

Social Rights Monitor 2025 - Country Report - Greece



Contents

1. About SOLIDAR
2. What is the Social Rights Monitor (SRM)?
3. What is the process?
4. How do we use it?
5. Social Rights Monitor Overview
6. Equal Opportunities and Access to the Labour Market
7. Fair Working Conditions
8. Social Inclusion and Protection
9. Civic Space
10. Just Transition

About SOLIDAR

SOLIDAR is a European network of progressive Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) working to advance social justice through a just transition in Europe and worldwide. We represent over 50 member organisations based in 26 countries (19 of which are EU countries), among which national CSOs in Europe, as well as some non-EU and EU-wide organisations, working in one or more of our fields of activity.

The network is brought together by its shared values of solidarity, equality and participation.

SOLIDAR voices the concerns of its member organisations to the EU and international institutions by carrying out advocacy actions, project management and coordination, policy monitoring and awareness-raising across its different policy areas.

What is the Social Rights Monitor (SRM)?

The Social Rights Monitor assesses the implementation of the European Pillar of Social Rights (EPSR) at national level from a civil society perspective. The EPSR – also known as the Social Pillar – is a set of 20 principles that guide the action of the European Union in the realm of social affairs and policies. In other words, it is intended to be a compass guiding the EU towards a more social Europe. For too many people, however, the implementation of these principles at national and EU level is not yet a reality.

Thanks to the contribution of our members and their networks on the ground (the National Strategy Groups), SOLIDAR monitors the extent to which social rights are respected, upheld and promoted for all people living in the EU. The Social Rights Monitor also investigates the health of civic space and social and civil dialogue in the EU, as well as the extent to which a just transition is being pursued. Therefore, the thematic areas covered by the Monitor are the following: Equal opportunities and access to the labour market; Fair working conditions; Social inclusion and protection; a Just transition; and Civic space. The first three correspond to the three chapters of the EPSR, while the last two have been added to give a fuller picture of social justice in Europe.

Thanks to first-hand data gathered by national civil society organisations, the Social Rights Monitor constitutes a direct channel of policy recommendations between the national level and EU policymakers. It thus amplifies the voices and needs of the most marginalised groups. The Monitor dedicates a section to “advocacy messages” which result from the national-level analyses in each thematic area and are addressed to EU policymakers.

Countries are assigned a score for each thematic area out of a maximum of 100 points. This makes immediately visible how each country is performing in each area and enables comparison with other countries. The numerical scores originate from the National Strategy Groups’ (NSGs) assessments of national developments related to social rights, civic space and just transition. Negative developments in an area result in lower scores. NSGs rate these developments for each country by replying to Linkert-scale questions. This means that the score of a country’s thematic area is given by adding up all the rates given to the questions concerning that thematic area and expressing the score out of 100. The overall score of a country is the average of the thematic areas scores. Further details on the questionnaire and data gathering are provided in the section “About: What is the process?”

Since the SRM score reflects the NSG’s assessment of changes—either improvements or deteriorations—in each of the five areas over the past 12 months, it does not represent the overall status of these dimensions in absolute terms. Instead, it highlights recent trends. For example, a country with a historically strong welfare state might receive a low score if recent reforms have significantly weakened social rights or pose a risk of doing so. This does not imply that the overall situation is poor, but rather that recent developments are cause for concern and may undermine social standards over time.

Therefore, the SRM should not be used to compare the overall situation of social rights across countries—official statistics are more appropriate for that purpose. Instead, it serves as a tool to track short-term national trends and to understand the perspectives of civil society organizations (CSOs) on these developments.

What is the process?

The Social Rights Monitor is a tool that amplifies the voice of progressive civil society at national level. Its content is based on the inputs provided by the National Strategy Groups (NSGs) set up by SOLIDAR’s members and partners, which are active in the countries analysed. They consist of NGOs, associations, movements, trade unions, academia and thinktanks, ensuring that the perspective of civil society is mirrored in the Social Rights Monitor’s analysis. The Monitor reflects the experiences of these organisations, which are active on the ground, and the experiences are complemented by scientific data gathered through desk research.

The data elaborated in the Social Rights Monitor are gathered by SOLIDAR’s secretariat through a questionnaire distributed to the National Strategy Group Leaders (our national members) and completed with information produced by each group. From 2023, this questionnaire has been carried out online.

Based on the picture that emerges from the Monitor, SOLIDAR and the NSGs together devise policy recommendations for EU policymakers. These aim to make social rights, a healthy planet and an enabling, free, protected civic space a reality for all in Europe. The key recommendations stemming from the analysis are used as a basis for SOLIDAR's social affairs advocacy work.

The SRM is published every year, around the end of November/beginning of December and its findings cover the period going from June of the previous year to May of the year of the publication. This timeline is due to the fact that the NSGs submit their questionnaire by the end of May of the publication year.

How do we use it?

SOLIDAR's main role as a European-level civil society network is as a bridge between EU institutions and their policies on the one hand and our progressive members working at the national level on the other. The Social Rights Monitor is a valuable tool to gather information from the ground and bring it to policymakers' attention. This ensures that the voices of the most neglected social groups are duly taken into account. For example, the SRM complements the European Semester, by providing a more-complete assessment of Member State policies. Regrettably, the Semester is still too focused on countries' economic and financial performances and does not provide sufficient guidance on upward social convergence in the European Union.

SOLIDAR disseminates the findings of the Social Rights Monitor in various ways, including through the Social Europe Conference, an annual event at which it is presented, and which also explores a topic of priority for social Europe. More generally, the Monitor is one of the main ways through which the SOLIDAR network presents its positions on social affairs, so its findings are mainstreamed throughout our advocacy work.

Social Rights Monitor Overview

SCORE: 29

Greece struggles with numerous persistent challenges and lacks policy initiatives to bring about progress, the NSG reports. Gender violence is insufficiently addressed despite new legislation to implement EU law. Constant reforms continue to cause instability in education policy. Political resentment towards migrants and asylum seekers has increased in parallel with far-right government policies that disrespect the rights of these people. In general, measures, such as social benefits, to help marginalized people are inadequate. More people are at risk of poverty and unable to afford energy or mobility. Government measures to boost incomes skew the work-life balance towards the needs of the labour market. Housing remains a problem, in particular for minorities such as the Roma. Civil dialogue is limited, and a lack of meaningful civil participation has detracted from areas including gender equality and the social and solidarity economy.

The NSG for Greece was led by SOLIDAR's member **Dafni KEK**.



Equal Opportunities and Access to the Labour Market

SCORE: 36

Gender equality

EIGE's 2024 report on Gender Equality in Greece shows some relative progress, most notably in terms of power and money, followed by a slight increase in work and knowledge. Time has remained the same, whereas health has slightly deteriorated. In the area of violence, Greece remains above the EU average, signalling a higher incidence. Employment and participation are domains where Greece shows significant gendered inequalities, so despite so progress, work segregation and quality of work remain low.^[1] As noted by the European Commission in the framework of the European Semester, Greece has one of the largest gender employment gaps in the EU.^[2]

On the same note, when it comes to the domain of knowledge assessed by EIGE, women in Greece are still behind from the rest of the EU, despite some increases in the last years. A substantial gain in economic power has been observed, compared to 15 years ago, yet access to health shows signs of deterioration.^[3]

Law 5172 to combat new forms of violence against women was adopted in January 2025, representing significant progress in gender equality.^[4] The law is meant to integrate EU Directive 2024/1385, but the transposition omits key elements,^[5] prompting heavy criticism from lawyers and CSOs. Diotima, which is one of the largest NGOs in Greece (both in expertise and size) dealing with gender and equality issues, called the law "another lost chance".^[6] Several of the provisions omitted by Law 5172 relate to important aspects of the fight against gender violence, such as rape prevention measures and the training of specialists.^[7] The law also omits the criminal standardization of femicide and uses language and terms that neglect the disproportionate impact of gender-based violence on women, for example "genital amputation" instead of "female genital mutilation".

Meaningful contributions from civil society to drafting the law were made practically impossible. The consultation period lasted from 24 December 2024 until 7 January 2025, a short period during the winter holiday season. No prior opportunities for consultation were made available, nor was there a hearing of CSOs, expert organizations or women's organizations, Diotima points out.^[8] The NSG highlights a lack of intersectoral collaboration by the public authorities involved in the fight against gender-based violence. Furthermore, Law 5172 does not provide the holistic, long-term approach that is needed and instead focuses on stricter penalties. That raises concerns that the law will be ineffective.

Other initiatives in 2024 and 2025 included the signing by several Greek CSOs of a pan-European statement expressing concern over the delays in the European Commission's recommendation on the prevention of harmful practices against women and girls.[9]

Greece made some overall progress in the prevention of gender-based and domestic violence. Alongside Cyprus, it expanded the availability of the Panic Button smartphone app to all victims of domestic violence, allowing users to alert police and share their location without the perpetrator knowing.[10] Individual risk assessment and management requirements have been introduced, which identify appropriate measures for the immediate protection of domestic violence victims. These measures also aim to prevent a recurrence of violence and secondary victimization – that is, further harm to the victim from institutions and other individuals after the violence.[11] These measures could make a positive change to the way Greek institutions approach the victims of gender-based violence. The need for such a change is shown by the European Court of Human Rights' condemnation of Greece's investigative and judicial authorities failure to respond adequately to rape allegations.[12] Law 5172 also explicitly includes psychological violence as a form of domestic violence and clarifies the use of restraining orders to improve their effectiveness.[13]

Education, training and lifelong learning

Despite many reforms in recent years, the NSG reports no substantial progress in access to education. Most of the reforms have been informed by EU recommendations, but they also seem to reflect the ideas of each of the three ministers of education to take office in the last two years. Public authorities have only considered the i The latest of these reforms is the creation of the Public Onassis Schools, which originate in a collaboration between the Ministry of Education and the Onassis Foundation. The foundation provides €160 million in funding to turn a network of public schools into "model schools", therefore creating a narrative of "excellence" that widens divide among students and within teaching staff based on their respective performance.[14] The involvement of this private foundation raises concerns over an increasingly privatised school system. The Onassis schools aim to provide high-quality education, and access is granted through ballot choices and entrance examination, and to increase educational opportunities in the socially and economically challenged areas of Greece where the schools are established, but the NSG points out serious concerns as to whether it succeeds in this. Admission depends on an entrance exam, so students who fail have to enrol in another school, often might then have to accept more students than those they have capacity for. Moreover, entrance exams will likely increase reliance on private tutoring, known as "shadow education", the NSG points out. This can lead to unfair advantages for those who can afford private tutoring to increase their chances of passing the entrance exams.

Second Chance Schools (SCSs) provide education to adults who wish to resume their studies.[15] Of a total of 80 SCSs in Greece, 12 are in prisons. Despite being well-attended and of great importance for social reintegration, SCSs lack institutional support and educational and administrative staff, and their curricula are outdated. They are administered by two authorities which hinders decisions and their implementation.

Inclusion of migrants, refugees, asylum seekers and minorities

Political attitudes towards migrants and refugees are increasingly xenophobic, leading to a disregard of their fundamental rights, as well as those of other vulnerable people, the NSG reports. Over the last few years, four different far-right ministers of migration have taken increasingly hard stances. Their ideas have received a platform in the mainstream media, spreading them throughout Greek society. In May 2024, Greek police detained nine Egyptian men despite a court order dismissing the charges brought against them.[16] In June 2024, an arrest warrant was issued for Tommy Olsen, the CEO and founder of the NGO Aegean Boat Report, on suspicion of the NGO being part of an international smuggling ring.[17] In July 2024, a court of appeal found no racist motive in a case where militiamen committed acts of violence against refugees and migrants, and the court converted the charge to a misdemeanour.

However, international pressure is increasing against illegal practices that form part of Greek migration policy, the NSG reports. In a January 2025 judgement, the European Court of Human Rights found Greece guilty of systematic pushbacks of asylum seekers[18] and ordered it to compensate a woman who had been forcibly expelled to Turkey despite seeking protection. This judgement was an official condemnation of Greece's pushback policy, which the Greek government had denied having. In April 2025, Frontex announced an investigation into grave human rights violations committed as a part of Greece's pushback policy.[19] The investigation will cover 12 incidents, most of which occurred in 2024. The agency is considering launching a call for disciplinary proceedings, which could lead to reduced border support funds for Greece, according to sources within Frontex cited by Politico.[20]

However, the Greek government has doubled down on its anti-migration rhetoric and policies. In May 2025, then-migration minister Makis Vordis that asylum seekers whose asylum claims had been rejected would be jailed until deportation.[21] While arrivals in Crete increased 320% in the first semester of 2025, the ministry made no efforts in the preceding months to improve the reception and hosting infrastructure or to increase its operational capacity, the 2024 Ombudsman Report notes. Such measures might have enabled Greece to handle the increase in arrivals.[22]

The HELIOS+ project has achieved positive results from its actions towards a more holistic approach to inclusion while providing services to people from migrant and refugee backgrounds, the NSG highlights. HELIOS+ is funded by the European Regional Development Fund and run by the UN's International Organization for Migration (IOM). It is implemented with support from regional governments.[23]

In the first phase, access to accommodation was provided through a collaboration between the IOM and the Ministry of Migration. The second phase of the project, which started in January 2025 offers integrated additional services to beneficiaries, and each regional unit is supported by NGOs active in the field. This NGO support is positive, as it ensures CSO involvement, according to the NSG. But the NSG also fears for the long-term financial sustainability of the CSO involvement, as they are private entities that rely on grants.

Many NGOs in Greece have had to cut staff, with a disproportionate effect on employees from a migrant or refugee background, who are overrepresented in the NGO sector, the NSG reports. [24] [25]

Investment in the welfare system

Greece's welfare expenditure was 23.7% of GDP in both 2023 and 2024, above the OECD average of 20.8% in 2023 and 21.2% in 2024. But the NSG reported significant barriers that reduce its impact on poverty and social exclusion.[26] One is the non-take up of social benefits, which is partly because social security services are highly digitalized and bureaucratic. This disproportionately affects people with limited digital literacy or little access to digital infrastructure. In 2022, the benefit recipient rate among people both at risk of poverty and living in quasi-jobless households was 64.6%, considerably lower than the EU average of 83.5%, according to the European Commission's 2025 Country Report on Greece.[27]

This country report points out that Greece's minimum income scheme is inadequate. The income of the recipients of the minimum income benefit (MIB) was only slightly more than half of the poverty threshold in 2022 (53.6%) and amounted to only 25.6% of a low-wage earner's income. The NSG also reported the government's animosity towards migrants, refugees and asylum seekers.[28]



Fair Working Conditions

SCORE: 28

Social and Solidarity economy

Development of the social and solidarity economy (SSE) remains slow, if not stagnant, the NSG reports. SSE policies are managed at the regional level and receive EU financial support – for example from the European Social Fund Plus and the European Regional Development Fund – and from public benefit foundations. The development of the SSE is hindered by several issues, starting with how little it is addressed in policies, with most references concerning gaps in institutional support. Collaboration between SSE organisations is sparse and mostly takes place when supported by public funding due to financial constraints. SSE actors are involved in SSE policy drafting to different degrees depending on their aims and on how far they are aligned politically with the government, the NSG reports. In the Western Greece region, CSOs and SSE actors are only involved in regional public consultations in a symbolic manner, and they do not have the opportunity to make a meaningful contribution. Actors are invited more often if they do not express concerns or suggest changes, and the precise criteria used to determine which organisations to invite are not transparent. The NSG does not have enough information to comment on the consultation process in other regions. But it states that politically aligned actors are commonly favoured in consultation processes at most – if not all – policy levels in Greece.

Positive SSE initiatives in the Western Greece region include the continued operations of community and neighbourhood centres. These centres provide various social and family services and support communication with administrative offices and social services. [29] Other SSE initiatives include public kindergartens and Day Care Centers for the Elderly (KIFI). Several initiatives aim to integrate Roma people and help them access essential services and social housing. The HELIOS+ project also seeks to promote the integration of national minorities, such as the Roma, into the Greek labour market.[30]

Work Life Balance

The entry into force of Law 5053/2023 in July 2024 worsened Greece's work-life balance, the NSG reports. In specific sectors – such as those providing 24/7 services or businesses with rotating shifts and five-day working weeks (excluding hotels and restaurants) – the maximum working day was increased to The working week in these sectors was extended from five to six days, which already

applied to certain public services.[31] The government portrayed these developments as positive, because they better match the needs of these sectors and let workers earn more by working more overtime. The law also obliges use of the digital employment card system to track overtime more effectively and ensure it is recognized and paid. The NSG sees the law as that prioritizes the demands of the labour market and that primarily affects low-paid workers in sectors like factories and services, such as supermarkets. Workers concerned by this measure often are not in the position of refusing an increase of working time without repercussions on their working situation. Workers and trade unions were not consulted in the final legislative process, and no official monitoring tools are in place to measure the effects of the law on wellbeing and work-life balance. The NSG points out that the measure has not led to any particularly positive developments for the labour market, as Greece's projected GDP growth is lower than in previous years.[32] Moreover, while the government has said the measure has already led to a significant increase in overtime declarations, the overtime hours actually worked are likely far greater, as people are still often hesitant to declare overtime.[33] It is therefore worrying that the government is considering raising the maximum duration of a working day to 13 hours and reducing minimum annual leave by two days.[34]



Social Inclusion and Protection

SCORE: 33

Housing

Housing – in particular affordable housing – continues to be a severe issue in Greece. The European Commission's 2025 Country Report on Greece highlights that house prices rose an average of 9.3% each year over the 2020-2024 period.[35] These increases are mainly attributed to two failures. Firstly, housing construction has not matched the increase in demand from locals and tourists. Many of the latter are seeking to purchase a holiday residence. While housing construction has increased, it will still take some years before it affects the housing market. Secondly, pay increases have not kept up with the rise in housing prices. High housing costs combined with insufficient salaries have reduced people's willingness to move for employment, leading to labour shortages in certain regions, the Country Report points out. In addition, the report available housing to be overvalued by around 20%.[36]

Vulnerable groups are disproportionately affected by the housing shortage. The 2025 Special Ombudsman Report discusses the housing [37] in Greece, many of whom live in deplorable conditions in encampments. These living conditions constitute degrading treatment, according to the NSG. But the situation is seemingly encouraged by the Greek government, as the state does not provide temporary accommodation or take other steps to resolve the Roma's housing problems. Some cases have been reported of the state imposing sanctions on the encampments for unlawful occupation.[38] This practice has been confirmed by the Council of Europe's Commissioner for Human Rights, who states that the legally precarious situation of Roma people is highly worrying.[39]



Civic Space

SCORE: 17

The CIVICUS Monitor classifies Greece as “Obstructed”, as was the case in 2023.[40] This classification means that, whilst civil society organisations are allowed to exist, their activities and the civic space in which they operate are heavily contested by power holders. They are undermined by public authorities through demeaning public statements and bureaucratic harassment. Protests and demonstrations are allowed, but police interventions are frequent and often involve the use of excessive force, such as tear gas to disperse crowds. Journalistic freedom is restricted through state control and legal or physical attacks, which often lead to self-censorship.

Civil Dialogue

Real and substantial civil dialogue is rare in Greece, the NSG reports. The main platform for civil dialogue is open consultations, while open discussions in the national parliament also play a role, though a lesser one, according to the European Commission's 2025 Country Report on Greece.[41] Authorities tend to invite specific CSOs for bilateral consultations and often exclude largescale CSOs with experience in the relevant policy, the NSG reports. Public space where critical or concerned opinions can be expressed is increasingly restricted. The government spokesperson oversees public media, which endangers their editorial independence.[42] One example of this heightened government control is the coverage of the agricultural scandal at OPEKEPE, . Several government officials misused EU agricultural funds,[43] but the mainstream media only briefly covered the scandal, while they increased coverage of migrant arrivals in Crete. Moreover, the thin coverage of the scandal focused on individual wrongdoings rather than underlying systemic issues and the individuals' ties to the governing Neo Dimokratia (ND) party. Freedom of speech has been consistently limited through similar practices, the NSG points out. The aim is not violent suppression of critical voices but rather to downplay concerns and the people expressing them.

The government has tried to restrict access to information, as seen in the coverage of the Zackie Oh trial. Two men were accused of murdering Zack Kostopoulos, a popular LGBTQI+ activist and drag performer. While the trial was open to public viewing, it was not allowed to be broadcast. The ZackieOh Justice Watch initiative, consisting of journalists and independent media, monitored the trial and transmitted live recordings on social media. On 5 July 2024, however, the Ministry of Justice expanded the scope of Law 3090/2002, which prohibits the radio or television broadcast of court hearings without judicial approval, to include internet transmissions.[44] This decision was criticized by ThePressProject and the ZackieOh Justice Watch for being unconstitutional, hindering access to information and reducing transparency.[45]

The NSG highlights the lack of substantial advances in the government's handling of the 2023 Tempe Train Crash. Victims' families have sustained legal and other actions, notably one of Greece's largest demonstrations. But no change was detected in the .[46] Finally, the constitution was modified in a way that undermines the democratic accountability of the head of state. Parliament is no longer dissolved if a president does not achieve a majority after two rounds of voting. As a result, Konstantinos Tasoulas was elected after four rounds in 2025. [47]



Just Transition

SCORE: 17

Access to energy and energy poverty

Energy poverty continues to be a substantial and growing problem in Greece, with many indicators far exceeding EU averages. The European Commission's 2025 Country Report shows that 19% of the Greek population are unable adequately to heat their homes, more than double the EU average of 9.2%.[48] The rate is 43.6% for people at risk of poverty, while 32% of the population face payment arrears on utility bills – nearly five times the EU average of 6.9%.[49] The government relevant indicators of energy poverty defined by the European Observatory of Energy Poverty and by 75% by 2030.[50] However, the plan proposes measures such as financial assistance and price support instead of addressing the root causes of energy poverty.

Access to sustainable mobility and transport poverty

Transport poverty has risen in Greece, the NSG reports. Personal cars represent an increasingly important means of inland transport, being used by 84.6% of the population in 2022. But 8.4% of the population could not afford a car in 2024, compared to an EU average of 5.6%.^[51] The effect is disproportionate for people at risk of poverty, 24.8% of whom already have on private transport.^[52] Public inland transport has declined in use to showing that the services do not meet people's needs effectively.

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