²⁶

In the case of the measures outlined in **Chapter 1** and in **Box 3.1** below that have a retrogressive dimension,²⁷ and founded on the above-mentioned elements,²⁸ Greece would have violated its obligations regarding retrogressive measures if it *cannot prove* that:

1. an assessment of the impact of the measures on all rights enshrined in the ICESCR was undertaken;
2. the adoption of retrogressive measures is necessary and proportionate, in the sense that the adoption of any other policy, or a failure to act, would be more detrimental to economic, social and cultural rights;
3. such retrogressive measures remain strictly temporary;
4. such measures do not result in discrimination or increased inequalities;
5. such measures do not affect the minimum core content of the rights protected under the Covenant;
6. the measures have no discriminatory impact on especially (the most) vulnerable groups;
7. those concerned by the measures have had the opportunity to participate in the discussion about these measures and their alternatives;
8. such measures occurred through, or on the basis of, a law.

Such standards bind the Greek State – but also the negotiating partners – throughout the negotiation and conclusion of all bailout agreements and their subsequent implementation.²⁹



BOX 3.1.

Retrogressive Measures Taken by Greece

The economic austerity measures implemented in Greece from 2010 were largely based on economic and market analysis and had deep impacts on the lives of people throughout the country, including the damage caused to the food system. The government is obliged to ensure that economic policy respects its human rights obligations, including non-discrimination, progressive realization of economic, social and cultural rights and non-retrogression, and the requirement that policy design and implementation upholds the principles of participation, transparency and accountability. What we have witnessed in Greece with implementation of austerity measures is the lack of respect for human rights principles and economic policies that prioritize financial interests over citizens' rights and needs.

Through the lens of the Right to Food in Greece, we can identify violations of human rights, both nationally and extraterritorially. And while the human rights analysis will largely focus on access to food, this Report outlines the continuing impacts of the austerity measures on Greek society as well as within the food system – affecting producers, retail, and consumers.

Some retrogressive measures taken include the following:

- During the 2010–2018 period, under pressure from the Troika, public spending was cut through reducing the wage bill, including overall income reduction with the elimination of the 13th and the 14th-month wage for public-sector employees in 2010, as well as a series of pension cuts.³⁰
- Public investment cut, as was spending in crucial sectors, such as education and health.
- The first Memorandum claimed that high minimum wages in Greece were hindering the competitiveness of the Greek economy³¹ and therefore required authorities to freeze minimum wages for three years³² and introduce other measures such as restricting collective bargaining, sub-minimum wages, easing of rules on dismissal, and making temporary and part-time work regulations more flexible in order to depress wages.³³
- Minimum wages were reduced in 2012 by 22–32%: from €751 a month to €586 or €511 for workers under 25.³⁴

The combination of several retrogressive measures had a major adverse impact on people's livelihoods.

In addition, general costs increased:

- Despite the precarity felt by a huge proportion of the population, for a significant part of the crisis (until 2013), food prices in Greece kept rising faster than in the Eurozone, despite the sharp fall in domestic incomes and labour costs.³⁵
- The introduction of the meagre social and solidarity income scheme (coinciding with the end of other measures) confronted households with difficult choices and failed to address poverty.³⁶
- New agricultural tax and a social security regime associated with higher costs of production, reduced incomes and created greater uncertainty.³⁷
- Moreover, the current plan requires a 3.5% fiscal surplus until 2022 and a 2.2% fiscal surplus until 2060, meaning that the Greek economy will be subjected to a continuous austerity plan, with no possibility to achieve sufficient growth or (re)gain independence of multinational corporate interests and foreign investment.

As wages fell by 25%, unemployment increased from 7.3% to 27.9% between 2008 and 2013.³⁸ By April 2018, unemployment was 20%,³⁹ more than twice the average Eurozone rate of 8.5%.⁴⁰ Successive wage cuts and tax hikes brought massive lay-offs, erosion of labour standards, increased job insecurity, and widespread precariousness, with low-paid and flexible jobs in which women and young people are disproportionately clustered.⁴¹ **The crisis also disproportionately hit women and migrants**, including a rise in dismissals due to pregnancy and maternity leave and unfair policy measures that discriminate against women, as reported by CEDAW.⁴²

Due to these measures, some of the core elements of the right to food – access to adequate food – have been infringed (see **Box 3.2**).

BOX 3.2

Normative Content of the Right to Food

Article 11 of the ICESCR states:

1. The States Parties to the present Covenant recognize the right of everyone to an adequate standard of living for himself and his family, including adequate food, clothing and housing, and to the continuous improvement of living conditions. The States Parties will take appropriate steps to ensure the realization of this right, recognizing to this effect the essential importance of international co-operation based on free consent.
2. The States Parties to the present Covenant, recognizing the fundamental right of everyone to be free from hunger, shall take, individually and through international co-operation, the measures, including specific programmes, which are needed:
 - (a) To improve methods of production, conservation and distribution of food by making full use of technical and scientific knowledge, by disseminating knowledge of the principles of nutrition and by developing or reforming agrarian systems in such a way as to achieve the most efficient development and utilization of natural resources;
 - (b) Taking into account the problems of both food-importing and food-exporting countries, to ensure an equitable distribution of world food supplies in relation to need.

Clarifying further the content of this right in its General Comment No. 12 on the right to adequate food, the CESCR stated that '[the] right to adequate food is realized when every man, woman and child, alone or in community with others, has physical and economic access at all times to adequate food or means for its procurement'.⁴³ The human right to food also encompasses several dimensions that need to be fulfilled, such as the availability of food⁴⁴ and the accessibility of food. The latter dimension not only encompasses physical accessibility, but also economic accessibility. General Comment No. 12 is explicit on this regard:

*Economic accessibility implies that personal or household financial costs associated with the acquisition of food for an adequate diet should be at a level such that the attainment and satisfaction of other basic needs are not threatened or compromised. Economic accessibility applies to any acquisition pattern or entitlement through which people procure their food and is a measure of the extent to which it is satisfactory for the enjoyment of the right to adequate food. [...].*⁴⁵

A wide variety of international instruments addresses different dimensions of the right to adequate food.⁴⁶ In reaction to the World Food Summit organized by FAO in 1996, **the Committee on Economic, Social and Social Rights issued its General comment No. 12 (1999)**, which defines the right to food: *The right to adequate food is realized when every man, woman and child, alone or in community with others, has physical and economic access at all times to adequate food or means for its procurement.*

In 2004, FAO's member countries adopted the Voluntary Guidelines to Support the Progressive Realization of the Right to Adequate Food in the Context of National Food Security (Right to Food Guidelines), providing practical guidance to States in their implementation of the right to adequate food. Articles 55 and 56 of the UN Charter are relevant to the Right to Food Guidelines.

The right to food is an inclusive right. It is not simply a right to a minimum ration of calories, proteins and other specific nutrients. It is a right to all nutritional elements that a person needs to live a healthy and active life, and to the means to access them. The holders of the right to food are individuals and communities. This means, in practice, that every person or group of persons is entitled to this fundamental human right.

The right to food encompasses two separate norms contained in Article 11 of the ICESCR: the right to adequate food and the fundamental right of everyone to be free from hunger. It is not about being fed, but primarily about the right to feed themselves. It is not reduced to the access to safe food, but to adequate food (including qualitative, quantitative, culturally, biodiverse and according to gender and age). It is also different from food security and food sovereignty, since it implies the possibility of the people to hold their governments accountable for the violation of their right to food.

It is important to emphasize certain core elements of the right to food. Food must be available, accessible, adequate and sustainable:

Availability requires that food should be available from natural resources and available for sale in markets and shops.

Accessibility requires economic and physical access to food to be guaranteed. Economic accessibility means that food must be affordable. Physical accessibility means that food should be accessible to all, including to the physically vulnerable, such as children, the sick, persons with disabilities or the elderly, for whom it may be difficult to obtain food. Access to food must also be guaranteed to people in remote areas and to victims of armed conflicts or natural disasters, as well as to prisoners.

Adequacy (and acceptability) means that the food must satisfy dietary needs, taking into account the individual's age, living conditions, health, occupation, sex, etc. Food should also be safe for human consumption and free from adverse substances, such as contaminants from industrial or agricultural processes, including residues from pesticides, hormones or veterinary drugs. Adequate food should also be culturally acceptable. For example, food containing food that is religious or cultural taboo for the recipients or inconsistent with their eating habits would not be culturally acceptable. Food shall also take into account gendered needs.

Sustainability: food production and consumption should be socially, economically and environmentally sustainable, which means that its production and consumption should not have a negative impact on the enjoyment of the right to food and nutrition of future generations, cause environmental degradation or exert a negative impact on the economic accessibility of such generations.

The *right to adequate food and nutrition* shall therefore not be interpreted in a narrow or restrictive sense which equates it with a minimum package of calories, proteins and other specific nutrients. The *right to adequate food* will have to be realized progressively. However, States have a core obligation to take the necessary action to mitigate and alleviate hunger even in times of natural or other disasters.

State parties' obligations

There are three general obligations of States:

The first is the obligation to take steps to achieve *progressively* the full realization of the right to adequate food. This imposes an obligation to move as expeditiously as possible towards that goal and includes an implicit *prima facie* prohibition of retrogressive measures.⁴⁷

The second is the obligation of non-discrimination, which means that persons shall not be treated in a different manner based on race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status and that those who are *de facto* discriminated shall be supported through affirmative measures, which allow them to eliminate such discriminatory situations and guarantee material equality.⁴⁸

The third is the obligation of international assistance and cooperation,⁴⁹ which includes among others that States shall work together to create an enabling environment for the realization of the right to food and nutrition.

Furthermore, States have three specific obligations:

The obligation to respect requires States Parties to refrain from taking any measure – through actions, policies or the failure to act of its own agencies and public officials – that may result in preventing or denying individuals or groups to provide food for themselves.

The obligation to protect requires the adoption of specific legislative or other measures regulating third parties' activities so as to ensure that they do not negatively affect peoples' enjoyment of the right to food. This include the adoption of laws and policies, implementation of monitoring mechanisms, investigation of allegations, provision of remedies for the affected and sanctions for the perpetrators.

The obligation to fulfil means that States Parties must take positive measures to facilitate and provide for individuals' enjoyment of their rights. Facilitating the realization of the right to food requires more far reaching measures on the part of the government in that it has actively to seek to identify vulnerable populations and implement policies and programmes to improve these people's access to food and their capacity to feed themselves. The obligation to fulfil the right to food by providing food directly will only apply at times and for persons or groups that are not able to exercise their right to food by their own means. The obligation to provide also includes the obligation to ensure, as a minimum, that no one in a country suffers from hunger and to establish strategies for people to recover or create their capacity to feed themselves in case this is feasible.⁵⁰ In a number of its recent General Comments, the CESCR considered that the obligation to fulfil also incorporates an obligation to promote. The State should promote awareness of human rights among its own agents and private actors. In recent years, the need to clarify State obligations and responsibilities for actions taken by themselves and also by other actors outside their borders has become stronger.

Some measures at these different levels of obligations of States parties are of a more immediate nature, while others are more of a long-term character, to achieve progressively the full realization of the right to food and nutrition.

The following are underlying determinants of the right to food and nutrition:

- **The right to health:** Nutrition is a component of both the right to health and the right to food.
- **The right to life:** When people are not able to feed themselves and face the risk of death by starvation, malnutrition or resulting illnesses, their right to life would also be at stake.
- **The right to water:** The right to food cannot be realized if people lack access to safe drinking water for personal and domestic uses.
- **The right to adequate housing:** When a house lacks basic amenities, such as for cooking or storing food, the right to adequate food of its residents may be undermined.

In relation to the obligations of the Greek State, the conditions for the adoption of retrogressive measures derived from the austerity measures were not met as the minimum essential levels of the rights were affected and because the measures were not proportional. Furthermore, in its austerity measures, Greece did not comply with the obligations to progressively realize the rights, non-discrimination and international cooperation to enable the realization of the rights, and the specific obligations to respect, protect and fulfil. The unjustified retrogressive measures impaired the enjoyment of the rights by a great proportion of people in Greece, and particularly by the rural population, and prevented the enjoyment of the right to food because of the violations of the rights to work and social security.

3.2 The Extraterritorial Human Rights Obligations of Eurozone Member States and the Responsibility of the 'Troika'

The MoU were negotiated and signed by Greece and its lenders. The degree of international responsibility of Greece for non-compliance with the ICESCR relates to the level of coercion in these negotiations, i.e. how much leeway Greece had to define the measures or to what extent these were imposed on Greece by Eurozone Member States and the Troika.

In his recently released book, the current European Commissioner for Economic and Financial Affairs, Pierre Moscovici, strongly suggested that there *were not* discussions between equals:

In the room, there are nineteen Finance Ministers, plus the Managing Director of the IMF, Christine Lagarde, Mario Draghi, the President of the ECB, the Managing Director of the ESM, the German Klaus Regling, and myself on behalf of the Commission. Twenty-three people in all, with their deputies, *make – or not – fundamental decisions for millions of others, the Greeks in this case*, on extraordinarily technical parameters, decisions that are beyond democratic control. The Eurogroup is not accountable to any government, to any Parliament, especially not to the European Parliament.⁵¹

Indeed, several publications and reports suggest that Greece had little room for manoeuvre in negotiations regarding the MoU, and that the measures might have been imposed.⁵² It is reasonable to assume that in the context of massive political and economic pressure, Greece was not in a position to protect human rights from the impact of the measures demanded. Yet, within the scope of this human rights analysis, the mere fact that the MoU was signed by both parties places human rights responsibilities and obligations on both sides in relation to (the risk of) adverse impacts on human rights resulting from the MoU measures.

In this section, we discuss the extraterritorial human rights obligations of the Eurozone Member States. States' obligations can be territorial or extraterritorial, depending on whether the rights-holders related to such obligations are within or beyond their borders. There has been considerable work on extraterritorial obligations in human rights law in the UN treaty bodies, regional human rights systems and some courts. A summary of the emerging structures and principles can be found in the 2011 Maastricht Principles on Extraterritorial Obligations of States in the Area of Economic, Social and Rights.⁵³ These are based on international law, with sources given in the Commentary. According to international human rights law, States have the obligation to respect, protect and fulfil human rights not only domestically, but also under certain circumstances beyond borders.⁵⁴ In the context of the adverse human rights impacts in Greece due to the imposed austerity measures, Eurozone Member States and members of the Troika did not fully meet their extraterritorial human rights obligations.

As we will see, States have extraterritorial human rights obligations under certain circumstances, whether acting alone, in cooperation with other States and when acting in international organisations or other international bodies to which they have conferred powers.

It is interesting to note that, for instance, the ICCPR effectively sees obligations on civil and political rights in the *jurisdictions or territories* of the States concerned, which indicates that jurisdiction is not limited to territory. The ICESCR Art. 2 enshrines States Parties' duty to cooperate among States. The rights-holders relevant to such international cooperation are for some cooperation partners extraterritorial and this obligation is therefore extraterritorial. Different human rights bodies as well as the International Court of Justice (ICJ) have elaborated extraterritorial application of human rights in several general comments and decisions.⁵⁵ The recent General Comment No. 24 on States' obligations under the ICESCR in the context of business activities is comprehensive on extraterritorial human rights obligations in this regard.⁵⁶ Furthermore, the European Court on Human Rights has also affirmed the extraterritorial application of human rights in several cases.⁵⁷

The Maastricht Principles, after examining practice of treaty bodies, regional human rights systems, national and international courts, come to the following conclusion on jurisdiction:

A State has obligations to respect, protect and fulfil economic, social and cultural rights in any of the following:

- a) situations over which it exercises authority or effective control, whether or not such control is exercised in accordance with international law;
- b) situations over which State acts or omissions bring about foreseeable effects on the enjoyment of economic, social and cultural rights, whether within or outside its territory;
- c) situations in which the State, acting separately or jointly, whether through its executive, legislative or judicial branches, is in a position to exercise decisive influence or to take measures to realize economic, social and cultural rights extraterritorially, in accordance with international law.⁵⁸

This implies that a State in its capacity as member of an international organization must comply – in all its decision-making processes – with its own pre-existing human rights obligations, territorial and extraterritorial. In its statement on public debt and austerity measures, the ICESCR and the CESCR stipulates the following⁵⁹:

The Committee recalls that States parties making decisions in their capacity as members of international financial institutions or other international organizations cannot ignore their human rights obligations when acting in their capacity as members of these organizations. The Committee has consistently stated that States parties to the Covenant, as well as the relevant United Nations agencies, should make a particular effort to ensure that the protection of the most basic economic, social and cultural rights is, to the maximum extent possible, built into programmes and policies designed to promote adjustment.⁶⁰ The Committee therefore made it clear that States parties to the Covenant have obligations as States members of international financial institutions, in general, and of IMF, in particular. It has reiterated this in various general comments.⁶¹ States parties to the Covenant would be acting in violation of their obligations if they were to delegate powers to IMF or to other agencies and allowed such powers to be exercised without ensuring that they do not infringe on human rights. Similarly, they would be acting in breach of their obligations if they were to exercise their voting rights within such agencies without taking human rights into account. The same duty applies to States that are not parties to the Covenant, under human rights law as part of general international law. States would not be absolved of their responsibility even where, in its capacity as a State member of an international organization, a State would be acting in full accordance with the rules of the organization.⁶²

In the words of the CESCR, it applies not only to an obligation of means,⁶³ but to an obligation of result⁶⁴ in relation to decisions taken in international organizations.⁶⁵ A State must take all reasonable steps to ensure that 'the powers delegated to [an international] organization shall not be exercised in ways that may result in a violation of the human rights that the State has

committed to uphold'.⁶⁶ Accordingly, States have human rights obligations when acting within the ECB and the IMF.

Member States also have to comply with their human rights obligations when they exercise decision-making control in international organizations, for example through their membership on the boards of international financial institutions such as the European Stability Mechanism or IMF. The Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights has underlined that States parties to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights must respect these rights when they are acting as members of international organizations.⁶⁷

Extraterritorial obligations also apply to international organizations under, *inter alia*, general international law and international agreements to which they are parties.⁶⁸ International human rights law applies directly to States as they are parties to these instruments, and not directly to intergovernmental organizations (IGOs). Even so, States must take into account their extraterritorial human rights obligations when acting in IGOs, so that although the latter have their own legal status and are not directly bound by international human rights law, they are not exempted from responsibility in this regard. The vast majority of IMF and ECB members are States Parties to human rights conventions. Clearly, a State would infringe its human rights obligations when IGOs of which it is a member take decisions that would constitute a human rights violation and failed to take all reasonable steps to prevent such decisions.

The dimensions discussed above relate to States' obligation to *respect* human rights, but they also have the obligation to *protect* human rights from the interference of non-State actors over which these States exercise control.⁶⁹ This is the case of the European Financial Stability Facility (EFSF), established in Luxembourg as a *société anonyme* – a public company with limited liability, outside the EU legal framework. The same applies to the establishment of the European Stability Mechanism (ESM). While the State parties to the ESM may have circumvented their obligations under the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, the parties have obligations under the ICESCR and general international law.⁷⁰

Troika members have rejected any responsibility concerning the impact on human rights of the austerity measures in Greece. They argue that the entire and ultimate responsibility for the impacts of austerity rests exclusively with Greece. Within the scope of an adopted resolution,⁷¹ the European Parliament interrogated the Troika members on the role and operations of their actions in diverse Eurozone programme countries, including Greece. To the question '*How much leeway did the countries concerned have to decide upon the design of the necessary measures (consolidation or structural reforms)? Please explain for each country*', the different answers provided are both predictable and fundamentally wrong in this analysis and their excuses are not legally acceptable. They also circumvent talking about the conditionality's 'opaqueness' in the MoU.⁷²

The EC argued that as the MoU is signed by the national authority responsible for its implementation, the entire responsibility for the consequences lies with the authority.⁷³ The ECB said the same thing, underlining that Greece assumes its commitments under the MoU and has both ownership and responsibility for all measures foreseen in the MoU.⁷⁴ They all reject any responsibilities or obligations.

This stance ignores the human rights obligations of the respective Member States who have to take all reasonable steps to ensure that IGOs do not contradict their members' obligations. While there is disagreement on whether and how IGOs are subject to international human rights law, it should be politically obvious that each Troika member should comply with the same human rights obligations as their members.

3.2 (a) Member States of the Euro Area

From 21 April to 3 May 2010, a Troika mission took place following a request by the Greek government for financial assistance. It laid the foundations for the first Economic Adjustment Programme for Greece, henceforth referred to as a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU). On 2 May 2010, the Troika and Greece announced 'an agreement on a three-year programme of economic and financial policies. The Eurogroup unanimously agrees to activate stability support to Greece via bilateral loans centrally pooled by the European Commission'.⁷⁵ On 9 May 2010, the IMF Executive Board unanimously approved a €30 billion 'loan for Greece as a part of a joint European Union-IMF €110 billion financing package'.⁷⁶ The same day, the European Council conclusions confirmed that 'the [European] Commission will coordinate and implement the programme **on behalf and under the instruction of the euro area Member States** and provide the support, including negotiation and signing with Greece, of a Loan Facility Agreement and Memorandum of Understanding regarding policy conditionality'.⁷⁷ In the Loan Facility Act of 8 May 2010, 14 Euro Area Member States were direct Lenders to Greece.⁷⁸ In the case of Germany, the official Lender was the *Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau (KfW)*, 'acting in the public interest, *subject to the instructions of* and with the benefit of the guarantee of *the Federal Republic of Germany*'.⁷⁹

In this regard, the Euro Area Member States have explicit extraterritorial human rights obligations, are bound by international human rights law and are responsible for all human rights violations that result from the imposed measures. They not only violated their extraterritorial obligations on the right to food and other economic, social and cultural rights in Greece (obligations regarding the people in Greece), but possibly also as lenders that have – through the different imposed measures – exercised huge pressure on the Greek State. Finally, in relation to non-State actors they were in a position to control, such as the EFSF, Euro Area Member States failed to regulate them properly in order to avoid human rights violations.⁸⁰

It needs to be highlighted that although the Troika members played a prominent role in the negotiations of MoU, it was the Eurozone Member States who approved the loan agreements.

3.2 (b) International Monetary Fund

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) is an international financial institution (IFI). Although it is not a party to international human rights instruments, the IMF as well as other international organizations are 'bound by any obligations incumbent upon them under general rules of international law, under their constitutions or under international agreements to which they are parties', as specified by the International Court of Justice.⁸¹ Besides, the CESCR argues that IFIs such as the IMF have direct obligations.⁸²

As part of the UN system, the IMF is obliged to comply with the principles of the UN Charter, which includes the progressive realization of human rights. The Charter stipulates purposes and principles for both the UN and its Member States, which include promoting, and encouraging the respect for human rights, as established in Art. 1.3. Furthermore, Art. 57 establishes that: '1. The various specialized agencies, established by inter-governmental agreement and having wide international responsibilities, as defined in their basic instruments, in economic, social, cultural, educational, health, and related fields, shall be brought into relationship with the United Nations in accordance with the provisions of Article 63'.

Furthermore, EU Member States involved in the IMF decisions had the obligation to protect and respect human rights in Greece and so were obliged to conduct impact assessments and follow the criteria for retrogressive measures listed above, before drafting and imposing certain measures.

3.2 (c) European Commission and European Central Bank

Under the loan facility agreement, the EC was charged by EU Member States with the coordination and management of the bilateral loans and to negotiate the MoU with Greece.⁸³

Article 2(1) of this Intercreditor Agreement says:

The Parties agree that the Commission on behalf of the Parties shall negotiate (i) the Loan Facility Agreement under which the Pooled Bilateral Loans will, subject to the terms and conditions set out therein, be made available to the Borrower; (ii) the MoU with the Borrower; and (iii) collect and hold in safe custody any conditions precedents. The Parties (other than Germany) hereby authorise the Commission to sign the Loan Facility Agreement on their behalf, subject to the prior approval by all of them, after having liaised with the ECB. The Parties hereby authorise the Commission to sign the MoU on their behalf, subject to the prior approval by all of them, after having liaised with the ECB. These authorisations and the authorisation referred to in Article 3 shall take immediate effect as of the signature of this Agreement notwithstanding the terms of Article 1(2) above.

The EU institutions are bound to comply with the obligations set out in the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights. Its Article 51(1) stipulates that:

The provisions of this Charter are addressed to the institutions, bodies, offices and agencies of the Union with due regard for the principle of subsidiarity and to the Member States only when they are implementing Union law.

Consequently, the EC had to take into account the Charter requirements. De Schutter and Salomon have argued that although the EC promised that its legislative proposal would comply with the EU Charter, there are concrete doubts about whether it really complies with its international human rights obligations in general.⁸⁴

3.3 Austerity measures violating the human right to food in Greece

Missions to Greece in April 2013 and November-December 2015 by the UN Independent Expert on the effects of foreign debt and other related international financial obligations of States on the full enjoyment of all human rights, particularly economic, social and cultural rights,⁸⁵ described the adverse impact of austerity on human rights.⁸⁶ Further reports and studies have drawn attention to a wide range of human rights being infringed through austerity measures.⁸⁷

This Report indicates the risk that the austerity measures will deny human rights, and Eurozone Member States as well as members of the Troika and Greece itself failed to make the necessary assessments of the risks and their potential consequences and thereby violated their extraterritorial human rights obligations. Furthermore, retrogressive measures are a *prima facie* breach of human rights obligations. In this sense, Greece and the other actors involved carry the burden of proving both that these measures were inevitable and that no other possible measures could have avoided the real risk of harm. Such proof is missing. The human right to adequate food and nutrition was violated by Greece and the Eurozone Member States due to their various retrogressive measures affecting people in Greece overall and rural population in particular (see Chapter 1).

The right to adequate food and nutrition is enshrined in the ICESCR (Art. 11) and its normative content explained in the CESCR General Comment No. 12.⁸⁸

The diverse measures taken and explained in Chapters 1.2 and 1.3 had a negative impact on the right to food in Greece.⁸⁹

Eurozone Members States breached their extraterritorial obligations, and hence violated human rights, in particular the right to food as mentioned above. Within the scope of the MoU, Eurozone Member States have the human rights obligation to respect, and must refrain from any type of direct and – certainly applicable in the present case – indirect interference. As laid out in the Maastricht Principles,

States must refrain from any conduct which a) impairs the ability of another State or international organisation to comply with that State's or that international organisation's obligations as regards economic, social and cultural rights; or b) aids, assists, directs, controls or coerces another State or international organisation to breach that State's or that international organisation's obligations as regards economic, social and cultural rights, where the former States do so with knowledge of the circumstances of the act.⁹⁰

The International Law Commission stipulated in its *Articles on Responsibility of States for Internationally Wrongful Acts* the following:

A State which *aids* or *assists* another State in the commission of an internationally wrongful act by the latter is internationally responsible for doing so if: (a) that State does so with knowledge of the circumstances of the internationally wrongful act; and (b) the act would be internationally wrongful if committed by that State.⁹¹

This general principle is enshrined in substantive rules of international law.⁹² The International Law Commission specified that '[such] situations arise where a State voluntarily assists or aids another State in carrying out conduct which violates the international obligations of the latter, for example, by knowingly providing an essential facility or financing the activity in question'.

As mentioned above, several publications⁹³ examine whether Greece had leeway in co-deciding on the content and implementation. In this sense, it is worth highlighting that, for direct interference, the International Law Commission stated that

[a] State which *directs* and *controls* another State in the commission of an internationally wrongful act by the latter is internationally responsible for that act if: (a) that State does so with knowledge of the circumstances of the internationally wrongful act; and (b) the act would be internationally wrongful if committed by that State.⁹⁴

The implication of Eurozone Member States as 'aiding' or 'assisting' States within the scope of the MoU is an evident and proven fact, which implies their international responsibility. It is reasonable to argue that the role of Eurozone Member States went further than 'aiding' and 'assisting' and approached a 'directing' or 'controlling' role, and to determine how much of the shared responsibility rests with each side.



Endnotes

1. See Chapter 1, Sections 1.2 and 1.3 for a detailed explanation of these measures. In this chapter, some measures will be used in order to explain the human rights violations occurred. See Box 3.1 below.
2. The right to adequate food is enshrined in and recognized by the ICESCR, Art. 11. See also CESCR *General Comment No. 12: The Right to Adequate Food (Art. 11)*, UN Doc. E/C.12/1999/5, 12 May 1999. The normative content of the right to food is explained in Box 3.2 below.
3. *CESCR Statement on Public debt, austerity measures and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights*, UN Doc. E/C.12/2016/1 (22 July 2016), para. 2. (emphasis added)
4. *Ibid.* (emphasis added)
5. *CEDAW General Recommendation No. 35 on gender-based violence against women, updating general recommendation No. 19*, UN Doc. CEDAW/GC/35, 26 July 2017, Art. 7. (emphasis added)
6. *CESCR General Comment No.8*, E/1998/22 (12 December 1997), para. 8.
7. *CESCR Letter dated 16 May 2012 addressed by the Chairperson of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights to States parties to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights*, p.1.
8. ICESCR Articles 2(1), 4 and 5.
9. *CESCR General Comment 3: The nature of States parties obligations (Art. 2, para.1)*, UN. Doc. E/1991/23, 14 December 1990, paras 9 and 10. This was reiterated in the *CESCR General Comment 14: The right to the highest attainable standard of health*; UN Doc. E/C.12/2000/4 (2000), para. 29 which reads: '*In line with article 5.1 [of the ICESCR], such limitations must be proportional, i.e. the least restrictive alternative must be adopted where several types of limitations are available. Even where such limitations on grounds of protecting public health are basically permitted, they should be of limited duration and subject to review.*'
10. See following section.
11. CESCR, Art. 2.1. Retrogressive measures are addressed more extensively below.
12. See ICESCR, Art. 2.1 'Each State Party to the present Covenant undertakes to take steps, individually and *through international assistance and co-operation*, especially economic and technical, to the maximum of its available resources, with a view to achieving progressively the full realization of the rights recognized in the present Covenant by all appropriate means, including particularly the adoption of legislative measures'. (emphasis added), and *CESCR General Comment No. 3: The Nature of States Parties' Obligations (Art. 2.1)*, UN Doc. E/1991/23, 14 December 1990.
13. This aspect is discussed in section 2.
14. See also CESCR General Comment 3, *The Nature of States Parties' Obligations (Art. 2, Para. 1, of the Covenant)*, E/1991/23.
15. International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (accession on 16 May 1985), International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (accession on 5 May 1997) and its Second Optional Protocol (accession on 5 May 1997), Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (ratification on 7 June 1983), International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ratification on 18 June 1970), Convention on the Rights of the Child (ratification on 11 May 1993). The full list of ratification status by Greece can be accessed here: https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/TreatyBodyExternal/Treaty.aspx?CountryID=68&Lang=EN. Greece has neither signed nor ratified the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families.
16. The obligation to *respect* means that States must refrain from interfering with or curtailing the enjoyment of human rights. The obligation to *protect* requires States to protect individuals and groups against human rights violations and abuses by third parties (individuals, private actors, other States...) through regulation, monitoring, investigation, sanction and remedy to the victims. The obligation to *fulfil* means that States must take positive action to facilitate the enjoyment of basic human rights.
17. What is of progressive implementation is above all the obligation to fulfil; yet, excluding the compliance with the minimum essential levels of the rights as put forward in the CESCR General Comment 3, Art. 10. It also needs to be noted that States have to fulfil as quickly as possible. In the *Limburg Principles on the Implementation of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights* (1986), it is stipulated that '*[the] obligation to achieve progressively the full realization of the rights' requires States parties to move as expeditiously as possible towards the realization of the rights. Under no circumstances shall this be interpreted as implying for States the right to deter indefinitely efforts to ensure full realization. On the contrary all States parties have the obligation to begin immediately to take steps to fulfil their obligations under the Covenant.*' (Principle 21).

18. These minimum core obligations have been stipulated in most of the General Comments from the General Comment 14 onwards.
19. Para. 21 stipulates that *[as] with all other rights in the Covenant, retrogressive measures should in principle not be taken in relation to the right to work. If any deliberately retrogressive steps are taken, States parties have the burden of proving that they have been introduced after consideration of all alternatives and that they are duly justified by reference to the totality of the rights provided for in the Covenant in the context of the full use of the States parties' maximum available resources.* Furthermore, Art. 34 provides that *"[as] for all other rights in the Covenant, there is a strong presumption that retrogressive measures taken in relation to the right to work are not permissible.[...] Such measures would constitute a violation of States parties' obligation to respect the right to work'.*
20. Para. 9 lays out: *'The principal obligation of result reflected in article 2 (1) [of the ICESCR] is to take steps "with a view to achieving progressively the full realization of the rights recognized" in the Covenant. [...] [The] phrase must be read in the light of the overall objective, indeed the raison d'être, of the Covenant which is to establish clear obligations for States parties in respect of the full realization of the rights in question. It thus imposes an obligation to move as expeditiously and effectively as possible towards that goal. Moreover, any deliberately retrogressive measures in that regard would require the most careful consideration and would need to be fully justified by reference to the totality of the rights provided for in the Covenant and in the context of the full use of the maximum available resources'.*
21. See, CESCR GC No. 4, para. 11; CESCR GC No. 12, para. 19; CESCR GC No. 13, paras. 45 and 59; CESCR GC No. 14, paras. 32 and 48; CESCR GC No. 15, paras. 19 and 42; CESCR GC No. 16, para. 42; CESCR GC No. 27, para. 44; CESCR GC No. 18, paras. 21 and 34; CESCR GC No. 19, para. 42. See also the *Maastricht Principles on Extraterritorial Obligations of States in the Area of Economic, Social and Cultural Rights*, Principle 32 d).
22. Sepúlveda, M. (2003). *The Nature of the Obligations under the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights*. Intersentia: Antwerpen, Oxford & New York, p.323. (emphasis added)
23. See CESCR *General Comment No. 4*, para. 11. This General Comment concerns more explicitly the general State obligation to protect – at any time and regardless of available resources – the most vulnerable and disadvantaged members or groups of society. It has to be noted that not only the economically most disadvantaged or vulnerable groups are targeted.
24. *Letter dated 16 May 2012 addressed by the Chairperson of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights to States parties to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights*, p.1-2. (emphasis added)
25. See the *General Comment No. 14 on the Right to the Highest Attainable Standard of health: "The adoption of any retrogressive measures incompatible with the core obligations under the right to health [...] constitutes a violation of the right to health"* (para. 48). Similar provisions are put forward in, *inter alia*, *General Comments No. 14*, para. 42; *General Comment No. 15*, para. 42; *General Comment No. 17*, para. 42.
26. CESCR *General Comment No. 19, The right to social security (Art. 9 of the Covenant)*, para. 42.
27. We refer above all to measures involving substantial wage cuts, among others. See also Box 3.1.
28. See also Suárez Franco, A.M. (2010)., *Die Justiziabilität wirtschaftlicher, sozialer und kultureller Menschenrechte. Eine Untersuchung über den aktuellen Zustand in Lateinamerika unter Beachtung der völkerrechtlichen Menschenrechtsstandards – Kolumbien als Beispiel*. Frankfurt am Main: Peterlang, p. 253-259.
29. See De Schutter, O. & Salomon, M.E. (2015). *Legal Brief prepared for the Special Committee of the Hellenic Parliament on the Audit of the Greek Debt (Debt Truth Committee). Economic Policy Conditionality, Socio-Economic Rights and International Legal Responsibility: The Case of Greece 2010-2015*, 15 June 2015, p. 20.
30. European Commission. 2010a. *The Economic Adjustment Programme for Greece. Occasional Papers 61*, May 2010. Brussels: Directorate – General for Economic and Financial Affairs.
31. *Ibid.*, 21-23.
32. *Ibid.*, 64.
33. *Ibid.*, 22.
34. *Ibid.*, 38.
35. See section 1.3 (b) on Food prices.
36. See section 2.1 (b) on Social and Solidarity Income Scheme.
37. See further explanation in section 2.1 (a).
38. Truth Committee on Public Debt (2015). *Preliminary Report*, Hellenic Parliament. Retrieved from <http://www.cadtm.org/IMG/pdf/Report.pdf>
39. <http://www.statistics.gr/en/statistics/-/publication/SJO03/>; ELSTAT (2018). Labour force, monthly data. April 2018. <http://www.statistics.gr/en/statistics/-/publication/SJO02/>.

40. Eurostat. (2018). *Unemployment rates, seasonally adjusted, April 2018 (%)*. Retrieved from http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Unemployment_statistics
41. See further analysis in the report by the Truth Committee on Public Debt, 2015, at <http://www.cadtm.org/IMG/pdf/Report.pdf>
42. "The Committee is also concerned that Act No.3896/2010 and 3996/2011 against unfair dismissals and the extension of the period during which working mothers cannot be dismissed after their return from maternity leave to 18 months, has resulted in them being offered part time and rotation work in many cases with reduced levels of pay.", CEDAW (March 2013), *Concluding observations on the seventh periodic report of Greece adopted by the Committee at its fifty fourth session (11 February – 1 March 2013)*
43. CESCR *General Comment No.12: The Right to Adequate Food (Art. 11)*, E/C.12/1999/5, Art. 6.
44. *Ibid.*, Art. 12.
45. *Ibid.*, Art. 13.
46. Article 2 and 11 of ICESCR, Articles 24 and 27 of CRC,, article 12 and 14 of CEDAW, Article 6 of ICCPR , Articles 25 and 28 of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), Article 20 of the Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, Article 20 of the Convention relating to the status of Stateless Persons, Food Aid Convention (1999), Universal Declaration on the eradication of Hunger and Malnutrition (1974), Article 8 of the Declaration on the Right to Development, the four Geneva Conventions and their two Additional Protocols.
47. ICESCR, Art.2.1., *supra note 15*.
48. ICESCR, Art. 2.2., *supra note 15*.
49. ICESCR, Art. 2.1., *supra note 15*.
50. Guiding Principles on Extreme Poverty and Human Rights, V. G.
51. Pierre Moscovici (2018). *Dans ce clair-obscur surgissent des monstres. Choses vues au cœur du pouvoir*. Paris: Plon (emphasis added ; own translation). The original text reads: 'Dans la pièce, il y a dix-neuf ministres des Finances, plus la directrice générale du FMI, Christine Lagarde, Mario Draghi, le président de la BCE, le directeur général du MES, l'Allemand Klaus Regling, et moi-même au nom de la Commission. Vingt-trois personnes en tout et pour tout, avec leurs adjoints, prennent – ou non – des décisions fondamentales pour des millions d'autres, les Grecs en l'occurrence, sur des paramètres extraordinairement techniques, décisions qui sont soustraites à tout contrôle démocratique. L'Eurogroupe ne rend compte à aucun gouvernement, à aucun Parlement, surtout pas au Parlement européen'.
52. See, *inter alia*, European Parliament resolution of 13 March 2014 on the enquiry on the role and operations of the Troika (ECB, Commission and IMF) with regard to the euro area programme countries (2013/2277(INI)) (Section on 'The Troika: the institutional dimension and democratic legitimacy', Articles 48-63); Truth Committee on Public Debt, *Preliminary Report*, Hellenic Parliament, July 2015 (above all chapter 9: 'Legal Foundations for Repudiation and Suspension of Greek Sovereign Debt', p. 57-62); Truth Committee on the Greek Public Debt, *Illegitimacy, Illegality, Odiousness and Unsustainability of the August 2015 MoU and Loan Agreements*, Athens, 25 September 2015 (above all chapter on "Coercion, Unlawful Coercive Measures and Direct Interference in the Domestic Affairs of Greece"). This document can be accessed here: http://www.cadtm.org/spip.php?page=imprimer&id_article=12324; Costamagna, F. (2012). *Saving Europe 'Under Strict Conditionality': a Threat for EU Social Dimension?*, LPF Working Paper No 7. Torino: Centro Einaudi; Ioannidis, M. 2014. *EU Financial Assistance Conditionality after "Two Pack"*. Max-Planck-Institut für ausländisches öffentliches Recht und Völkerrecht, ZaöRV, 74:61-104 (above all chapter IV.1. on "Conditionality: Between Ownership and Coercion", p.91-96).
53. *Maastricht Principles on Extraterritorial Obligations of States in the Area of Economic, Social and Cultural Rights*, 2011. They can be accessed here: https://www.etoconsortium.org/nc/en/main-navigation/library/maastricht-principles/?tx_drblob_pi1%5BdownloadUid%5D=23. Henceforward "Maastricht Principles".
54. In recent years, UN treaty bodies have increasingly addressed extraterritorial human rights obligations for different rights, such as in General Comments and Concluding Obligations. See, for example, CESCR, *Consideration of reports submitted by States parties under articles 16 and 17 of the Covenant: Concluding observations of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights: Germany*, 12 July 2011, E/C.12/DEU/CO/5, para.9; CESCR, *General Comment No. 19: The right to social security (Art. 9 of the Covenant)*, E/C.12/GC/19, 4 February 2008, para. 54; UN Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC), *Consideration of reports submitted by States parties under article 44 of the Convention: Concluding observations: Republic of Korea*, 6 October 2011, CRC/C/KOR/CO/3-4 para. 26; CESCR, *General Comment No. 24 (2017) on State obligations under the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights in the context of business activities*, E/C.12/GC/24, 10 August 2017, chapter III.C, Art.25-37. In this regard, see also the legal *Commentary to the Maastricht Principles on Extraterritorial Obligations of States in the Area of Economic, Social and Cultural Rights*, which can be accessed at: https://www.etoconsortium.org/nc/en/main-navigation/library/maastricht-principles/?tx_drblob_pi1%5BdownloadUid%5D=63.

55. See International Court of Justice *Advisory Opinion on the Legal Consequences of the Construction of a Wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory*, 9 July 2004, para 109; *Armed Activities on the Territory of the Congo (Democratic Republic of the Congo v. Uganda)*, 19 December 2005, paras. 178-180 and 216-217.
56. See paras. 25-37.
57. See, for example, *Loizidou vs. Turkey* (23 March 1995), *Al-Skeini and others vs. The United Kingdom* (7 July 2011), *Ilaşcu and others vs. Moldova and Russia* (8 July 2004).
58. *Maastricht Principles on Extraterritorial Obligations of States in the Area of Economic, Social and Cultural Rights*, principle 9, *supra* note 54.
59. *CESCR statement on Public debt, austerity measures and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights*, E/C.12/2016/1, 22 July 2016, para. 9.
60. See General Comment No. 2 (1990) on *international technical assistance measures*, para. 9.
61. See, for example, General Comment No. 14 (2000) on *the right to the highest attainable standard of health*, para. 39.
62. See International Law Commission, *draft articles on the responsibility of international organizations with commentaries*, Art. 58 (2) and commentary 5 (A/66/10, para. 88).
63. CESCR General Comment No. 2, *International technical assistance measures* (Art. 22), UN Doc. E/1990/23, para. 9.
64. CESCR General Comment No. 14, *The right to the highest attainable standard of health* (Art. 12), UN Doc. E/C.12/2000/4, para. 39.; CESCR General Comment No. 15, *The right to water* (Arts. 11 and 12), UN Doc. E/C.12/2002/11, para. 36.
65. See De Schutter, O. et al., (2012). Commentary to the Maastricht Principles on Extraterritorial Obligations of States in the Area of Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. *Human Rights Quarterly*. 34, p. 24.
66. *Ibid.*, p. 25. This opinion was adopted by the International Law Commission, on 3 July 2011, within the scope of the *Draft Articles on Responsibility of International Organisations* (UN Doc. A/CN.4/L.778). Article 61(1) on "Circumvention of international obligations of a State member of an international organisations" stipulates that "[a] A State member of an international organization incurs international responsibility if, by taking advantage of the fact that the organization has competence in relation to the subject-matter of one of the State's international obligations, it circumvents that obligation by causing the organization to commit an act that, if committed by the State, would have constituted a breach of the obligation." Paragraph 2 of Article 61 further specifies that the above-mentioned "applies whether or not the act in question is internationally wrongful for the international organization".
67. *Report of the Independent Expert on the effects and foreign debt and other related international financial obligations of States on the full enjoyment of all human rights, particularly economic, social and cultural rights on his mission to institutions of the European Union*, A/HRC/34/57/Add.1, 28 December 2016, para. 34.
68. *Maastricht Principles*, Principle 16. As laid out in the *Commentary to the Maastricht Principles*, 'a wide range of human rights have acquired a customary status in international law, and international organizations are therefore bound to exercise the powers that they have been delegated in compliance with the requirements that they impose.' *Supra* note 54, p. 25.
69. De Schutter, O. & Salomon, M.E. (2015). *Legal Brief prepared for the Special Committee of the Hellenic Parliament on the Audit of the Greek Debt (Debt Truth Committee). Economic Policy Conditionality, Socio-Economic Rights and International Legal Responsibility: The Case of Greece 2010-2015*, 15 June, p. 8.
70. Salomon, M.E. (2015). *Of Austerity, Human Rights and International Institutions*, LSE Legal Studies Working Paper No. 2/2015, 25 March, p. 22.
71. *European Parliament resolution of 13 March 2014 on the enquiry on the role and operations of the Troika (ECB, Commission and IMF) with regard to the euro area programme countries (2013/2277(INI))*.
72. See Truth Committee on Public Debt, Preliminary Report and report on the Illegitimacy, Illegality, Odiousness and Unsustainability of the August 2015 MoU and Loan Agreement; Costamagna, F. (2012). *Saving Europe "Under Strict Conditionality": A Threat for EU Social Dimension?* LPE Working Paper No 7.; Ioannidis, M. (2014). 'EU Financial Assistance Conditionality after "Two Pack"' (20 February).
73. "The ownership of the design of the programme belongs to the authorities of the Member State concerned, and the main measures are included in the authorities' Letter of Intent (LoI) to the IMF and the EU. In the preparatory phase of the programme and the subsequent MoU there are intense interactions between the national authorities and the Troika, but given that the MoU is signed by the national authorities, who are also responsible for its implementation, the ultimate responsibility rests with them." See Ref. Ares(2013)3736254, p.5, 16 December 2013. Document can be accessed here: <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/document/activities/cont/201401/20140114ATT77315/20140114ATT77315EN.pdf>.

74. 'In line with the EFSM Regulation, EFSF Agreement and the ESM Treaty, the MoU lays down the commitments assumed by the respective Member State in return for receiving financial assistance, as a result of technical discussions between the country concerned and the troika institutions. The respective government has ownership of, and responsibility for, these commitments, including all specific measures', in ECB's replies to the questionnaire of the European Parliament supporting the own initiative report evaluating the structure, the role and operations of the 'troika' (Commission, ECB and the IMF) actions in euro area programme countries, p.3. The document can be accessed here: https://www.ecb.europa.eu/pub/pdf/other/140110_ecb_response_troika_questionnaire.pdf.
75. *European Economy. The Economic Adjustment Programme for Greece* European Commission Occasional Papers 61/May 2010, Brussels, 26 May 2010, p.12. The Eurogroup is the informal though established body gathering the Finance ministers of States having adopted the Euro, i.e. the Member States of the Euro Area.
76. See *IMF Survey: IMF Approves €30 Bln Loan for Greece on Fast Track*, accessed here <https://www.imf.org/en/News/Articles/2015/09/28/04/53/sonew050910a>.
77. *European Economy. The Economic Adjustment Programme for Greece*, European Commission Occasional Papers 61/May 2010, Brussels, 26 May 2010, p. 26. (emphasis added)
78. Belgium, Ireland, Spain, France, Italy, Cyprus, Luxembourg, Malta, The Netherlands, Austria, Portugal, Slovenia, Slovakia and Finland.
79. *Euro Area Loan Facility Act 2010*, Schedule 2: Loan Facility Agreement, 8 May 2010, p. 26. (emphasis added). Accessible here: <http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2010/act/7/schedule/2/enacted/en/html>. The *Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau* ('Reconstruction Credit Institute' - KfW) is a wholly publicly owned bank: 80% of its shares belong to the Federal Republic of Germany and 20% to the 16 German *Bundesländer*.
80. Ibid.
81. International Court of Justice, *Interpretation of the Agreement of 25 March 1951 between the WHO and Egypt. Advisory Opinion of 20 December 1980*, para. 37.
82. CESCR, *General Comment No. 19 (2008)*, UN Doc. E/C.12/GC/19, para. 38: 'The international financial institutions, notably the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, should take into account the right to social security in their lending policies, credit agreements, structural adjustment programmes and similar projects, so that the enjoyment of the right to social security, particularly by disadvantaged and marginalized individuals and groups, is promoted and not compromised'. The CESCR reiterated this in other General Comments.
83. De Schutter, O. & Salomon, M.E., *supra note 70*, p. 2.
84. De Schutter, O. & Salomon, M.E., *supra note 70*, p. 13.
85. Cephas Lumina in 2013, followed by his successor, Juan Pablo Bohoslavsky, in 2015.
86. See their respective reports, UN documents A/HRC/25/50/Add.1 and A/HRC/31/60/Add.2.
87. See *Report of the Independent Expert on the effects of foreign debt and other related international financial obligations of States on the full enjoyment of all human rights, particularly economic, social and cultural rights, Mission to Greece (20 Nov.-8 Dec. 2015)*, A/HRC/31/60/Add.2, 29 February 2016; Crespi, E. et al. (2014). *Downgrading Human Rights: the Cost of Austerity in Greece*. Paris: FIDH.
88. See Box 3.2 above.
89. See Box 3.1 above.
90. *Maastricht Principles*, *Supra note 54*, Principle 21.
91. *Articles on Responsibility of States for Internationally Wrongful Acts, with Commentaries adopted by the International Law Commission*, Report of the International Law Commission on the Work of its 53rd session (23 April to 1 June and 2 July to 10 August 2001), UN Doc. A/56/10, Art. 16. (emphasis added)
92. See, for example, *Declaration on the Principles of International Law concerning Friendly Relations and Cooperation among States in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations*, General Assembly resolution 2625 (XXV) of 24 October 1970, annex, first principle; *Definition of Aggression*, General Assembly resolution 3314 (XXIX) of 14 December 1974, annex, Art. 3(f).
93. See for example, Greek Truth Committee, *Preliminary Report*, op. cit.; Elena Crespi et al., *supra note 88*.
94. *Articles on Responsibility of States for Internationally Wrongful Acts, with Commentaries adopted by the International Law Commission*, *supra note 92*, Art. 17. (emphasis added)

Obligations and recommendations

This Chapter looks first at obligations and then makes recommendations. Human rights are guaranteed by obligations to respect, protect and fulfil them. A rights-holder comes together with a duty-bearer. Recommendations address a wide set of policy measures to support a more just and sustainable food and agricultural system in Greece.

Part 1. Obligations

EU Member States

- Do not participate in economic programmes that carry a real risk of impairing the enjoyment of economic, social and cultural human rights.
- Within the scope of aid and assistance programmes and related Memoranda of Understanding (MoU), avoid any measures that assist or even coerce Greece or any other country to breach its human rights obligations, including those related to economic, social and cultural rights.
- Refrain from impairing targeted countries' ability to comply with their human rights obligations. In this context, EU Member States must not negotiate retrogressive measures for Greece to implement in the area of economic, social and cultural rights unless Greece has provided proof of human rights compliance, as described below.
- Undertake Human Rights Impact Assessments (HRIAs) before beginning financial assistance programmes and refrain from implementing them if there is a real risk of harming economic, social and cultural rights. Conduct HRIAs during and after such programmes, with the full participation of all vulnerable groups who might be affected.
- When acting and taking decisions in international organizations or other bodies of which your State is a member and has co-deciding powers (such as the IMF or ECB), refrain from taking decisions that would impair the ability of another State or the international organization to comply with its obligations in the area of economic, social and cultural rights.
- Within the European Council, refrain from taking decisions that impair the capacity of Greece or any other country to comply with its obligations in the area of economic, social and cultural rights.
- Do not set up mechanisms like the European Stability Mechanism (ESM), the European Financial Stability Facility (EFSF) and the European Financial stabilisation Mechanism (EFSM) which stand outside treaty law, and lack transparency and accountability.*

* See European Parliament resolution on the **"Role and operations of the Troika with regard to the euro area programme countries"**, 2013/2277(INI), 13 March 2014, Articles 51, 105, 106, 107.

Greece

- Greece must respect, protect and fulfil the enjoyment of human rights.
- In international agreements and financial assistance programmes such as the MoUs, Greece retains its human rights obligations, and must refrain from approving or accepting measures (and desist from implementing related acts) that create a real risk of impairing the enjoyment of economic, social and cultural rights.
- In negotiating MoUs and implementing the related steps, the Greek State must avoid any retrogressive measures that create a real risk of nullifying or impairing the enjoyment of economic, social and cultural human rights of people living in the country unless Greece provides proof that
 - a) an assessment of the impact of the measures on all rights enshrined in the ICESCR is undertaken;
 - b) the adoption of retrogressive measures is necessary and proportionate, in the sense that the adoption of any other policy, or a failure to act, would be more detrimental to economic, social and cultural rights;
 - c) such retrogressive measures remain strictly temporary;
 - d) such measures do not result in discrimination or increased inequalities;
 - e) such measures do not affect the minimum core content of the rights protected under the Covenant;
 - f) the measures have no discriminatory impact on especially (the most) vulnerable groups;
 - g) those concerned by the measures have had the opportunity to participate in the discussion about these measures and their alternatives;
 - h) such measures occur through, or on the basis of, a law.

European Commission

Within the scope of economic or financial aid or assistance programmes, the European Commission should refrain from any types of measures or conditions that carry a real risk of impairing the enjoyment of economic, social and cultural human rights.

The European Commission must ensure that any type of financial or economic aid or assistance mechanism established at EU level must comply with a) EU law and the founding treaties; b) the EU Charter for Fundamental Rights; and c) all international human rights instruments to which its Member States are Parties. In this sense, the ESM needs to be accountable before other European bodies, in particular the European Parliament.

The European Commission, alongside EU Member States, should ensure that HRIAs are conducted before, during and after measures are being implemented. Full participation of all potentially affected vulnerable groups must be ensured.

Part 2. Recommendations

International Monetary Fund (IMF)

- The IMF, as an IFI within the UN system, should comply with the UN Charter, which includes promoting and encouraging respect for human rights.
- The IMF should refrain from any conduct that would be tantamount to a breach of extraterritorial human rights obligations its Member States.
- The IMF should conduct HRIAs before, during and after measures are endorsed and implemented. Full participation of all potentially affected vulnerable groups must be ensured.

European Central Bank (ECB)

- The ECB should refrain from any measures that would – if put to the vote of Member States – have to be rejected by a majority in compliance with their (extraterritorial) human rights obligations.
- The ECB should conduct HRIAs before, during and after measures are being implemented. Full participation of all potentially affected vulnerable groups must be ensured.

Greece

In order for the Greek economy to be able to recover, and fight the poverty and unemployment that were exacerbated during the 10 years of austerity measures, Greece should focus on creating an appropriate environment for healthy, sustainable and long-term and equitable development and support human rights-based social policies and standards.

Participation, accountability, transparency, and non-discrimination

In order to work towards rights-based policy-making and to rebuild and repair the relationships between the state and the people, it is fundamental that the Greek state fulfils the basic principles of human rights. These principles, which include participation, accountability, transparency, equality, and non-discrimination, should inform the functioning of the government and decision-making processes generally, with specific focus on processes that have an impact on the right to food and other related rights of people in Greece.

- Monitor, evaluate, and revise social policies implemented under the austerity measures in collaboration with the Greek National Commission for Human Rights and the participation of relevant elements of civil society, including community organizations and trade unions, in order to assess corrective and remedial measures.
- Report on progress of the situation of food insecurity under its obligations to report to international human rights treaty bodies, in particular to the Committee on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (CESCR), the Committee on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), and the Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC).

- Acknowledge and apply the recommendations from the work of the Greek Truth Committee and the audit on debt/austerity.
- Ensure consultation / vote of Greek Parliament on all major policy changes, following HRIAs to inform the discussion.
- Increase participation in decision-making of the people of Greece in the design of policies that affect them through mechanisms such as participatory budgeting. These participatory processes should pay particular attention to the inclusion of marginalized groups (e.g. rural communities, migrants), be based on human rights principles, and extend to the transparent management of the country's financial resources.
- Respect legally binding human rights protections to all persons within the Greek state, including migrants and refugees.

Supporting domestic food production in Greece

In order to reduce vulnerability to price spikes and recurrent food (price) crises, Greece needs a policy shift to foster domestic, resilient agricultural production and limit dependence on food imports, generate support for small-scale food production and local markets, and create affordable access to local food.

- Foster public agricultural investment in e.g. irrigation, roads, climate change adaptation techniques to support the agricultural sector, sustainable production methods, and inclusive rural development.
- Support domestic processing in key sectors (e.g. olive production, fruit) through state forms or subsidised cooperative efforts (e.g. through a State Development Bank).
- Take advantage of particular EU Common Agricultural Policy schemes, including, under Pillar I, the small and young farmers scheme, the redistributive payment, and capping; under Pillar II, the rural development and greening measures, in order to support small-scale and sustainable agricultural production.
- Ensure farmers' right to conserve, use, maintain and develop their own seeds, crops, varieties, propagating material and genetic resources, or those of their choice, as well as to save, store, transport, exchange, donate, sell, use and re-use farm-saved seeds, crops and propagating material in order to promote biodiversity and preserve traditional and local seed varieties.
- Support the creations of apprenticeship programmes in Greece in order to educate farmers, share agro-ecological knowledge, and better support farm succession.
- Ensure farmers' access to extension services, including those that support organic and agro-ecological production.
- Land:
 - In order to ensure a healthy agrarian structure in line with the EU's structural goals for dispersed land ownership and a multi-functional agricultural model, a public land body should be created to safeguard, supervise and regulate transfers (including through

sale and lease agreements) of agricultural land.* This supervisory body would be responsible for monitoring land transactions and regulating land transfers according to certain predefined criteria such as:

- pre-emption rights for farmers, young farmers, and new entrants
 - intervening in cases of land speculation and transfers that would lead to excessive concentration of farmland
 - closely monitoring changes in land use, especially where they entail a conversion of farmland to non-agricultural use. Proposed land use changes should be in line with the EU's policy for Territorial Cohesion.
- Develop sound spatial planning and land zoning policies in order to allow for targeted agricultural policy, proper taxation, and sustainable rural development. Completion of the land registry and forestry maps should be carried out in accordance with international best practice set out in CFS Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries, and Forests in the Context of National Food Security.** All legitimate tenure rights must be respected and protected.
 - Provide access to land: Make public land available for sustainable agricultural initiatives, with consideration given to new entrants, young farmers, and small-scale production in order to support a redistribution of Greek farmland and strengthen Greek food sovereignty. This should include recognition not only of individual land titles but also other forms of tenure such as the communal ownership and management of land and other resources.
 - Halt harmful privatization and redevelopment plans which have a negative impact on communities and the environment, such as the ongoing plans in Helliniko and Skouries in Chalkidiki.
- Tools for funding:
 - Create alternative and innovative financial/funding tools to allow for diverse channels to borrowing and lending, including CSA agreements, credit cooperatives, ethical banks, and citizen-led investment instruments such as crowdfunding, etc.

* While the exact nature of such a supervisory land body should be defined within the Greek context, inspiration may be drawn from the French example of the „Sociétés d'Aménagement Foncier et d'Etablissement Rural" (SAFERs). SAFERs must be notified of all potential land transfers and have the power to approve or reject transfers within their jurisdiction. They have a specific mission to support the settlement of farmers, especially young farmers, and to ensure transparency and the proper functioning of the rural land markets. If the land transfer does not respect these mission objectives, the SAFER can exercise its right to halt the transfer and propose an alternative arrangement.

** The CFS Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries, and Forests in the Context of National Food Security were adopted in 2012 by the Committee on World Security (CFS), following a process which ensured the full and meaningful participation of civil society organisations, including organisations of small-scale food producers. They are considered a significant advancement in the human rights normative understanding of resource governance, and are an important tool to guide national policy. More information on these Guidelines can be found at: <http://www.fao.org/tenure/voluntary-guidelines/en/>

- Increase support for cooperative banks to provide access to financing for food producers and others in the food and agricultural industry who are operating at a smaller scale. Such models can be seen with the Karditsa Cooperative Bank, which during the crisis years managed to successfully expand and increase loans to farmers for the purchase of equipment, light processing units, rural development plans, etc, despite a very harsh economic climate in which many other commercial banks were closing.
- Make providing credit to farmers, with low interest rate and no guarantees, a priority of a state development bank.

Socially Just Tax System

A well-regulated tax system is fundamental for a functioning society, with taxes that support public programmes without unfairly burdening low-income and/or marginalized communities. Such systems should also ensure proper oversight and regulation to recipients of subsidies to ensure transparency in the use public funds.

- VAT is the most unequal form of tax as it disproportionately affects low-income groups. This Report recommends significantly reducing VAT on food and other basic goods, and increasing wealth taxes.
- Taxes are important, including on farmland, but introducing new tax measures for farmers during an economic downturn, with rising cost of production, makes it difficult for them – especially small-scale farmers – to continue food production. Provide appropriate tax breaks or subsidies to encourage production and linked to specific social standards and production methods, such as sustainable and low carbon-footprint methods.
- Ensure that all recipients of agricultural subsidies respect workers' human rights, labour rights and standards with regards to permanent, seasonal, and short-term agricultural workers.

Food Security

- Ensure access to adequate public funds for social support initiatives such as social groceries, based on collaboration between local government and civil society, and provide access to basic goods and services for low-income and marginalized families and people.
- Expand free school meals to ensure that all pupils, at every level, receive a daily nutritious meal.
- Improve data collection at the national level on quantitative and qualitative food security, including the use of the Food Insecurity Experience Scale (FIES) methodology, which is an internationally agreed method within the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Sustainable food markets

Greek food markets currently favour large commercial enterprises and foreign imports, rather than creating infrastructure that stimulates the agricultural economy, promotes local production and produce, and creates opportunity to medium- and small-scale enterprises, processing, and production.

- Support the establishment of genuine farmers' markets across the country, and support the use of Social Solidarity Income in these markets.
- Create a framework and design appropriate and sustainable (public) procurement to encourage socially and environmentally responsible purchasing, giving priority to SSE initiatives and cooperatives, small-scale farmers, ethical and alternative farms, CSAs etc. Such practices could be applied to the nationwide school meals programme, hospitals, nursing homes, universities, etc.
- Create laws and policies that favour and reward local procurement for food businesses (i.e. restaurants, taverns).
- Create legal and fiscal frameworks that encourage cooperation and a diversity of SSE structures, including CSA initiatives:
 - Legal framework that facilitates the creation of new enterprises, both in terms of bureaucracy and requirements, especially for small entrepreneurs and professionals.
 - Legal framework that allows and facilitates cooperation among different individuals and groups, for example that allows co-housing /co-location of different enterprises and sectors and cross-sectoral collaborations, including among those that are governed by different laws and registers, e.g. agricultural cooperatives and social enterprises KoinSEps.



Annex

Methodological Note

Research findings in this report are derived in part from interviews conducted with key persons in the period October 2017 – February 2018.

For **Chapter 1** examining the impacts of austerity measures on the agri-food system in Greece, **62 persons** were interviewed. Whilst these persons wish to remain anonymous, the following details can be given on the interview locations and types of persons interviewed:

Interview locations (in alphabetical order): Argos, Athens, Creta, Drama, Filiatra, Igoumenitsa, Kalamata, Kalimnos, Karpathos, Kilkis, Komotini, Kos, Leipsoi, Livadeia, Mesologgi, Mytilini, Naxos, Neapolis, Nea Kios, Preveza, Salonica, Samos, Santorini, Serres, Zitsa (Epirus).

Occupations of persons interviewed: Farmers; Agronomists; Journalists; Fishermen; Attorneys; Consultants; Bank employee; Workers; Mayor; Trade unionists; High state officials.

Findings for **Chapter 2** on people's responses to austerity measures in the agri-food system were collected through a qualitative study and field visits to four geographical areas of Greece, namely Athens, Thessaloniki, Thessaly (focused on the region of Karditsa) and the island of Crete. We conducted semi-structured interviews with agricultural cooperatives, small producers/farmers, agronomists, social cooperative enterprises, consumer cooperatives, soup kitchens, municipal social grocery stores and informal initiatives such as producers' groups, peri-urban agriculture, no intermediaries' markets and Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) networks. In total, **33** initiatives and **50** respondents from more than **10** locations in Greece participated. A detailed list of participant initiatives is provided below.

We would like to thank the following initiatives for their kind participation in the interviews conducted during the field study.

Name of Initiative	Location	Legal form / type	Website
Development Agency of Karditsa	Karditsa, Thessaly	Development SA of local authorities	www.anka.gr
Psychanthos / Agricultural Cooperative of Legumes	Karditsa, Thessaly	Agricultural Cooperative	https://www.facebook.com/pg/A-Σ-Οσπρίων-Και-Προϊόντων-Διατροφής-ΨυχΑνθός-788889321230251
Agricultural Cooperative of Stevia	Karditsa, Thessaly	Agricultural Cooperative	www.thestevia.gr
Efkarpon / Agricultural Cooperative of Superfoods	Karditsa, Thessaly	Agricultural Cooperative	www.efkarpon.com/portal

Konstantinos Zachokostas	Karditsa, Thessaly	Agronomist	
EcoGaia Farm	Trikala, Thessaly	Producer / Farmer	www.ecogaia.gr
THESGala	Larisa, Thessaly	Agricultural Cooperative	www.thesgala.gr
Trinity Farm	Farsala, Thessaly	Producer / Farmer	www.thetrinityfarm.gr/
Integral Cooperative of Herakleion	Herakleion, Crete	Informal Network	heraklion.cooperativas.gr
Apo Koinou / To Rovithi	Herakleion, Crete	Social Cooperative Enterprise	www.apokinou.gr/el
Melitakes	Asterousia, Crete	Social Cooperative Enterprise	https://melitakes.gr/
Aristidis Karousis	Herakleion, Crete	Producer / Farmer	https://www.facebook.com/groups/1446142162301614/about/
Terra Verde	Chania, Crete	Social Cooperative Enterprise	http://www.terraverde-kania.gr/
Antonis Papagiannakis	Chania, Crete	Producer / Farmer	
Begiri / Chalikouti	Rethymno, Crete	Civil Cooperative	http://toxalikouti.org/
Self-organized Garden of Hellinikon	Athens	Informal Initiative (Peri-urban Agriculture)	http://agroselliniko.blogspot.gr/
Social Kitchen The Other Human	Athens	Informal Network (Soup Kitchen)	http://oallosanthropos.blogspot.gr/
Solidarity of Piraeus	Piraeus, Athens	Non-profit Organisation	www.solidaritypeiraias.gr
No Intermediaries Cooperative of Galatsi	Athens	Civil Consumer Cooperative	www.xmesazontes.gr/www.pernoampariza.wordpress.com
CSA Agronaftes	Athens	Informal Network (CSA)	http://agronaftes.blogspot.gr
Solidarity Farmlands	Athens	Informal Network / Social Cooperative Enterprise	https://www.facebook.com/solidarityfarmland/
Syn Allois	Athens	Civil Supplying Cooperative	https://synallois.org/
Korinthos Orchard	Korinthos	Informal Network (Producers' group)	http://www.perivolikorinthou.gr/
No Intermediaries Market of Toumpa	Thessaloniki	Informal Initiative (No intermediaries market)	http://protobouliatoumpas.blogspot.gr/
No Intermediaries Market of the Open Assembly of Kalamaria's Residents	Thessaloniki	Informal Initiative (No Intermediaries Market)	https://politeskalamarias.wordpress.com/
Eklektik	Thessaloniki	Social Cooperative Enterprise	https://www.facebook.com/eklektik.gr/
Periurban Agriculture PER.KA.	Thessaloniki	Informal Initiative (Peri-urban Agriculture)	http://perka.org/
Chrysoula Skorditi	Thessaloniki	Producer / Farmer / President of Organic Farmers of N. Greece	https://www.biologikesagores.gr/

Social Grocery of the Municipality of Kordelio - Evosmos	Thessaloniki	Municipal Social Grocery	http://www.kordelio-evosmos.gr/
Syntrofia	Thessaloniki	Informal Initiative (No Intermediaries Grocery)	https://micropolis-socialspace.blogspot.gr/2012/07/blog-post_14.html
Agricultural Grocery of Kalamaria	Thessaloniki	Civil Cooperative	https://agropankalamarias.blogspot.gr/
Orestis Christidis	Thessaloniki	Producer / Farmer	
Social Grocery of the Municipality of Neapoli-Sykies	Thessaloniki	Municipal Social Grocery	http://www.dimosneapolis-sykeon.gr/
BiosCoop	Thessaloniki	Civil Consumer Cooperative	http://www.bioscoop.gr

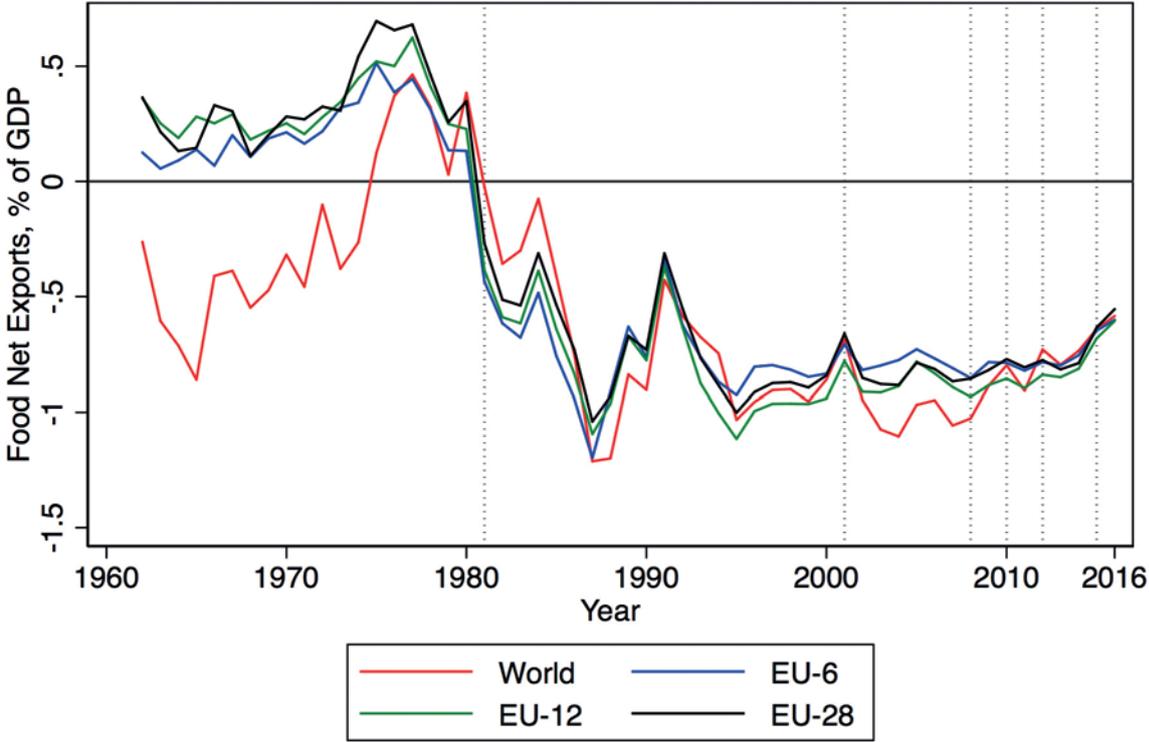
Moreover, we later conducted small informal interviews with two elementary school teachers from Athens and Thessaloniki and one receiver of social allowances in Thessaloniki about the government's school meals programme and social allowances - policies that are aimed at alleviating the impact of the humanitarian crisis. We also spoke to people from 8 church parishes in Thessaloniki to obtain data about humanitarian actions and soup kitchens provided by the Greek Church.

Finally, we used statistical data in order to convey aggregate information about the size of the agri-food cooperative sector in Greece, as well as the number of informal initiatives and networks operating throughout the country. Since there has been no systematic and consolidated effort to collect statistical data about the SSE field on the national level up to date, especially concerning informal SSE initiatives, the information presented here can only be considered to be an approximation.

Statistical data was collected from the following entities / sources:

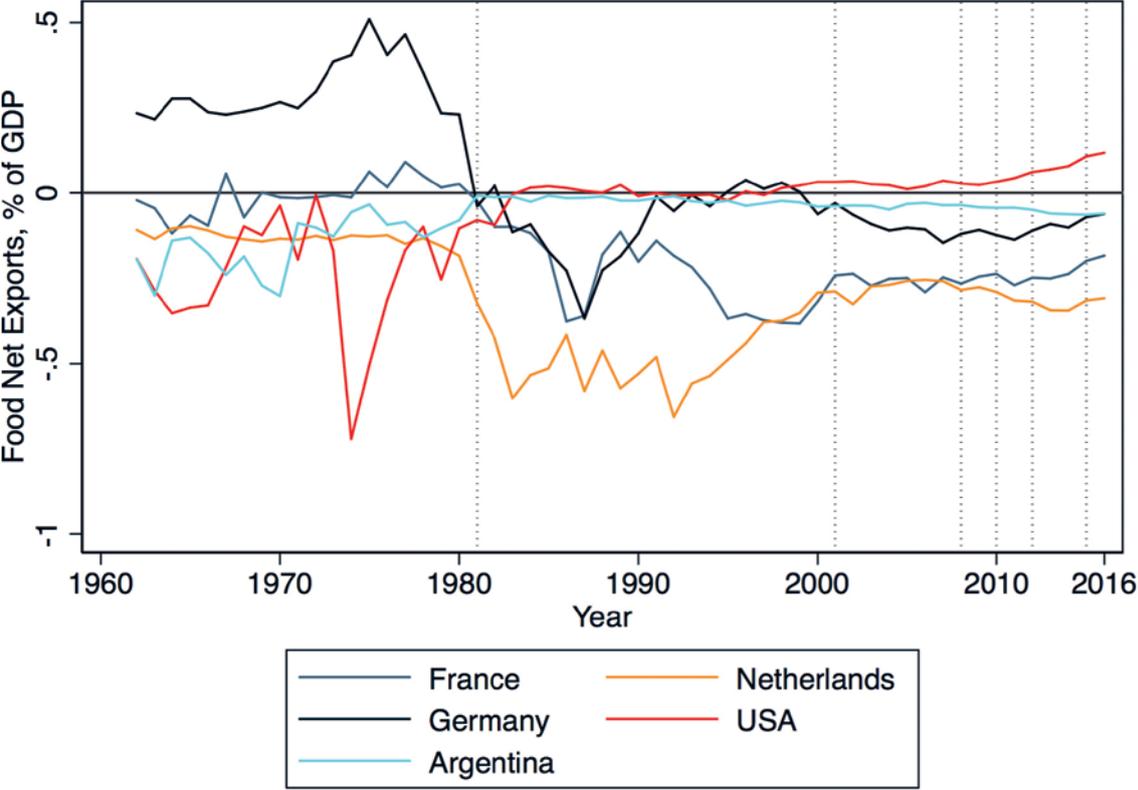
- The Greek Ministry of Labour, Social Security and Social Solidarity: <http://www.ypakp.gr/>
- The Greek Ministry of Agricultural Development: <http://www.minagric.gr/index.php/el/for-farmer-2/sillogikes-agrotikes-organoseis>
- The NGO organisation Network of Social Solidarity and Regional Development (KAPA network): <http://www.diktio-kapa.dos.gr/>
- The news site Enallaktikos.gr which contains information based on an informal mapping of the SSE field (including informal initiatives and networks): <http://www.enallaktikos.gr/>

Figure A.1 Food Trade Balance Greece, 1962 – 2016, EU vs. non-EU Trading Partners



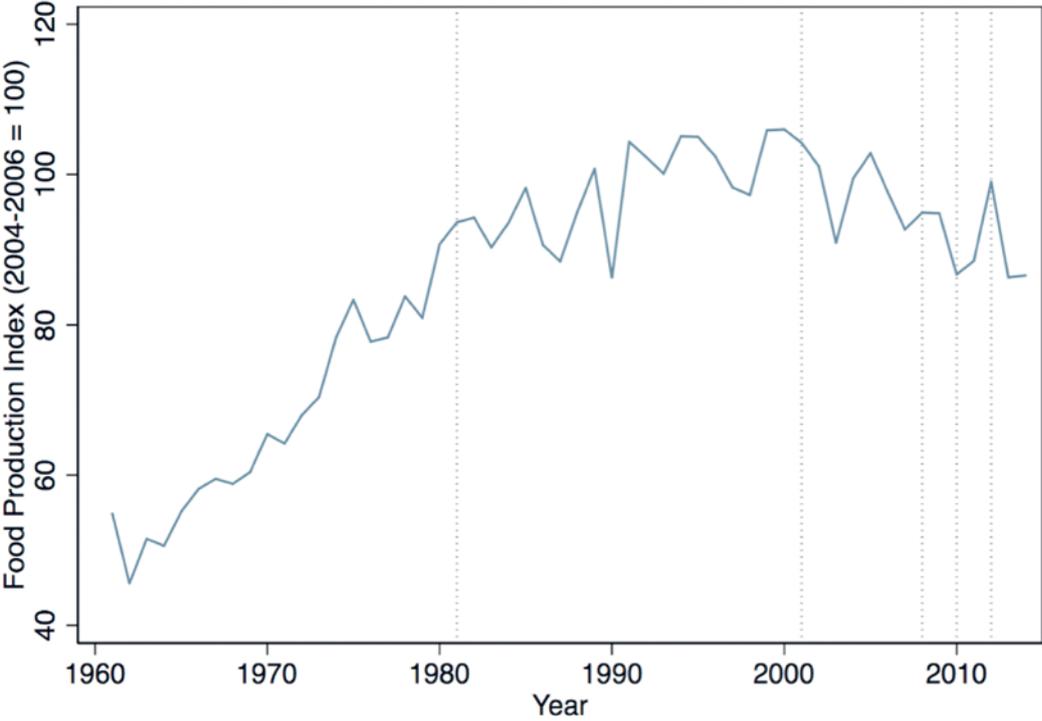
Source: Authors' calculations, United Nations Comext Trade Data, accessed January 15, 2018. The dotted lines delineate Greece's EEC entry (1981), Eurozone entry (2001), the beginning of the crisis (2008), and the three Memoranda (2010, 2012 and 2015). EU-6 refers to Belgium, France, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, and Germany (West Germany before 1991).

Figure A.2 Food Trade Balance Greece, 1962 – 2016, Major Trading Partners



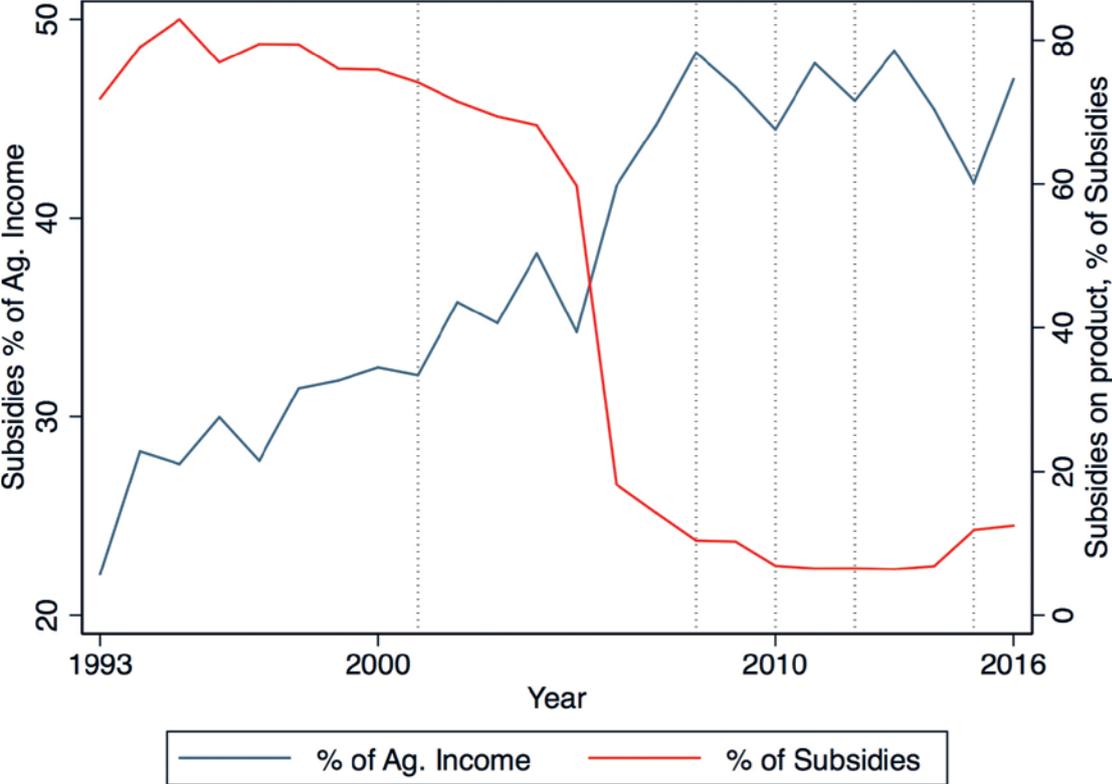
Source: Authors' calculations, United Nations Comext Trade Data, accessed January 15, 2018. The dotted lines delineate Greece's EEC entry (1981), Eurozone entry (2001), the beginning of the crisis (2008), and the three Memoranda (2010, 2012 and 2015). Germany refers to West Germany before 1991.

Figure A.3 Food Production Index, Greece



Source: Authors' calculations, Data FAOSTAT, accessed February 3, 2018. The dotted lines delineate Greece's EEC entry (1981), Eurozone entry (2001), the beginning of the crisis (2008), and the first two Memoranda (2010 and 2012).

Figure A.4 Subsidies, Factor Income, and Subsidies on Product



Source: Authors' calculations, Data ELSTAT, accessed February 3, 2018. The dotted lines delineate Greece's

**Table A.1. Additional Measures of Material Deprivation
(Share of Households).**

Year	Inability to keep home adequately warm	Inability to afford paying for one week annual holiday away from home	Inability to afford a meal with meat, chicken, fish (or vegetarian equivalent) every second day	Inability to face unexpected financial expenses	Arrears (mortgage or rent, utility bills or hire purchase)	Arrears on mortgage or rent payments	Arrears on utility bills	Arrears on hire purchase instalments or other loan payments
2003	17.4	50.1	12.1	44.8	35.5	10.8	30.5	13.7
2004	16.8	47.2	8.3	35.5	30.4	9.7	24.7	11.9
2005	15.7	50.1	5.8	38.8	33.1	6.6	26.5	13.9
2006	12	49.7	7.9	30.6	29.9	4.5	25	11.1
2007	13.8	46.9	6.5	29.6	26.4	7.4	15.7	12.2
2008	15.4	49.8	7.1	26.6	24.4	5.5	15.9	12
2009	15.7	46.3	7.6	26.6	28.7	8.6	18.9	13.2
2010	15.4	46.3	7.9	28.2	30.9	10.2	18.8	13.3
2011	18.6	51.2	9.2	34.4	31.9	11	23.3	13.5
2012	26.1	52.8	14.2	40.5	39	12.9	31.8	15
2013	29.5	49	13.8	47.1	45.3	14.9	35.2	16.9
2014	32.9	50	13	51.8	46.4	14.6	37.3	14.4
2015	29.2	53.7	12.9	53.4	49.3	14.3	42	16.3
2016	29.1	53.6	14.4	53.6	47.9	15.3	42.2	15.8

Source: SILC

Table A.2 Average Monthly Household Consumption, 2008 and 2016.

Product	Unit	2008	2016	Per capita change
Rice	grams	1161.62	1335.39	18.97%
Bread	grams	9287.5	9635.09	7.36%
Pasta products and couscous	grams	2441.44	2868.36	21.58%
Wheat	grams	1444.81	1612.74	15.52%
Breakfast cereals	grams	296.24	434.13	51.66%
Beef and veal	grams	3862.64	3024.89	-18.96%
Pork	grams	2240.45	2096.23	-3.17%
Lamb and goat	grams	1234.95	788.97	-33.88%
Poultry	grams	2845.7	3205.43	16.57%
Fish	grams	2540.02	1944.97	-20.76%
Fresh milk	ml	9064.62	8175.64	-6.66%
Fresh milk low fat	ml	2262.26	2165.03	-0.96%
Preserved milk	grams	1624.46	755.32	-51.88%
Yogurt	grams	1630.53	1787.47	13.45%
Cheese	grams	3519.14	2810.11	-17.36%
Eggs	units	13	16	27.37%
Butter	grams	47.98	58.24	25.62%
Margarine and other vegetable fat	grams	441.43	295.33	-30.76%
Olive oil	ml	3053.37	3128.56	6.04%
Apples	grams	3278.28	2884.02	-8.96%
Bananas	gram	1759.9	1778.09	4.56%
Oranges	grams	3793.26	3906.35	6.57%
Tomatoes	grams	4629.65	3839.72	-14.17%
Potatoes	grams	8590.04	7011.62	-15.53%
Beans	grams	491.46	540.16	13.74%
Lentils	grams	502.48	609.09	25.45%
Chickpeas	grams	123.65	194.59	62.86%
Sugar	grams	2016.96	1102.86	-43.41%
Jams, marmelade and honey	grams	361.51	467.76	33.90%
Coffee	grams	478	372.31	-19.39%
Mineral or spring waters	ml	8798.04	6660.44	-21.66%
Soft drinks	ml	5183.11	2868.53	-42.73%
Fruit juices	ml	2788.11	2327.08	-13.62%
Households		4072175	4104187	
Average size		2.67	2.58	
Men		1.31	1.24	
Women		1.35	1.34	

Source: Greek Statistical Authority, Budget Surveys.

Table A.3. Meal portions and food packages provided by Church parishes in Thessaloniki, 2005 – 2017.

Church Parish		2005-2010	2012-2014	2016-2017	Comments
Analipsi	Meal portions	70	110	110	
	Food packages	-	-	-	
Agia Varvara	Meal portions	100	200	140	
	Food packages	-	-	40	
Agios Therapontas	Meal portions	70	110	80	Large percentage among beneficiaries Greek elderly.
	Food packages	-	-	60	
Metamorfosi Sotiros	Meal portions	50	NA	100	
	Food packages	-	-	-	
Osia Xeni	Meal portions	40		110	
	Food packages	30		52	
Profitis Ilias (Olympiados)	Meal portions	30		250	Portions not enough for everyone, obliged to turn people down as demand too high in the area
	Food packages	Few		-	
Profitis Ilias (Pylaia)	Meal portions	40-50		70	
	Food packages	20		40	Beneficiaries solely Greeks. Cases of families not asking for food but in need of electricity and heating. Church parish covers cost of oil (2 families in the past - 15 now).

Data shows absolute numbers of meal portions and food packages offered by each of the eight church parishes in Thessaloniki. NA indicates that no data is available. The symbol '-' indicates zero or no provision of food packages.



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Agroecopolis is a young, grassroots non-profit, non-governmental organisation. It is the Hellenic Network for Agroecology, Food Sovereignty and Access To Land. www.agroecopolis.org