



# The Greek Ecosystem of Science for Policy

Discussion Paper

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September 2021

*How to cite this discussion paper:* Ladi, S., Panagiotatou, D. and Angelou, A. (2021) ‘The Greek Ecosystem of Science for Policy’, Discussion Paper prepared for the workshop on *Science for Policy across the EU: Greece* organised by the Joint Research Centre of the European Commission and the General Secretariat of Coordination, Presidency of the Government, Hellenic Republic, September.

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This Discussion Paper was commissioned by the European Commission’s Joint Research Centre as an input to the “Science for Policy Ecosystems Across the EU” project.

## Acknowledgments

The authors would like to thank Kristian Krieger and Lorenzo Melchor Fernandez, Joint Research Centre (JRC) of the European Commission, and Athanasios Gouglas, Lecturer in Politics and Public Policy at the University of Exeter, for their input and comments to the discussion paper.

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# Abbreviations

ADEDY	Greek Civil Service Confederation/Ανώτατη Διοίκηση Ενώσεων Δημοσίων Υπαλλήλων)
CERTH/ΕΚΕΤΑ	Centre for Research and Technology Hellas/Εθνικό Κέντρο Έρευνας και Τεχνολογικής Ανάπτυξης
CPERI	Chemical Process and Energy Resources Institute (Centre for Research and Technology Hellas)
ECDC	European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control
EKDDA	National Centre for Public Administration and Local Government/Εθνικό Κέντρο Δημόσιας Διοίκησης & Αυτοδιοίκησης
EKEM	Hellenic Centre for European Studies/Ελληνικό Κέντρο Ευρωπαϊκών Μελετών
EKKE	National Centre of Social Research/Εθνικό Κέντρο Κοινωνικών Ερευνών
EKT	National Documentation Centre/Εθνικό Κέντρο Τεκμηρίωσης
ELIAMEP	Hellenic Foundation for European and Foreign Policy/Ελληνικό Ίδρυμα Ευρωπαϊκής και Εξωτερικής Πολιτικής
ELKETHE	Hellenic Centre for Marine Research/Ελληνικό Κέντρο Θαλασσιών Ερευνών
ELSTAT	Hellenic Statistical Authority/Ελληνική Στατιστική Αρχή
ENA	Institute for Alternative Policies/Ινστιτούτο Εναλλακτικών Πολιτικών
ESEE	Hellenic Confederation of Commerce and Entrepreneurship/Ελληνική Συνομοσπονδία Εμπορίου & Επιχειρηματικότητας
FORTH/ITE	Foundation for Research and Technology – Hellas/Ίδρυμα Τεχνολογίας και Έρευνας
GFMC	Global Fire Monitoring Center
GSEE	General Confederation of Greek Workers/Γενική Συνομοσπονδία Εργατών Ελλάδας
GSEVEE	Hellenic Confederation of Professionals, Craftsmen & Merchants/Γενική Συνομοσπονδία Επαγγελματιών Βιοτεχνών Εμπόρων Ελλάδας
GSRI	General Secretariat for Research and Innovation (Ministry of Development and Investments)
HFRI/ELIDEK	Hellenic Foundation for Research and Innovation/Ελληνικό Ίδρυμα Έρευνας και Καινοτομίας
HIT	Hellenic Institute of Transport (Centre for Research and Technology Hellas)
IA	Institute of Astrophysics (Foundation for Research and Technology – Hellas)
IACM	Institute of Applied and Computational Mathematics (Foundation for Research and Technology – Hellas)
IBA	Institute of Biosciences and Applications (Demokritos)
IBO	Bioeconomy and Agrotechnology Institute (Centre for Research and Technology Hellas)
ICB	Institute of Chemical Biology (National Hellenic Research Foundation)
ICE-HT	Institute of Chemical Engineering Sciences (Foundation for Research and Technology – Hellas)

ICS	Institute of Computer Science (Foundation for Research and Technology – Hellas)
IDIS	Institute of International Relations (Panteion University of Social and Political Sciences)
IESL	Institute of Electronic Structure and Laser (Foundation for Research and Technology – Hellas)
IHR	Institute of Historical Research (National Hellenic Research Foundation)
IIT	Institute of Informatics and Telecommunications (Demokritos)
IMBB	Institute of Molecular Biology and Biotechnology (Foundation for Research and Technology – Hellas)
IMBBC	Institute of Marine Biology, Biotechnology and Aquaculture (Hellenic Centre for Marine Research)
IMBRIW	Institute of Marine Biological Resources and Inland Waters (Hellenic Centre for Marine Research)
IMS	Institute for Mediterranean Studies (Foundation for Research and Technology – Hellas)
INAB	Institute of Applied Biosciences (Centre for Research and Technology Hellas)
INN	Institute of Nanoscience and Nanotechnology (Demokritos)
INPP	Institute of Nuclear and Particle Physics (Demokritos)
INRASTES	Institute of Nuclear & Radiological Sciences and Technology, Energy & Safety (Demokritos)
Insocial	Institute for Social-Democracy
IO	Institute of Oceanography (Hellenic Centre for Marine Research)
IOBE	Foundation for Economic and Industrial Research/Ίδρυμα Οικονομικών και Βιομηχανικών Ερευνών
IOFR	Institute of Oceanographic and Fisheries Research
IPR	Institute of Petroleum Research (Foundation for Research and Technology – Hellas)
ISTAME	Institute of Strategic and Development Studies Andreas Papandreou/Ινστιτούτο Στρατηγικών και Αναπτυξιακών Μελετών Ανδρέας Παπανδρέου
ITI	Information Technologies Institute (Centre for Research and Technology Hellas)
JRC	Joint Research Centre (European Commission)
KAS	Centre for Analysis and Planning (Greek Ministry of Foreign Affairs)/Κέντρο Ανάλυσης και Σχεδιασμού
KEMEA	Centre for Security Studies/Κέντρο Μελετών Ασφαλείας (Ministry of Citizen Protection)
KEPE	Centre of Planning and Economic Research/Κέντρο Προγραμματισμού και Οικονομικών Ερευνών
KESEP	Centre for Foreign Policy Planning (Greek Ministry of Foreign Affairs)/Κέντρο Σχεδιασμού Εξωτερικής Πολιτικής
KKE	Communist Party of Greece
MFA	Greek Ministry of Foreign Affairs

NCRI	National Council for Research and Innovation/Εθνικό Συμβούλιο Έρευνας, Τεχνολογίας και Καινοτομίας
NHRF/EIE	National Hellenic Research Foundation/Εθνικό Ίδρυμα Ερευνών
NOA	National Observatory of Athens/Εθνικό Αστεροσκοπείο Αθηνών
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PBO	Parliamentary Budget Office/Γραφείο Προϋπολογισμού του Κράτους στη Βουλή
RDI	Raw data, Descriptive and Inferential statistics
SOE	Council of Economic Advisers/Συμβούλιο Οικονομικών Εμπειρογνομόνων (Ministry of Finance)
STEP-C	Science and Technology Park of Crete (Foundation for Research and Technology – Hellas)
SYRIZA	Coalition of Radical Left
TPCI	Institute of Theoretical and Physical Chemistry (National Hellenic Research Foundation)
WHO	World Health Organisation

## **The Greek Ecosystem of Science for Policy**

### **Introduction**

The purpose of this discussion paper is to provide an initial mapping of the Greek ecosystem of science for policy in light of the workshop on *Science for Policy across the EU: Greece* organised by the Joint Research Centre (JRC) of the European Commission and the General Secretariat of Coordination, Presidency of the Government, Hellenic Republic to be held online on the 29<sup>th</sup> September 2021. The first part of the paper provides a mapping of the different types of institutions and structures that the Greek ecosystem consists of. Some key examples and their work are given in each section, but the list is not exhaustive. An attempt is made to categorise the different institutions and to provide a brief discussion of their role in the science for policy ecosystem. The second part of the paper outlines some of the key challenges and opportunities for the Greek ecosystem of science for policy building upon the findings of this initial research and the relevant bibliography.

Our aim is to provide a basis for discussion in order to enrich our knowledge of how expertise is informing policymaking in Greece and to co-create proposals for structures and mechanisms that could advance the links between science and policy even further. The Greek ecosystem of science for policy is rich and its potential capacity is significant. The current global challenges and multiple crises that Greece is facing make this the right moment for further strengthening the policy - science nexus.

The discussion paper was supported by JRC and followed to a large extent the structure of the report on the Danish Ecosystem of Science for Policy (Pedersen and Hvidtfeldt 2021).

### **Part 1: Science for Policy in Greece**

The aim of this part is to map the science for policy landscape in Greece.

#### **1.1. Academies**



The Academy of Athens (Ακαδημία Αθηνών), Greece's only Academy and oldest research hub, was founded in 1926 to contribute to the advancement of the Sciences, Humanities and Fine Arts and promote the exchange between its members and Academies in other countries and their members. Nowadays, there are 20 Research Centres and Research Offices operating under its auspices with the most recently established being the internationally acclaimed Biomedical Research Foundation. They conduct research falling into both the Arts and Humanities (e.g. Greek Philosophy, Modern Greek History, Modern Greek Art, Greek and Latin Literature, Archaeology, Architecture, International and Constitutional Institutions, Financial Research, etc.) and the Sciences (e.g. Mathematics, Physics, Astronomy, Mechanics, etc.). The Academy's members, most of whom are renowned scientists and academics, participate in international research projects and scientific conferences, and provide advice at times to the Greek state in their capacity as experts in areas ranging from education and fiscal policy to agriculture, shipping, and industry. In fact, a clear part of the Academy's mission consists in issuing consultations and proposals as well as adopting decisions and judgements in view of guiding different state bodies and authorities. Lastly, the Academy grants a number of scholarships and awards, which are made available through donations by both individuals and other bodies ([Academy of Athens](#)).

## ***1.2. Government Funded Research Institutes***

The first research institutes that emerged in Greece were funded by the government. This implies that the state at that time perceived them as essential for both pioneering scientific research and contributing to better policymaking, and thus was to provide for their basic infrastructure and personnel. In that respect, they do not have to depend on research projects or other external funding for their survival and they can perform some basic research which is necessary for developing applied research. Having said that, it is important to note that most of them also attract external funding and manage numerous research projects. This section discusses the most prominent research centres and institutes within this category.

The National Hellenic Research Foundation (NHRF) (ΕΙΕ, Εθνικό Ίδρυμα Ερευνών) was established in 1958 with the aim of developing and promoting new scientific knowledge via the realisation of various research programmes. The NHRF operates under the supervision of

the General Secretariat for Research and Innovation (GSRI) of the Ministry of Development and Investments. It consists of three research institutes: i) the Institute of Historical Research (IHR) conducting research on the political, economic, social and cultural history of the Greek areas from prehistoric antiquity to the modern era; ii) the Institute of Chemical Biology (ICB) which acts as a focal point for innovation in the intersection between health, drug research and biotechnology, and iii) the Institute of Theoretical and Physical Chemistry (TPCI) which focuses on computational/theoretical chemistry and physics, with emphasis on nanomaterials and electrochemical applications. With most of its employees being holders of doctoral degrees, the Foundation is managing around 180 research projects, while it also hosts young scientists who carry out dissertations, doctoral research (in collaboration with Greek universities) and post-doctoral work within externally funded projects. The NHRF is also contributing much to the translation of research insights to measurable social and economic output by enhancing the linkage between its educational mission and the Greek economy and society; indeed, the provision of services towards industry, enterprises, and the wider public sector -though not explicitly towards government agencies and bodies- constitutes a central goal of the Foundation. To that end it identifies potential users of its services and products, while also supporting researchers in their collaboration with the industry ([National Hellenic Research Foundation](#)).

Of similar nature is the Centre of Planning and Economic Research (KEPE, Κέντρο Προγραμματισμού και Οικονομικών Ερευνών), founded in 1959. KEPE operates under the supervision of the Ministry of Development and Investments and its research agenda covers the areas of i) macroeconomic analysis and projections, ii) fiscal and monetary policy, iii) human resources and social policies, and iv) sectoral analyses and policies. KEPE has produced rich research-related material on different aspects pertaining to the Greek economy including studies for some of the key issues that Greece faced during the Eurozone crisis such as the impact of debt restructuring and evaluations of the structural reforms. It has also produced studies and reports assigned by different ministries and other bodies, while its members have at various occasions advised the Greek government on a multitude of economic and social policy issues ([Centre of Planning and Economic Research](#)).

In the field of social sciences, the most prominent research hub linking research with policy is the National Centre of Social Research (EKKE, Εθνικό Κέντρο Κοινωνικών Ερευνών). EKKE was

established in 1959 and is supervised by the General Secretariat for Research and Innovation of the Ministry of Development and Investments. EKKE's main task is to conduct and promote social research on a wide range of issues, from comparative politics and electoral behaviour to sociology. Subsequently, its research personnel is mainly comprised of in-house researchers of various disciplines. Following its mission, EKKE publishes studies related to the research of contemporary Greek society, while it also publishes the Greek Review of Social Research, the country's oldest social sciences journal. At the same time, EKKE occasionally undertakes projects which involve, among others, the design and evaluation of public policies at all levels of government thus supporting the Greek state in its function. Although the latter function is project-based and thus not linked to a formal policy evaluation process, EKKE has on various occasions drawn attention to critical social and political issues while it has managed over time to develop partnerships with various public and private bodies being also responsible for the coordination of applied research hubs ([National Centre of Social Research](#)).

The National Documentation Centre (EKT, Εθνικό Κέντρο Τεκμηρίωσης & Ηλεκτρονικού Περιεχομένου), another noteworthy foundation, was established in 1980 to systematize the collection and distribution of the country's scientific, research and cultural output. EKT operates under the supervision of the Ministry of Digital Governance and plays a key role in knowledge dissemination at both national and global level. Having been designated as a National Authority of the Hellenic Statistical System for European statistics on Research, Development and Innovation, it operates as a mechanism for official statistical information and monitoring of public policies. EKT also employs cutting edge technology infrastructure and know-how to ensure full accessibility to research-related material (both content and data) to the entire scientific community, including the research institutes of the NHRF and working groups of national and international organisations. EKT's priorities include: i) the collection, organisation, and dissemination of e-content and digital services (e.g., the development of and accessibility to the Greek National Archive of Doctoral Dissertations), ii) the production of Raw data, Descriptive and Inferential (RDI) statistics and indicators and the close collaboration with the Hellenic Statistical Authority (ELSTAT, Ελληνική Στατιστική Αρχή), Eurostat and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), and iii) the linkage of research and business through the provision of networking services for

enterprises and the scientific community ([National Documentation Centre](#)). Finally, EKT has recently produced a publication focusing on the concept of ‘documented public policy planning’ and highlighting, through a case study aiming to evaluate EU-funded interventions in support of higher education and research during Horizon 2020 (the Multiannual Financial Framework 2014-2020), how the Centre can contribute evidence and data towards effective public policy design and implementation ([EKT 2021](#)).

A more recent yet important body for the linkage of research and policy practice is the Hellenic Foundation for Research and Innovation (HFRI/ELIDEK, Ελληνικό Ίδρυμα Έρευνας και Καινοτομίας). The foundation was established in 2016 with the aim of supporting new researchers by providing scholarships for doctoral candidates, as well as funding for post-doctoral research projects. The Foundation’s overall aim is to actively involve researchers in the country’s research and innovation policy, while also reversing the outflow of scientists abroad. In addition to granting scholarships and financing the acquisition of research equipment, HFRI/ELIDEK also supports start-ups utilising research output. Following its establishment HFRI/ELIDEK has opened multiple calls for doctoral and post-doctoral researchers with some of the most recent funding rounds being focused on the multi-disciplinary study of Covid-19 and its implications. Following the respective European practice HFRI/ELIDEK’s funding calls give much emphasis to the scientific and social impact of projects, thus facilitating the linkage between research and practice ([Hellenic Foundation for Research and Innovation](#)).

In the 1980s, further organisations were founded, such as the Hellenic Centre for European Studies (EKEM, Ελληνικό Κέντρο Ευρωπαϊκών Μελετών). Nevertheless, the research that they produced was not policy-oriented *per se* and their contribution was mainly academic. During the Eurozone crisis years and as a result of budget cuts organisations such as EKEM were closed down and only the biggest and most relevant to the crisis managed to survive. To sum up, organisations within this category are non-profit and are most commonly established either as public-interest legal entities under private law (e.g., EKT) or as public law legal entities (e.g., EKKE). Therefore, although they all operate under the supervision of different ministries, their employees are not always public servants. Another point worth making is that most such bodies now function under the auspices of the Ministry of Development and Investments, rather than the Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs or other ministries

that would seem more relevant with regards to the subject of their work, this clearly pointing to knowledge transfer to industry and innovation. It should be noted, finally, that often ideological and party affiliation has influenced staffing decisions in government-funded research institutes, especially in relation to the selection of the president, who is usually appointed by the Minister in charge, and the members of the board, who may represent other institutional bodies that are also potentially subject to change following a change of government.

### **1.3. In-house Research Structures**

A number of ministries/public bodies have sought to create in-house research structures so that they can develop tailor-made research and policy proposals. While some of these structures have long-standing presence within their administrative entities their influence vis-à-vis the policymaking process varies widely between policy fields and in accordance with the approach and openness of the respective ministry's political leadership.

Two prominent organisations of this type in the field of economics are the Council of Economic Advisers and the Parliamentary Budget Office. The Council of Economic Advisers (SOE, Συμβούλιο Οικονομικών Εμπειρογνομώνων) started functioning in its current form in 1987 and is an advisory body of the Ministry of Finance. Its significance has increased during periods when the economy is high on the agenda. For example, during the Eurozone crisis and as Greece had to engage in highly technical economic negotiations, SOE held a prominent role providing expert input to the Greek government, while its president was usually a key member of the Greek negotiating team ([Council of Economic Advisers](#)). A revolving doors phenomenon can be observed in the case of SOE since many of its presidents have also served as Ministers and vice versa.

The second organisation is the Parliamentary Budget Office (PBO, Γραφείο Προϋπολογισμού του Κράτους στη Βουλή) which was created in 2010 as an internal unit of the Parliament. Its creation was part of the structural reforms introduced with the First Economic Adjustment Programme for Greece. Its role is to monitor the State Budget's implementation and to produce reports regarding the fiscal targets which are set in the Mid-term Fiscal Strategy Frameworks ([Parliamentary Budget Office](#)). PBO was created following the example of similar

independent *intra-muros* bodies like the Congressional Budget Office to ensure the non-partisan and independent monitoring of the Greek economy and budget.

Beyond the field of economics, the Greek Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) has established three internal platforms that aim to provide expertise vis-à-vis the Ministry's multi-faceted activities. On the one hand, the MFA employs several experts from different fields that are seen as crucial for its function. Officially, the branch of experts is staffed by holders of postgraduate degrees in specialized subjects ([MFA a](#)). The latest round of recruitment took place in March 2018 and led to the hiring of an expert on cyber-security, of an economist-statistician, of an expert on Greek-Russian relationships and of a communications expert ([MFA b](#)). Generally, the number and specialization of posts along with the timing of the recruitment is left to the Ministry's political leadership.

In addition to the branch of experts, the Greek MFA has established, in 1998, the Centre for Analysis and Planning (KAS, Κέντρο Ανάλυσης και Σχεδιασμού), later renamed as Centre for Foreign Policy Planning (KESEP, Κέντρο Σχεδιασμού Εξωτερικής Πολιτικής). Officially, KESEP operates as an autonomous unit under the supervision of the Minister of Foreign Affairs. Its aim is to offer analysis on foreign policy and international relations and conduct scientific research in support of the Ministry. KESEP is headed by an ambassador or an Expert-Minister Counsellor A' with a PhD and a record of relevant publications. KESEP's research-related activities are coordinated by its Scientific Director, a university Professor of relevant specialization. The Centre is staffed by permanent personnel from several branches of the Foreign Ministry (Diplomatic, Expert, Economic and Commercial Affairs, Administrative staff), while it works in tandem with working groups/mixed Task Forces composed of MFA staff and academics ([Centre for Foreign Policy Planning](#)). Finally, in June 2017, the MFA re-established the Scientific Council with the aim of examining special legal issues and providing relevant proposals. The Council initially comprised of academics specialized in international law, maritime law and human rights law ([MFA c](#)).

It is ambivalent how much the above three bodies take part in the MFA's decision-making process. The branch of experts, together with the Legal Service of the MFA which deals with the day-to-day issues that are associated with foreign policy, seem to be more embedded in the overall hierarchy while they play a more dynamic role in the policymaking process. KESEP, while officially participating in the National Council of Foreign Policy, seems to be mainly

focusing on research-related reporting and on coordinating task forces/working groups. Finally, the Scientific Council seems to be less active and influential since its reestablishment in 2017 though it was initially supposed to provide advice and make recommendations on critical and long-term issues concerning the Greek state such as the Greek-Turkish relations and the Cyprus conflict. In addition to the field of foreign policy, the Greek state has also established an in-house centre of scientific expertise on matters of security. The Centre for Security Studies (KEMEA, Κέντρο Μελετών Ασφαλείας) was established in 2005 by the Minister of Citizen Protection as the respective ministry's scientific, consulting and research organisation. Its main aim is to conduct research and produce studies on security-related questions and policies like public order, terrorism, crime prevention, border management and risk-assessment. KEMEA employs 175 scientific and research associates of various academic backgrounds and professional expertise. Throughout the years it has managed to develop a distinct Europe-wide presence in its field by participating in numerous EU-funded projects. In addition to its research-related activities KEMEA acts as the point of contact with various European organisations in the field of security ([Centre for Security Studies](#)).

In addition to such in-house research structures there is Special Scientific Personnel (Ειδικό Επιστημονικό Προσωπικό) across the Greek Civil Service in different ministries and local authorities. These scientific experts are hired on permanent and fixed contracts based on their credentials, i.e. relevant experience and scientific publications. Their number and specialization remain under the respective ministry's discretion and are subject to budget constraints. However, the embeddedness of these experts in ministries and other institutional bodies seems to be rather inefficient as there is not a clear description of specific tasks they are supposed to undertake thus often ending up performing non-scientific tasks. Moreover, there is no single organisation representing them and there also seems to be a lack of knowledge on the side of policymakers of how this type of personnel could be useful for their day-to-day work.

Ministers and Prime Ministers in Greece also rely heavily on the political and policy advice of adviser-staffers who according to Law 4622/2019 serve in institutionalized 'political offices' (PM) and 'private offices' (Ministers). Since their establishment in the early 1980s, these offices have colonized the policy advisory system in the country, enjoying extensive political leverage in both the front (agenda setting, policy formulation, decision-making) and back end

(monitoring and evaluation) of the policy cycle. The advisers in these offices, who are appointed under different titles (special advisers, scientific associates, etc.) are mainly, though not exclusively, ‘policy managers, not experts’, who steer policy and network with other political staff across a fragmented executive core government (Gouglas 2015). They therefore perform key coordination functions and are also important policy entrepreneurs. The influence of these adviser-staffers on Ministers and Prime Ministers depends on trust (Gouglas 2018). With the exception of expert adviser-staffers (e.g., a chief economic adviser, a legal expert, etc.), the majority of adviser-staffers influence the degree to which scientific knowledge or other types of expert knowledge produced in the knowledge ecosystem is utilized by Ministers. This happens either openly via contesting scientific advice, or more covertly via politicizing the policy process (e.g., gatekeeping and regulating access to politicians).

Public administration in Greece has been commissioning numerous studies to private consultants and public research centres to get evidence for better policymaking in areas such as public administration reform, social policy, health policy, etc. It is usually the case that these studies are rarely used or are lost over time. In an effort to address this problem, the Ministry of Public Administrative Reform and e-Government announced, in March 2012, the creation of a database for all public sector studies, whether commissioned or in-house. Responsible for assembling, diffusing, and providing proposals for its utilization, is the Documentation and Innovation Unit of the National Centre for Public Administration and Local Government (EKDDA, Εθνικό Κέντρο Δημόσιας Διοίκησης & Αυτοδιοίκησης). An online repository has been created although its usefulness and usage by policymakers has not been evaluated yet (see [Digital Repository EKDDA](#)).

Overall, we observe a discrepancy between the ministries that seek to cluster their research resources together in order to facilitate synergies and produce comprehensive policy proposals and those that opt to commission research to individual experts based on their needs. Experts hired in ministries and local authorities without such organized platforms tend to be isolated within the wider administrative framework and have limited chances of influencing the policy process. While the contribution of in-house research bodies towards policy planning remains subject to multiple variables, including the level of politicization within the ministry or the urgency of the policy, it is without a doubt that structured research



platforms are more effective and influential compared to individual experts. Challenges remain with respect to integrating the policy proposals of the above bodies into the day-to-day policymaking of ministries.

#### ***1.4. Ad hoc Commissions, Councils, Expert Panels, Taskforces, Working Groups***

Following evidence-informed policies during crises is not an obvious path and indeed constitutes a political choice. As crises entail scarce information about their nature and implications, policymakers have to diverge from their usual political deliberations and seek advice on the technical aspects of the emerging problem. This was very much the case for the Greek government during the first phase of the Covid-19 crisis. The government had to decide on the optimal measures for handling the pandemic by considering a multiplicity of variables including the severity and the contagiousness of the virus, health sector capacity, treatment costs, and the economic, social, and psychological implications of the different containment strategies.

An 'Experts' Committee on Public Health' (Επιτροπή Εμπειρογνώμόνων Δημόσιας Υγείας) was put at the centre of its crisis-response already since February 2020. The government's policies for the containment of the crisis, including an early lockdown, were guided by the input of this committee, while its communication strategy was also centered around the presentation of scientific evidence. The committee tended to reflect the mainstream views of the international medical community and to transmit the general guidelines as recommended by the relevant international bodies, e.g., the World Health Organisation (WHO) and the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC). In this sense, it operated as the official contact point between the international expert bodies and the Greek state. Subsequently, the head of the committee Professor of Pathology and Infectious Disease, S. Tsiodras, became the spokesperson of the Ministry of Health for Covid-19 while the de facto head of the crisis management effort, i.e., the head of the General Secretariat of Civil Protection and Crisis Management, N. Chardalias, developed a smooth and close cooperation with him.

The committee was composed of around thirty health scientists, including medical doctors and epidemiologists, practitioners, and academics. While following strict medical advice at

the beginning of the pandemic proved to be a successful strategy, this stopped being the case as the crisis dragged on and fatigue accumulated. In fact, the committee lacked social scientists and other experts that could advise on compliance problems, thus making medical advice less efficient during the pandemic's subsequent phases (Ladi, Angelou & Panagiotatou 2021).

And yet, the practice of bringing together experts to review the causes and the potential policy responses to a crisis was in place before the pandemic. An ad hoc commission was created in 2018 with the aim of reviewing the structural causes that led to the wildfires in the coastal Athenian suburb of Mati. In addition to the causes of the latter event, the ad hoc commission also provided proposals on how to address similar incidents in the future. The commission was created under the auspices of the Greek government and was managed by the Global Fire Monitoring Center (GFMC). It was constituted of six members, all of them experts in forestry, forest management and firefighting. During its five-months operation the commission interviewed seventy-three experts, both academics and practitioners, while it also met with relevant stakeholders. At the same time, the commission sought to hold roundtable discussions with all government agencies and ministries involved with the management of forests and firefighting. In this sense, there was a clear effort to establish linkages between the commission's work and policy planning. Apart from noting the multiplication of wildfires in recent years, the report that was issued in 2019 also identified long-term policy failures with respect to the planning and the implementation of measures for the prevention and the handling of wildfires ([Global Fire Monitoring Center 2019](#)). While the current government sought to present a plan that took into account these lessons, the 2021 wildfires demonstrate that this was only partially the case. This is so as we still witnessed the occurrence of numerous wildfires that destroyed large forests and property, yet with no human casualties this time.

It is interesting to note that the trend of consulting experts vis-à-vis the management of crises is gaining ground in Greece in recent years. This constitutes a clear break from the previous pattern of crisis-management and policymaking in the country as in the past experts were usually marginal to the policymaking process and their involvement was mainly dependent on their political ties (Ladi 2020). However, further research would be required to shed light on the level of public exposure expert committees have had during recent crises as well as

the level of scrutiny their advice has been given to. It is worth noting, though, that their advice reports have been usually made available to the general public, something harder to tell about their meetings' minutes, and that 'scrutiny' has in most cases taken the form of standard criticism on the part of the opposition. Apart from crisis-related commissions, we have also identified expert bodies that were created in view of providing policy solutions to wider challenges. The recent Pissarides Committee (2020) on a future growth plan for Greece and the Spraos Committee (1996) on long-term economic policy are such examples. Past efforts to apply some type of evidence-informed policymaking to imminent problems have fell through. The most characteristic example has been the multiple failed attempts to reform the Greek pension system to make it financially viable. All in all, successive Greek governments overlooked expert advice and opted to implement reforms that were mainly aiming to prolong the status-quo without changing the political balance (Tinios 2013; Trantidis 2016).

The Pissarides Committee was constituted of a limited number of well-known economists under the chairmanship of the 2010 Nobel Prize laureate in economics, Professor Sir Christopher Pissarides. The committee was tasked by the Greek PM to develop a plan for sustainable economic growth in Greece. The report was commissioned in the context of Greece exiting the close monitoring that the Memoranda of Understanding entailed. The lengthy report, published in November 2020, includes a review of the challenges that the Greek economy still faces while also making detailed suggestions on how the government can address them ([Pissarides Commission 2020](#)). While the Covid-19 pandemic has changed the government's economic planning, certain suggestions from this report were included in the Greek proposal vis-à-vis the European Commission's Recovery and Resilience Facility. While the extent to which the Pissarides report will be followed in the future remains debatable, its employment with respect to the Recovery and Resilience Facility provides some positive early signs.

While the Pissarides report seems to have influenced government policymaking this was not the case with the work of the Spraos Committee in 1996. The committee's official name was 'Committee for the study of the long-term economic policy' and was chaired by Yiannis Spraos, Professor Emeritus of the University of London. The committee's seven members were economists that acted as advisors to the PM and to various Ministers, senior civil

servants from the Ministry of Finance and the Bank of Greece and one academic. The committee's official aim was to examine the medium- and long-term development of the Greek economy and to submit relevant reports to the PM. While it produced seven reports, the one on social security and pension reform received much public attention as it suggested a substantial reform of the pension system. This report not only reviewed the unsustainable situation of the social security system but also proposed alternative policy solutions to amend the situation. Yet, the reaction of social partners and special interest groups led to the abandonment of the plan and the adoption of a watered-down version (Featherstone, Kazamias & Papadimitriou 2001).

The story of the Spraos report sheds light on a wider phenomenon: the employment of research in policymaking is traditionally politicised in the Greek context. Commissioning and following through such proposals might end up being subject to political and public opinion constraints. Characteristically the Pissarides report came at a time when the Greek economy seemed in position for a fresh start after a decade of conditionality-based lending. Moreover, it was employed in connection with a generous EU-funded package with minimum conditionality. On the other hand, the Spraos report was introduced at a time of soft-budget constraints and cheap lending, while social partners maintained much influence. Subsequently, the suggested reforms, being painful and politically costly, were abandoned under the pressure of special interest groups.

### ***1.5. Research and Technology Organisations***

A crucial, if not the most influential, group of research structures in terms of producing policy proposals and affecting to a greater or lesser extent policymaking is the one composed of research and technology organisations and institutes. With the majority of them operating under the supervision of the General Secretariat for Research and Innovation (GSRI) of the Ministry of Development, their undisputable specialisation and expertise in a variety of scientific fields results in their research outputs being of authoritative nature and thus difficult to ignore when designing policy.

To begin with, the National Council for Research and Innovation (NCRI) (Εθνικό Συμβούλιο Έρευνας, Τεχνολογίας και Καινοτομίας) plays an important role when it comes to linking

research with policy practice. NCRI is the supreme advisory body of the state for the formulation and implementation of the national policy for Research, Technology and Innovation. It operates under the auspices of the Ministry of Education, Research and Religious Affairs and its Board is comprised of eleven members, both academics and practitioners. The Council is responsible to formulate policy proposals in accordance with the relevant European and international standards and practices, while it is also tasked to draft and publish the Annual Review of Strategic Research, Technology and Innovation. In addition, the Council offers proposals on how to allocate funds with respect to the state's research and innovation policy. The latter objective is closely linked with the wider social impact of the funded project/actions. At the same time, NCRI is aiming to facilitate the employment of research output by entrepreneurs and the private sector, while also using research output to support the productive sectors of the national economy. Finally, a distinct part of NCRI's mission has to do with the support of start-ups ([National Council for Research and Innovation](#)).

Moving to the field of applied sciences, one of the most active and renowned research centres is the National Centre for Scientific Research 'Demokritos' (Εθνικό Κέντρο Έρευνας Φυσικών Ερευνών 'Δημόκριτος'), founded in 1961. Although initially dedicated to nuclear research, Demokritos hosts today five institutes conducting research on different scientific fields: i) the Institute of Informatics and Telecommunications (IIT), ii) the Institute of Biosciences and Applications (IBA), iii) the Institute of Nuclear and Particle Physics (INPP), iv) the Institute of Nanoscience and Nanotechnology (INN), and v) the Institute of Nuclear & Radiological Sciences and Technology, Energy & Safety (INRASTES). Demokritos operates under the auspices of the General Secretariat for Research and Innovation (GSRI) of the Ministry of Development and Investments and is governed by a board of directors, consulted in turn by a scientific council on issues pertaining to research strategy, technology transfer, and innovation support. Nowadays, the Centre employs around 180 researchers in tenured and tenure-track positions and more than 500 research personnel, including doctoral students in Physical Sciences, working on projects funded by the Greek state, the European Union or Demokritos in collaboration with private industries and public benefit organisations such as the Stavros Niarchos Foundation ([National Centre for Scientific Research 'Demokritos'](#)).

Another important research and technology hub, which has gained a worldwide reputation as a top-level research centre in recent years, is the Foundation for Research and Technology - Hellas (FORTH) (ΙΤΕ, Ίδρυμα Τεχνολογίας και Έρευνας). FORTH was established in 1983 with the aim of fostering learning, research, and innovation in the context of promoting regional, national, and European socioeconomic growth. Similar to Demokritos, FORTH reports to the General Secretariat for Research and Innovation of the Ministry of Development and Investments. Its eight research institutes, most of which are located in Crete, conduct cutting-edge research in high-added value areas, for instance Precision Medicine, Robotics, Nanotechnology and Telecommunications. FORTH's component institutes are: i) the Institute of Electronic Structure and Laser (IESL) focusing on Lasers, Photonics and Microelectronics, ii) the Institute of Molecular Biology and Biotechnology (IMBB) delving into Genetics and Bioinformatics, iii) the Institute of Computer Science (ICS), iv) the Institute of Applied and Computational Mathematics (IACM), v) the Institute of Astrophysics (IA) also dealing with Astronomy, vi) the Institute for Mediterranean Studies (IMS), vii) the Institute of Petroleum Research (IPR), and viii) the Institute of Chemical Engineering Sciences (ICE-HT). Apart from the above institutes, FORTH has also founded the PRAXI Network, aiming to bridge research and industry in Greece through the provision of mediation and consultation services on aspects pertaining to technology transfer and the exploitation of research results, and the Science and Technology Park of Crete (STEP-C). The latter, extending over an area of 2000 sqm, has accommodated more than sixty start-up and spin-off companies since its establishment, in 1995, and has provided them with the necessary means to bring to fruition their business ideas. Moreover, a number of projects, financed by regional, national, and European sources, have been implemented at STEP-C's premises ([Foundation for Research and Technology - Hellas](#)).

The Centre for Research and Technology Hellas (CERTH) (ΕΚΕΤΑ, Εθνικό Κέντρο Έρευνας και Τεχνολογικής Ανάπτυξης) is another foundation worth mentioning as it figures among the top-20 research institutes in the EU as far as participation in competitive research grants is concerned. Founded in 2000, CERTH is a legal entity governed by private law with non-profit status operating, similarly to the aforementioned bodies, under the supervision of the General Secretariat for Research and Innovation of the Ministry of Development and Investments. Its annual turnover originates from bilateral industrial research contracts (30%),

competitive research grants (60%) and government funding (10%). CERTH's mission is to produce high quality scientific research, promote RDI, develop innovative products and services, and build strong partnerships with national and international research centres, universities, and industry. CERTH's five institutes, in particular: i) the Chemical Process and Energy Resources Institute (CPERI), ii) the Information Technologies Institute (ITI), iii) the Hellenic Institute of Transport (HIT), iv) the Institute of Applied Biosciences (INAB), and v) the Bioeconomy and Agrotechnology Institute (IBO) conduct research in areas including Energy, Environment, Industry, Chemical and Biochemical Processes, Telecommunication Technologies, Information and Communication, Transportation and Sustainable Mobility, Health, Agrotechnology, Biomedicine, etc. The foundation has received various awards while the some 700 people -most of whom are scientists- employed at CERTH have produced research-related material with significant scientific impact ([Centre for Research and Technology Hellas](#)).

The Hellenic Centre for Marine Research (ELKETHE, Ελληνικό Κέντρο Θαλασσίων Ερευνών) is another specialised governmental research centre, this time supervised by the General Secretariat for Research and Technology (GSRT) of the Ministry of Development and Investments. It was established in 1985 as the successor of the Institute of Oceanographic and Fisheries Research (IOFR), formed in turn following the merging of the Hydrobiological Institute of the Academy of Athens and the Laboratory of Fisheries Studies in 1965. ELKETHE's three institutes, namely i) the Institute of Marine Biology, Biotechnology and Aquaculture (IMBBC), ii) the Institute of Marine Biological Resources and Inland Waters (IMBRIW), and iii) the Institute of Oceanography (IO) conduct scientific and technological research in a variety of marine-related areas such as: aquatic biodiversity, aquaculture, population genetics and genomics of marine organisms, the role of climate change in the evolution of aquatic ecosystems, the effects of natural and human-induced hazards on the marine environment, etc. The mission of the Centre includes, among others, the protection and conservation of the hydrosphere and its organisms, the promotion of sustainable exploitation of marine biological and other resources, and the sensitization of the public on issues related to the hydrosphere. ELKETHE also has an advisory role as it consults regional, national, Mediterranean and EU authorities on oil pollution from maritime activities and accidents, fisheries policy,

environmental sustainability and management, and marine strategy implementation ([Centre for Marine Research](#)).

Finally, the National Observatory of Athens (NOA) (Εθνικό Αστεροσκοπείο Αθηνών), the oldest research institute not only in Greece but in Southeastern Europe as a whole, also contributes significantly to the linkage between research and policy practice. Established in 1842 and also operating under the supervision of the General Secretariat for Research and Technology of the Ministry of Development and Investments, NOA conducts research in the fields of Astronomy, Astrophysics, Space Applications, Environment, Energy, Meteorology, Hydrology, Seismology, Physics of the Earth's Interior, Applied Geophysics, and Geodynamics. NOA's research activities are undertaken by its three institutes: i) the Institute of Astronomy, Astrophysics, Space Applications and Remote Sensing, ii) the Institute of Environmental Research and Sustainable Development, and iii) the Geodynamics Institute. Apart from producing scientific research in the above areas, all three Institutes offer postgraduate courses (MSc) in collaboration with Greek Universities and other research centres. Moreover, NOA's research outputs have practical policy implications as they are employed to support applications of economic, social and cultural interest; NOA also offers advice and guidance to the Greek government and other institutional bodies on how to improve the country's monitoring system when it comes to unforeseen events and disasters like earthquakes, tsunamis and wildfires ([National Observatory of Athens](#)).

### **1.6. Individual Advisers**

Despite the existence of several in-house research centres, the Greek public administration has also been commissioning studies, either through competitive tendering or through direct assignment depending on their cost, to academics and private consultants to get evidence for better policymaking in areas such as public administration reform, social policy, health policy, etc.

University Departments inside, and lately outside, the country, have traditionally been a source of expertise for governments. Individual academics often work as formal or informal consultants close to Ministers and Prime Ministers or in other similar posts. Not surprisingly party affiliation and/or personal connections which ensure trust are necessary for entering



such posts (Featherstone and Papadimitriou 2015). The most prominent specializations have been law and more recently economics.

Moreover, it is often the case that academics are given ministerial posts. Some examples are Loukas Papademos, Yannis Stournaras, Yanis Varoufakis and Eucleid Tsakalotos during the Eurozone crisis and currently Christos Staikouras as Minister of Finance. A direct relationship between academia and high-level government positions can thus be observed, meaning that in recent years political parties have been increasingly entrusting prominent positions to academics and not to political personnel. This trend could be an indication of the lack of analytical capacity on the part of the public administration to deal with complex issues especially if reviewed through the lens of Greece's long-standing tradition of political patronage. Another explanation could yet be that governments appoint academics to leverage scientific credibility and authority, thus supporting the argument brought up earlier that the employment of experts and evidence-informed policies in crisis-management has been gaining ground in recent years.

In addition to academics a number of studies have been commissioned to external consultants. Big consulting and legal firms undertake such exercises drawing from their previous experience with reform initiatives in Greece and abroad. The overall aim is to help the Greek state implement reforms drawing from existing best practices. For example, most privatisations during the decade-long financial crisis were conducted under the guidance and advice of external private sector consultants (To Vima 2012).

As one would expect the two main pools from which external experts are hired, i.e. academia and the private sector, have very different characteristics and lead to different input and actions. On the one hand, academic experts build their advice on a robust body of research and tend to provide detailed and multi-level analysis. On the other hand, due to the nature of their work, their ability to operationalise these insights is more limited. Contrary to this, private sector consultants are better able to provide practical short-term solutions, yet they occasionally base their proposals on norms, routines and international templates that might overlook the specificities of the Greek context, long-term policy effects and unintended consequences.

### **1.7. Policy Research Institutes and Think Tanks**

In the 1980s a small number of autonomous non-profit research organisations following the think tank model appeared with the aim of promoting research in their respective areas and influencing the government's policymaking.

Two such bodies are identified as the most prominent and active in recent years. The first, the Hellenic Foundation for European and Foreign Policy (ELIAMEP, Ελληνικό Ίδρυμα Ευρωπαϊκής και Εξωτερικής Πολιτικής) was created in 1988. The Foundation has established tight links with the MFA over time, though not with the latter's formal expert structures. In fact, ELIAMEP has been receiving funding from the MFA for research and project-related purposes while former ambassadors have traditionally served as members of its board. While ELIAMEP's expertise initially focused on foreign affairs-related issues it gradually expanded both geographically and thematically to include areas such as EU institutions and policies; migration; security and conflict resolution; democracy; good governance and the rule of law; gender equality; employment; sustainability and climate change, etc. ELIAMEP's mission, yet, is not only to generate new knowledge but to *“conduct policy-oriented research and provide policy makers, academics and the public at large with authoritative information and substantiated policy recommendations, to contribute to the development of evidence-based responses to major European and foreign policy challenges”* ([Hellenic Foundation for European and Foreign Policy](#)). It is also worth noting that ELIAMEP participates in a significant number of research projects; collaborates regularly with stakeholders such as government institutions, NGOs, the media, universities, and the private sector; and engages with several international networks in its capacity as member. Last but not least, it is committed to promoting public debate, through publications, seminars, conferences, and the usage of social media to inform the general public and raise awareness on different issues. In this context, ELIAMEP used funding it received from the Stavros Niarchos Foundation in 2013 to create the Crisis Observatory aiming to *“become a central hub for information, research and dialogue for both the Greek and European crises”* ([Crisis Observatory ELIAMEP](#)).

The second organisation, diaNEOsis (διαΝΕΟσις), emerged in 2016 as a dynamic non-profit think-tank with the purpose of contributing accurate arguments and data on social and economic issues to the public discourse, providing policy proposals leading to economic growth while protecting social cohesion, and ultimately promoting change and political

reform as deemed fit. Being the first policy research institute focusing on public policy and not foreign policy issues, diaNEOsis has been producing academic research, investigative journalism and open data on current and burning issues, for instance the impact of subsequent lockdowns on the Greeks' psychology and attitudes, public trust variations vis-a-vis vaccinations against Covid-19, key actions for the future of Europe, etc. DiaNEOsis has no affiliation to any political party, business sector or organisation, and its activities are financed exclusively from private funds; funding for the first three years of its operation was covered entirely by the prominent Greek businessman Dimitris Daskalopoulos ([diaNEOsis](#)).

A final body within this category worth mentioning is the Institute of International Relations (IDIS) (Ινστιτούτο Διεθνών Σχέσεων), which is affiliated with the Department of International and European Studies of the Panteion University of Social and Political Sciences. IDIS was created in 1989 as a forum where students, researchers, academics, and practitioners of international affairs could exchange ideas and engage in a constructive dialogue. Apart from international relations, IDIS has gradually expanded its research agenda to also include fields such as foreign policy analysis, strategic analysis, global governance, European integration, international political theory, and international law. In addition to research-related activities, IDIS also organises a number of events such as training seminars and an Annual Conference on Grand Strategy in collaboration with the Hellenic Armed Forces ([Institute of International Relations](#)).

Although the Eurozone crisis put a strain on many policy research institutes and think-tanks it also gave a push to new alternative initiatives, such as diaNEOsis, focusing more on economic and domestic policy issues. The few such bodies that managed to survive the crisis, remain active, and even increase the volume of their activities have arguably been successful also in terms of conducting policy-oriented research and providing concrete policy proposals to the Greek government and other institutional bodies.

### **1.8. Research Institutes affiliated to Political Parties and Politicians**

The law on the funding of political parties in Greece provides, similar to Germany's foundations, that all parliamentary parties receiving state funding are obliged to use part of it to establish and run research centres and training programs for party officials (Law

3023/2002). Subsequently, almost all parliamentary parties, with the exception of the right-wing Greek Solution, have established such research centres with the aim of producing research that could inform their political programme and policy proposals.

The governing centre-right party, New Democracy, has established the Institute for Democracy Konstantinos Karamanlis (Ινστιτούτο Δημοκρατίας Κωνσταντίνος Καραμανλής). The Institute was founded in 1998 and its mission is to study political, economic, and social issues and to formulate policy proposals. Its focus is on issues that have to do with democracy-building, state-market and market-society relationships, good governance, and European integration. The Institute runs research programmes, publications and public events, while also organising training activities ([Institute for Democracy Konstantinos Karamanlis](#)). Overall, the Institute for Democracy remained active in recent years despite facing funding problems.

The Coalition of Radical Left (SYRIZA) also runs an intra-party research institute of similar nature, the Nicos Poulantzas Institute (Ινστιτούτο Νίκος Πουλαντζάς). The Poulantzas Institute was founded in 1997 with the aim of strengthening left-wing values by promoting the systematic research of social, ecological, political, and cultural questions. The Institute has also managed to maintain a steady stream of public events and publications, following its overall mission and the pandemic-related developments ([Nicos Poulantzas Institute](#)).

Another research centre that positions itself in the progressive and left-wing part of the political spectrum, and hence closer -though not officially affiliated- to SYRIZA, is the Institute for Alternative Policies (ENA, Ινστιτούτο Εναλλακτικών Πολιτικών). ENA's stated goal is to go beyond theoretical research and to mobilise the wider population via its activities. To that effect its research and initiatives are orientated towards the "*creation of an original field of research, study, dialogue and action for a policy in favour of social needs and the interests of subordinate classes*" ([ENA Institute](#)). To achieve this ENA conducts studies and offers proposals on economics, institutional, societal, environmental, and political questions. It gives much emphasis on articulating alternative proposals on the above issues, while also supporting researchers that share ENA's goals. ENA has been particularly active since its creation in 2018 organising multiple events, including some on the implications of the Covid-19 pandemic. In addition, it produces a number of newsletters on European politics, economics, and societal issues, along with numerous pieces of analysis ([ENA Institute](#)).

The junior party of the left, the social-democratic PASOK, also runs its own research institute since 1995. The Institute of Strategic and Development Studies (ISTAME) Andreas Papandreou (Ινστιτούτο Στρατηγικών και Αναπτυξιακών Μελετών Ανδρέας Παπανδρέου) was created with the purpose of providing a forum for political discussion and research within the party. Despite its long-standing presence, ISTAME remained dormant in recent years due to financial problems and ceased its activities in February 2020. Subsequently, it was replaced by the Institute for Social-Democracy (Insocial). Insocial's official mission is to conduct research that promotes progressive thinking in the field of social democracy and democratic socialism ([Insocial](#)). Insocial's activity at the point of writing is fairly sparse.

The Communist Party of Greece (KKE) is operating the education centre, library and archive 'Charilaos Florakis' (ΚΚΕ Επιμορφωτικό Κέντρο – Βιβλιοθήκη – Αρχείο 'Χαρίλαος Φλωράκης'). The overarching goal of the Centre is to provide training and education to young party members with the aim of further promoting KKE's aims and mission. At the same time, the Centre aspires to operate as an archive/library for all researchers conducting work related to the party's history and activity. While the Centre remains active, its aims are mainly related to maintaining and organising parts of KKE's historical archive ([Charilaos Florakis Training Centre](#)).

Finally, the radical left party of Mera25 has established Méta - the Centre for Post-Capitalist Civilisation (Μέτα, Κέντρο Μετακαπιταλιστικού Πολιτισμού) in order to promote the debate on the form and nature of politics and culture in the post-capitalistic world. Consequently, Méta is organising political events and cultural activities under this broad theme. Despite its recent establishment, the Centre has proved very active organising multiple events during the pandemic ([Μέτα](#)).

Overall, it is not clear whether the work of the above institutes and centres actually informs the policies proposed by their respective affiliated parties. Instead, they seem to operate mainly as discussion forums rather than research platforms.

Besides research institutes affiliated to political parties there are also a few bodies directly linked to specific political figures thus being not only ideologically orientated but also personality centered. In this category, one could find the Circle of Ideas for the National Reconstruction (Κύκλος Ιδεών για την Εθνική Ανασυγκρότηση), founded by Professor

Evangelos Venizelos, a former Deputy PM and former Minister of Foreign Affairs, Finance, National Defense, and Development (among others) in 2015 as a forum for public debate on the redefinition of a novel and strategic role for Greece both within Europe and globally ([Circle of Ideas for the National Reconstruction](#)); the Constantinos Simitis Foundation (Ίδρυμα Κωνσταντίνου Σημίτη) and the Digital Repository thereof, created in 2007 with the aim of preserving and promoting the political archives of the former PM as well as his beliefs and positions vis-à-vis important national, European and international matters ([Digital Repository of the Constantinos Simitis Foundation](#)); and the newly founded (in 2021) Antonis Samaras Institute (Ινστιτούτο Αντώνη Σαμαρά) whose mission lies in i) the systematic study, research and promotion of the work of the former PM; ii) the support of the European idea and the process of European integration, and iii) the thorough study of national economic, political and cultural problems and subsequent formulation of policy proposals and solutions (ThePressProject 2021).

### **1.9. Research Institutes affiliated to Social Partners**

Moving to the research centers established by social partners, one can find a plethora of such bodies. The following section aspires to provide an overview of the bigger ones.

The most sizeable union for workers, the General Confederation of Greek Workers (GSEE, Γενική Συνομοσπονδία Εργατών Ελλάδας) has established the Labour Institute (Ινστιτούτο Εργασίας της ΓΣΕΕ) in 1990, with the aim of conducting scientific research related to the union's aims. In addition, the Labour Institute is tasked to provide relevant training to the union's members, both with respect to union claims and their professional development. It also acts as a contact point with foreign trade unions to exchange best practices. During the Eurozone crisis, the Labour Institute drafted policies that aimed to change the fiscal adjustment strategy and to promote income redistribution ([Labour Institute GSEE](#)). In this respect, it substantially informed union policy during that period but did not necessarily manage to influence public policy.

The Greek Civil Service Confederation (ADEDY, Ανώτατη Διοίκηση Ενώσεων Δημοσίων Υπαλλήλων) has also created its own research and training institute in 2004. Like the Labour Institute of GSEE, its aim is to provide scientific evidence in support of ADEDY's position. In

that respect it studies issues related to public administration and social policies, while also offering training and professional development opportunities to union members. Overall, ADEDY's research and training institute seems to be primarily focused on monitoring, measuring and improving the capabilities and skillset of civil servants ([Research and Training Institute ADEDY](#)).

In addition to research centres established by public and private sector unions, business associations have also founded a number of similar bodies. The Hellenic Confederation of Professionals, Craftsmen & Merchants (GSEVEE, Γενική Συνομοσπονδία Επαγγελματιών Βιοτεχνών Εμπόρων Ελλάδας) has established the Institute for Small and Medium Sized Enterprises. Following the pattern of other similar institutes its goal is to scientifically support the work of GSEVEE while also studying SMEs in the Greek context. It is important to note that the Institute is dedicating a big part of its activities to practically supporting SMEs by conducting research on the overall economic environment and by providing training and support to employees ([Institute for Small and Medium Sized Enterprises GSEVEE](#)). In a similar manner, the Hellenic Confederation of Commerce & Entrepreneurship (ESEE, Ελληνική Συνομοσπονδία Εμπορίου & Επιχειρηματικότητας) has created the Institute of Commerce and Services with the aim of studying and analysing commerce and service-related questions so that it can support the work of ESEE with evidence-informed policies. The Institute of Commerce and Services is publishing the Annual Commerce Review, while it has also produced research examining the pandemic's impact on commercial activities and their digital transition ([Institute of Commerce and Services ESEE](#)).

Last but not least, one of the central research pillars with respect to economic research in Greece is the Foundation for Economic and Industrial Research (IOBE, Ίδρυμα Οικονομικών και Βιομηχανικών Ερευνών). The Foundation was established in 1975 and is formally independent. It receives funding from a variety of private and public organisations. Having said that, its board is staffed with well-known figures of the financial and industrial sector. IOBE's mission is to conduct research on the prospects and challenges of the Greek economy and to produce innovative policy proposals for policymakers. To that end it carries out applied research on the problems of the Greek economy as well as on various aspects of economic policymaking. It also analyses economic trends, thus preparing forecasts of the Greek economy ([Foundation for Economic and Industrial Research](#)). Overall IOBE has strived to have

a continuous presence in the public debate with its proposals, studies and events receiving public attention during the financial crisis. It is characteristic that IOBE's Academic Director from the period, Yannis Stournaras, went on to become Minister of Finance in 2012 and was subsequently appointed Governor of the Bank of Greece.

Contrary to research institutes affiliated with political parties, the institutes affiliated to social partners appeared much more influential and active during the Eurozone financial crisis. In effect, they had to upgrade their research activities so that they could participate and influence the negotiations with the lenders and to promote their members' demands using concrete research data. This was a demanding exercise since their funding remained limited.

## **Part 2: Challenges and Opportunities**

### ***2.1. Introduction***

The Greek ecosystem of science for policy is rich with a variety of governmental, private, and non-governmental institutions engaging into research and analysis that aim to influence policymaking. Relevant actors range from government-funded research institutes and in-house research structures to permanent and ad-hoc research councils, committees, and task forces. Individual researchers based at university departments and private consultants often produce reports and research commissioned by public sector organisations. Several private and non-governmental organisations such as think-tanks, independent research institutes and research institutes affiliated with political parties and trade unions often produce policy-relevant research and analysis. The range of policy areas that they engage with is diverse and includes foreign and European policy, environmental policy and climate change, health policy, economic and social policy. Most of the research produced aims to explain the parameters of policy problems and offer policy alternatives to policymakers. Evaluations and risk assessments have gained ground in the last decades.

However, the impact of experts in policymaking has traditionally been limited due to two key reasons. The first is that policymakers often trust more the advice of personal aides with



whom they have built long-term relationships and trust. In this sense policymakers are less willing to receive advice via impersonal scientific processes and reports. This indicates that they are more likely to opt for person-bound expertise rather than codified expertise, which is usually collective and not linked to specific individuals. The second is the dominance of clientelism and patronage and political parties' ties with the bureaucratic mechanism. Both characteristics mean that the selection of advisers and policy experts is often not based upon merit but on personal trust and party affiliation. In this sense advisers play the role of a partisan 'fixer' rather than a policy pundit (Featherstone and Papadimitriou 2015, p. 16). Nonetheless, the awareness by political actors of the importance of research and evidence as an initiator of policy reform or at least as a justification for unpopular political decisions linked to reforms is a key feature of the Greek political system. This is because politicians are well aware that the tactical use of expertise and evidence-informed policies increases political legitimization.

The above trend with respect to the role of experts in policymaking started shifting during the Eurozone crisis because of the technical nature of the negotiations and the conditionality attached to the Economic Adjustment Programmes. While the Eurozone crisis put a strain upon research organisations both in the public and in the non-governmental sector, it has also prompted them to reconfigure their agenda towards economic and public policy issues. The social partners (i.e. business associations and trade unions) were also forced to strengthen their research capacity in order to better present their position and when possible, negotiate with the government and the lenders. Finally, a new in-house research structure, the Parliamentary Budget Office, was initiated by the Economic Adjustment Programmes and quickly gained visibility (Ladi 2020).

Following these developments, the complexity of the subsequent crises (i.e. Covid-19 crisis and climate crisis) seems to have led policymakers to attribute increased value to independent scientific advice (Ladi, Angelou & Panagiotatou 2021).

Overall, evidence-informed policymaking is an attractive idea for a country such as Greece, which needs and is in the process of making multiple public policy reforms. The country possesses the necessary human capital for producing the required evidence for such reforms.

Indeed, in many instances experts have informed the policy process. In this part of the report, we outline the challenges and opportunities for the future.

## ***2.2. Future Emergencies***

Greece is facing constant and increasingly challenging crises. This is the outcome of global problems such as the global financial crisis (2008), the immigration crisis (2015), the Covid-19 crisis (2020) and the revealing of the climate crisis as demonstrated by the wildfires in the summer of 2021. These crises are complex and multidimensional and it is clear that no government alone can tackle them. The Greek public administration, despite recent reform efforts and its ongoing digitalisation cannot confront the magnitude of these challenges without the support of expert knowledge. Given the extent of uncertainty that permeates crisis incidents policymakers have to diverge from their usual *modus operandi* and seek advice outside their narrow institutional framework. As they are unfamiliar with the technical aspects of emerging problems, policymakers need guidance in order to better understand the causal links that led to the crisis, its implications, and potential ways of mitigating it.

These future emergencies are a challenge for the Greek science for policy ecosystem since expertise and policy responses will be often necessary at short notice for complex problems and pressing situations. These same emergencies are also an opportunity for the re-design of structures and mechanisms aiming to bring science and policy together in a flexible and effective way. Even more centrally, these constant emergencies mean that political leaders can no longer ignore the necessity of strengthening evidence-informed policymaking and crisis management by dedicating the necessary resources to construct robust and resilient structures.

## ***2.3. Multidisciplinarity***

The complexity of future emergencies, the interlinkages between existing crises as well as their simultaneous eruption (e.g., climate crisis and immigration crisis) means that policy solutions are also complex and the input from scientists from different disciplines is necessary. Differentiating solutions across groups and regions within Greece (e.g., islands

versus big metropolies) will be necessary. Similarly, to the findings of the Danish report, we find that policy advice often derives from one discipline only. While integrating different disciplines is more challenging, it remains necessary (Pedersen and Hvidtfeldt 2021). A characteristic example is the management of the Covid-19 crisis. Although experts were central for the handling of the virus and the management of the crisis, the focus was mainly on medical and public health experts. Psychologists, behavioural scientists and sociologists were rarely included in the consultations making the management of the second wave, when confinement fatigue accumulated, more difficult (Ladi, Angelou & Panagiotatou 2021).

Of course, multidisciplinary is difficult to achieve not only in the policy-science nexus but also in academic research more generally. Dialogue between scientists from different disciplines should be encouraged and facilitated through research projects and common educational programmes. Becoming more familiar with each other's research but also worldview will enable further cooperation when it comes to research for policy.

#### ***2.4. Co-creation and Independence***

Successful public policies are not only the result of detailed policy designs based on experts' advice but also depend on their ability to be implemented. Implementation is very often linked to whether stakeholders perceive them as fair, well-designed, and effective. Therefore, co-creation of public policies is seen as the way forward in policymaking (Torfing, Ferlie, Jukic & Ongaro 2021). A key value of co-creation is the inclusion of different types of stakeholders at the early stages of policymaking. By large experts can also be seen as stakeholders and thus their inclusion in the policymaking process is beneficial. Given that in Greece the use of expertise in policymaking very often depends upon trust relations an early and constant interaction between experts and policymakers can bear fruit. It can serve to counterbalance the occasional pressure that special interest groups might exert and offer innovative policy alternatives.

The other side of the coin is the independence of the expert advice which can be compromised if the relationship with the policymakers and politicians is very close. Such compromise means that experts can end up offering easy and acceptable solutions to policymakers rather than pushing them for more challenging and perhaps costly in electoral

terms, actions. The challenge ahead is to find the right balance for co-creation and independence in the Greek science for policy ecosystem. The existence of both public and private hubs of knowledge and the availability of alternative sources of expertise is positive. Enhancing the transparency of evidence-informed policymaking would be helpful since alternative views or criticisms could be expressed from the experts' community at early stages of the policymaking process.

### ***2.5. A Receptive Public Administration***

Public administration in Greece, despite numerous attempts to modernise, has often been described as weak, inefficient and to a large extent dependent on political parties (Sotiropoulos 2007). The dominance of the party in government means that continuity in governance has more often been the exception rather than the rule since ad hoc political advisors were often more central in the decision-making processes than were senior administrators (Spanou 2008). Public administration has traditionally been hierarchical and centralised as far as its institutions and control mechanisms are concerned. Although experts work within the administration (e.g. Special Scientific Personnel in all ministries and experts at the MFA) and specific studies are often commissioned to independent experts, science seems to be underused in policymaking. Institutional memory is weak and there is a perception across the administration that the various studies and recommendations remain underused and do not really inform policymaking. The latter seems to be usually driven by political aspirations rather than evidence.

Going forward we see the opportunity of creating a culture where science is perceived as necessary for successful policies both in administrative but also in political terms. There is an opportunity to build upon the experience of the successful management of Covid-19 via the use of science. The absolute necessity of science to inform policies to combat climate crisis, which became glaringly apparent during the wildfires of summer 2021, should further reinforce this new culture. At the moment, the Greek science for policy ecosystem is rather fragmented and the use of expertise in policymaking is neither formalised nor transparent. The right balance of formalisation, openness and transparency needs to be found and it may vary between different sectors or levels of government. International experience and the

exchange of best practices can prove to be very useful when trying to improve the interaction between science and policymaking. A further challenge is the lack of the necessary skills needed for the use of evidence in policymaking by public administration and politicians alike. JRC's training experience and material could be used to inform the training of the Greek public administration. The role of the National Centre for Public Administration and Local Government (EKDDA) which already delivers most of the training programmes for the Greek public administration and has developed a repository for studies commissioned by public sector organisations is envisaged to be central.

## ***2.6. Knowledge Translation Skills and Incentives***

Researchers, experts, universities, and other organisations that are part of the supply side of the science for policy Greek ecosystem often lack the incentives and the necessary skills for translating their research findings and academic publications into policy outputs accessible to policymakers. The prerequisites for a career in a university or research organisation are purely academic and mainly value academic publications and related indicators. Policy impact has recently been included as an indicator in institutional evaluations but still plays no role in promotion procedures. The key incentives for engaging into activities of translation of research findings are financial via research projects and commissioned studies and/or reputational. Participating in the political dialogue and commenting in the media in relation to policies and political events is highly valued but can be best described as a diffusion of informed opinion rather than a provision of evidence for informed policymaking. It is often the case that academics with a strong public profile and political affiliation end up in ministerial posts and other high level government positions where they often attempt to translate their knowledge into policy. While such practices clearly promote exclusivity and discrimination, they do contribute significantly to the bridging of the gap between evidence and policymaking, especially in countries such as Greece where such phenomena are quite common.

New structures such as ELIDEK and the eHUB at the University of West Attica ([eHUB](#)) are more explicit about science for policy. It is an opportunity for other actors to build upon this experience. However, academics and researchers often lack the skills of translating their

research findings into meaningful output that is easy for policymakers to digest. More emphasis should be given to developing these skills via training material and sessions, exchange of best practices and rewards for those that engage in policy impact activities. Developing indicators to measure policy impact to then be able to attribute it to specific efforts is another challenge. The development of fora and opportunities for the interaction of academics, researchers and policymakers could also be beneficial since it would allow for a mutual understanding of each other's priorities, language, culture, and world views.

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Centre for Marine Research, <https://www.hcmr.gr/en/>

Centre for Research and Technology Hellas, <https://www.certh.gr/root.el.aspx>

Centre for Security Studies (Ministry of Citizen Protection), <http://www.kemea.gr/en/>

Centre of Planning and Economic Research, <https://www.kepe.gr/index.php/el/>

Charilaos Florakis Training Centre, <https://www.ekxf.gr/scope/>

Circle of Ideas for the National Reconstruction, <https://ekyklos.gr/>

Council of Economic Advisers (Ministry of Finance), <https://www.minfin.gr/soma-oikonomikon-empeirognomonon-soe->

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diaNEOsis, <https://www.dianeosis.org/en/>

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ENA Institute for Alternative Policies, <https://www.enainstitute.org/en/>

Foundation for Economic and Industrial Research, [http://iobe.gr/iobe\\_en.asp](http://iobe.gr/iobe_en.asp)

Foundation for Research and Technology – Hellas, [https://www.forth.gr/index\\_main.php?c=1&l=g](https://www.forth.gr/index_main.php?c=1&l=g)

Hellenic Foundation for European and Foreign Policy, <https://www.eliamep.gr/en/about-us/>

Hellenic Foundation for Research and Innovation, <https://www.elidek.gr/>

Institute for Democracy Konstantinos Karamanlis, <https://idkaramanlis.gr/en/the-institute/>

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Institute of Commerce and Services ESEE, <https://inemy.gr/?cn-reloaded=1>

Institute of International Relations (Department of International and European Studies of the Panteion University of Social and Political Sciences), <https://idis.gr/>

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