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GREECE

Statistical Profile

Compiled by Rea Prouska

INTRODUCTION TO GREECE



About this Statistical Profile -

Organizations striving to be employers-of-choice in different countries around the world need access to current information about the economic, social, political, and demographic characteristics of the countries where their employees live and work. The Country Profile Series focuses on statistics that can guide decision-making at the workplace: workforce highlights, economic highlights, and population highlights. This Country Profile is part of a set of resources about Greece available on the website of the Global Perspectives Institute: www.bc.edu/agingandwork.

Home to an ancient civilization, Greece is located on the southern end of the Balkan Peninsula. Up until the mid-1970s, Greece was operating in a turbulent environment. In 1922, Greece was faced with the task of incorporating 1.5 million Greek refugees from Asia Minor into the Greek society, an astonishing 30% increase in population. Greece was invaded by Italy in 1940 and by Germany in 1941. After the liberation in 1944, Greece experienced a civil war that led to economic devastation. In 1967, political turbulence led to a coup d'etat by the U.S.-backed Regime of the Colonels, while a counter-coup in 1973 established a new dictatorship that collapsed in 1974 when Turkey invaded the island of Cyprus and occupied its northern part. Greece withdrew from NATO in 1974 in protest of the Turkish occupation of Northern Cyprus and rejoined it in 1980.

Greece first joined the European Union in 1981 and became a full member of the European Monetary Union in January 2001. During its progression from a developing country to a European member state, Greece benefited more in terms of infrastructure development and industrial restructuring than any other country in the EU. From 1981 onwards, Greece managed to increase its GDP to exceed the average of other EU member states, while the 2004 Olympic Games staged in Athens account for the latest rise in the economy.

The modern state of Greece occupies an area of 81,994 square miles, bordering Albania, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Bulgaria, and Turkey. The overall Greek population is estimated around 11,213,785 people. Traditionally, the basis for the Greek economy was the agricultural sector; however, structural changes in recent years have shifted the economy to the services sector (especially tourism and the merchant marine), partly at the expense of the manufacturing sector.¹ The services sector now accounts for 70% of national economic activity, whereas the manufacturing sector accounts for 22% and the agricultural sector accounts for 8%. In addition, major exports to other EU countries include agricultural goods, food and drink products, and other manufactured goods.¹

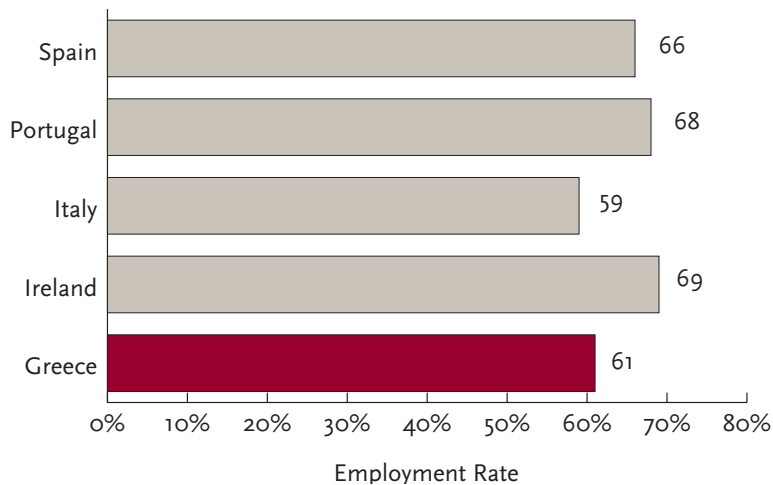
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LABOR FORCE HIGHLIGHTS

- 🌐 53.3% of the overall population is in the labour force.⁴
- 🌐 As noted in Figure 1, 61% of the Greek labour force is employed, compared to 66% of the Spanish labour force and 68% of the Portuguese labour force (two of the selected European countries in Figure 1).⁵
- 🌐 The 2008 unemployment rate was 7.2%.⁶
- 🌐 In 2008, the average hours worked by Greek employees was 45.4 hours per week in comparison to an average of 38.4 hours in the EU27 Member States.⁷
- 🌐 In 2008, 5.3% of the total labour force was working part-time.⁸
- 🌐 In 2008, 33% of the total labour force reported being self-employed.⁹

figure 1. Employed as Percent of Total Population - Selected Regional Countries, 2007

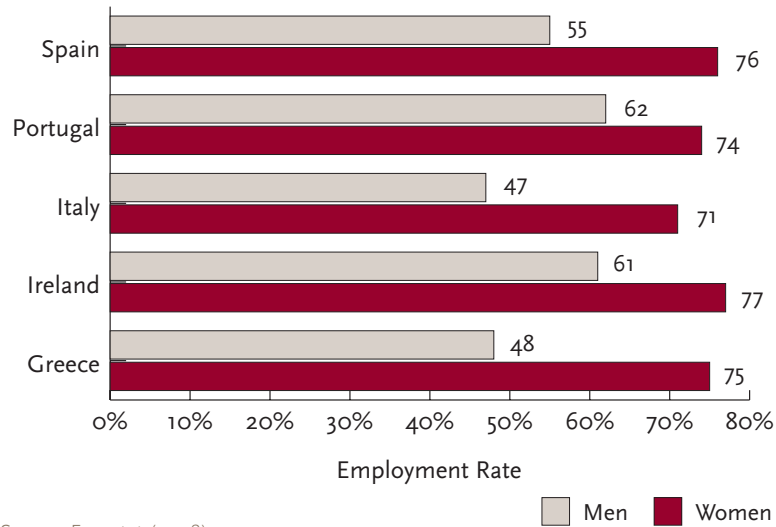


61% of the Greek population is employed, compared to 59% in Italy.

Source: Eurostat (2008).

As shown in Figure 2, about 75% of men and 48% of women age 15 to 64 are employed.

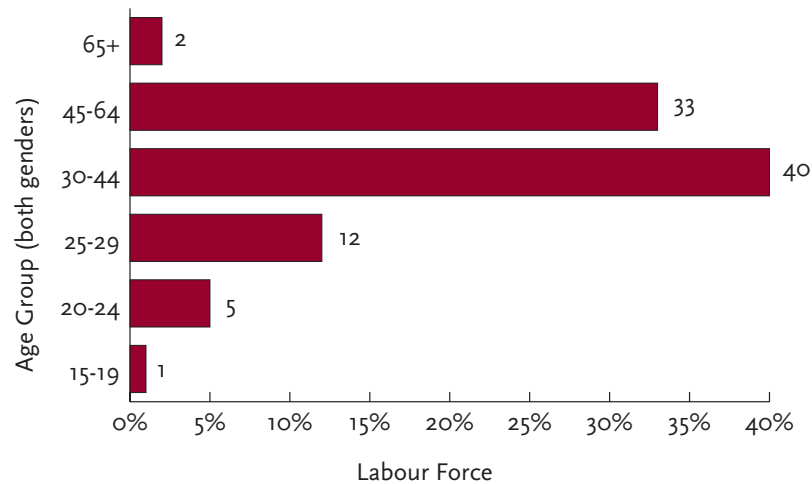
figure 2. Employment Rate, Ages 15-64, by Gender, Greece and Comparable Regional Nations



Source: Eurostat (2008)

The two prevalent age groups of the employed population are 30-44 (40%) and 45-64 (33%) years of age.

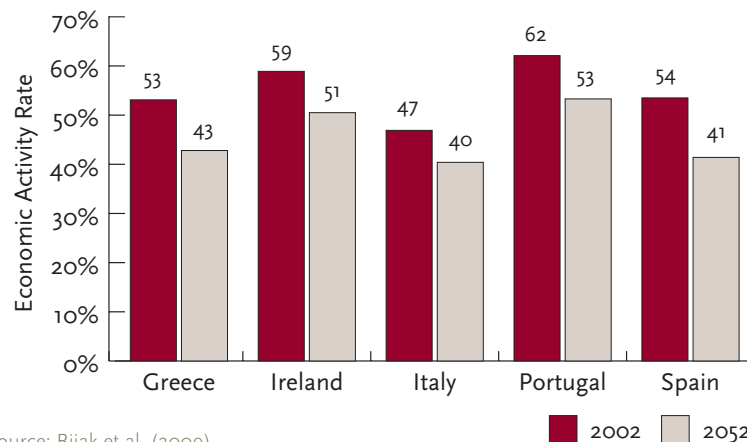
figure 3. Employment Rates in Greece, within age group, (2007)



Source: National Statistical Service of Greece (2008)

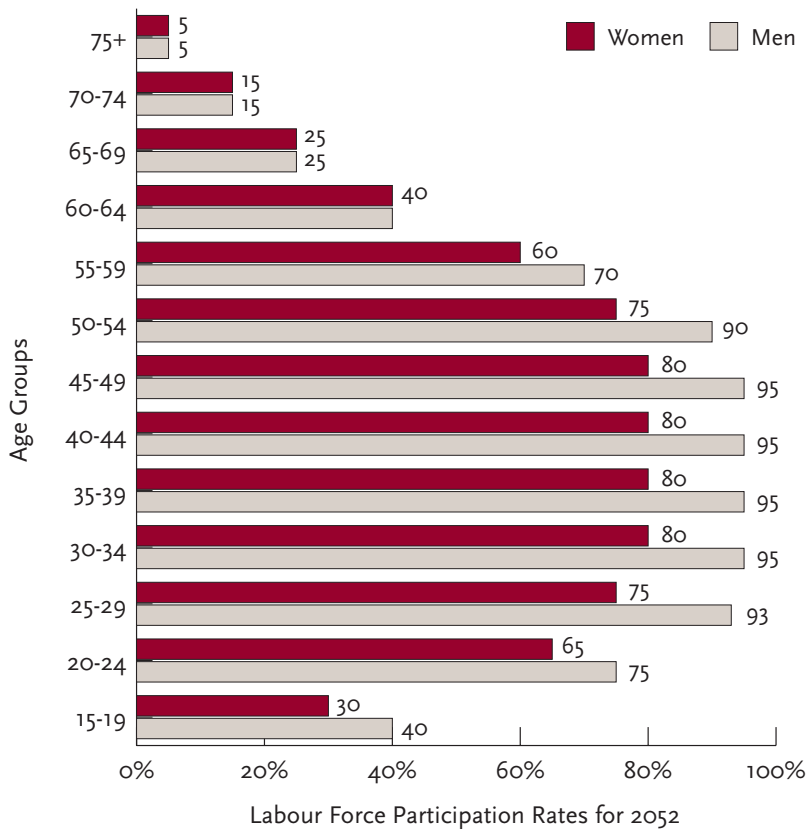
The Greek economic activity rate is projected to decline from 53.1 in 2002 to 42.8 in 2052. Similar reductions are expected in other comparable EU countries.¹⁰

figure 4. Employment Rates in Greece Compared to Selected Regional Countries, within age group, (2002 and 2052)



Source: Bijak et al. (2009)

figure 5. Current & Projected Economically Active Population Estimates and Projections in Greece, within age group, 2052



Source: Karasiotou (2004)

table 1. Occupational Demand in Greece

Ranking	Greece	Region of Attica (including Athens)
1	Various salespersons	Various salespersons
2	Unskilled industrial workers	IT specialists/programmers
3	Accountants (all levels)	Bus and truck drivers
4	Bus and truck drivers	Civil engineers and construction specialists
5	Waiters/waitresses	Road construction unskilled workers
6	Civil engineers and construction specialists	Accountants (all levels)
7	Various machine users	Unskilled industrial workers
8	IT specialists/programmers	Janitors
9	Janitors	Economists
10	Economists	Marketing experts
11	Road construction unskilled workers	
12	Machine users	

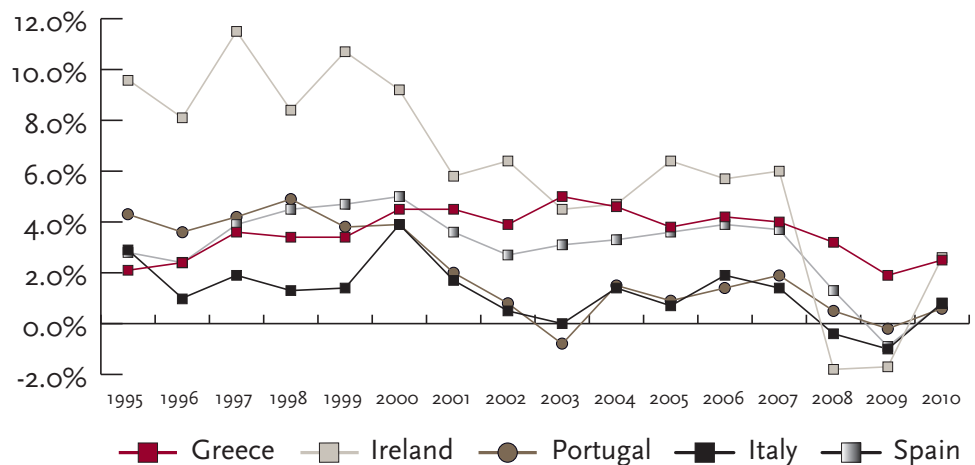
Source: Karasiotou (2004)

Most firms are seeking low-skilled employees. Almost half of the Greek population lives in the region of Attica (which includes Athens). This demand for low-skilled employees comes in conflict with the fact that the percentage of young people (25-29) with upper-secondary education in Greece is higher than the average European figure.

ECONOMIC HIGHLIGHTS

- 🌐 In 2006, Greece had a GDP per capita of \$27,233 and held a place between New Zealand and Italy.¹²
- 🌐 From 1988 to 2006, the GDP per capita in Greece has significantly grown from \$10,602 (1986) to \$15,207 (1996) to \$27,233 (2006) (see Figure 6). This growth in the GDP per capita followed the growth of other EU countries, but has been and still is below the EU15 average.¹²

figure 6. GDP Growth, [Percentage change from previous year]



Source: OECD Economic Outlook 84 database.

table 2. Greek Private Organizations by Size

Size	Number of Employees	Number of Organisations	Percentage
Micro (a)	0*	480,532	54.65%
Micro (b)	1-10	384,312	43.71%
Small	11-50	11,792	1.34%
Medium	51-250	2,219	0.25%
Large	251+	463	0.05%
Total		879,318	100.00%

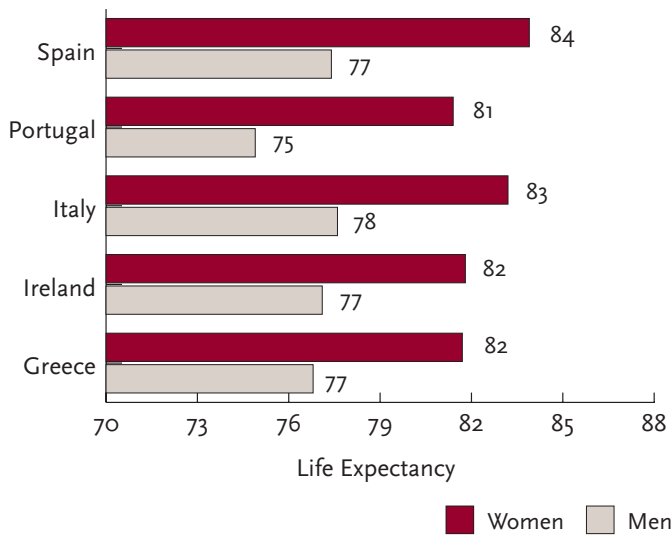
Source: National Statistical Service of Greece (2002)

Greece is characterized by the small size of firms (number of employees), operating in its market. From the 879,318 registered businesses in Greece, 99.69% are micro/small enterprises (0-50 employees), while only 0.25% and 0.05% are medium-sized (50-250 employees) and large organizations (250+ employees) respectively. An important 54.65% of businesses have no employees (the owner is the only person employed in those businesses), while 43.71% employ 1-10 people. Small organizations (11-50 employees) account for 1.34% of the micro/small category.¹³

DEMOGRAPHIC HIGHLIGHTS

- 🌐 The overall Greek population is estimated around 11,213,785 people.³
- 🌐 93% of the Greek population are Greeks and the remaining 7% comprise of Albanians, Bulgarians, Romanians, Ukrainians, Pakistani, Russians, Georgians, Indians and others ethnic minorities.¹⁴
- 🌐 The fertility rate in Greece was 1.36 children born per woman in 2008.¹⁴

figure 7. Life Expectancy at Birth [Regional Comparisons, 2005]

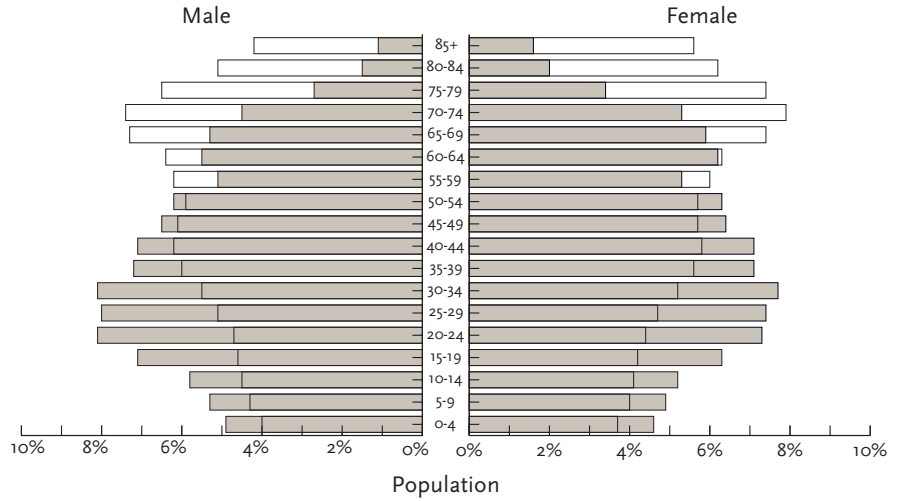


Source: OECD Factbook

In Greece, life expectancy at birth for males stands at 76.8 years. This is higher than the OECD average (males) of 75.7 years.¹³ Life expectancy at birth for females stands at 81.7, almost the same as the OECD average (females) of 81.4 years.¹²

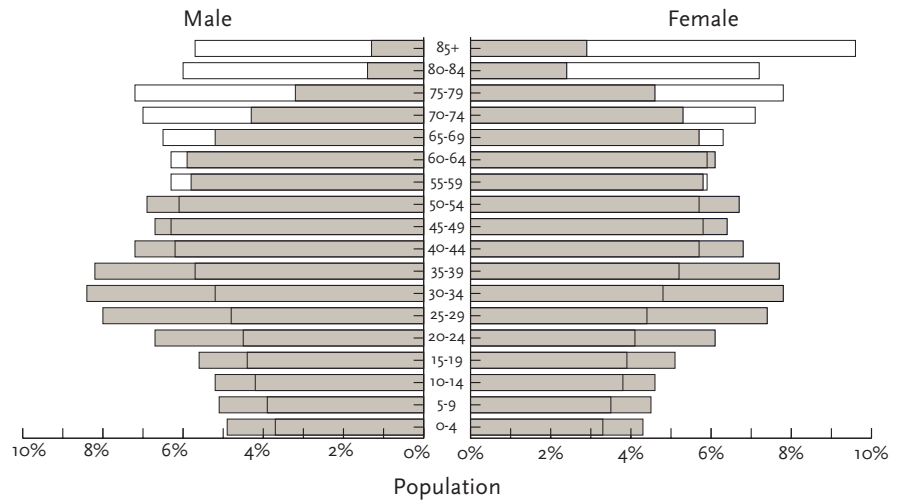
- 🌐 The Greek population pyramid for 2000 shows that the majority of the Greek population is concentrated around the 20-50 age categories, while projections for 2050 move the majority of the population into the 50-80 categories (see Figure 8a). Similar projections are made for other comparable EU countries (see Figures 8b-c).¹⁵

figure 8a. Population Distribution of [Greece, 2000 and 2050]



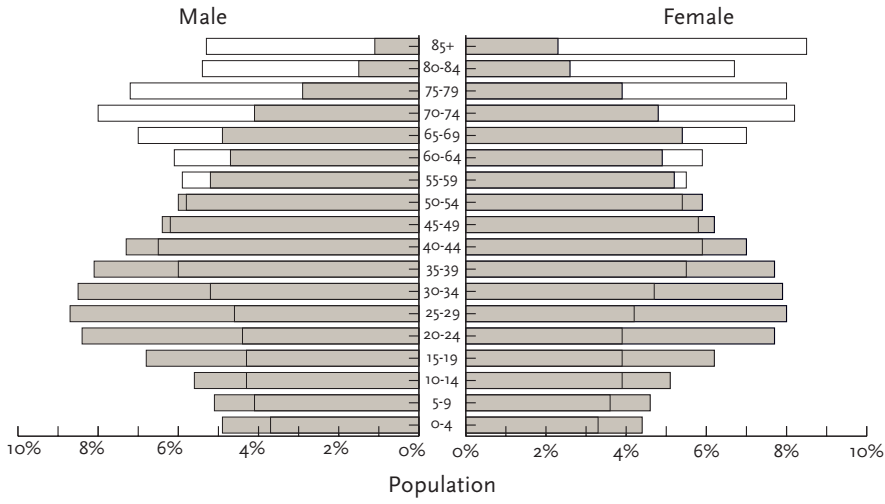
Source: OECD (2009)

figure 8b. Population Distribution of [Italy, 2000 and 2050]



Source: OECD (2009)

figure 8c. Population Distribution of [Spain, 2000 and 2050]



Source: OECD (2009)

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ABOUT THE INSTITUTE

Established in 2007 by the Center on Aging & Work, the Global Perspectives Institute is an international collaboration of scholars and employers committed to the expansion of the quality of employment available to the 21st century multi-generational workforce in countries around the world.

The Global Perspectives Institute focuses on innovative and promising practices that might be adopted by employers and policy-makers.

The Institute's research, publications, and international forums contribute to:

- 🌐 a deeper understanding of the employment experiences and career aspirations of employees of different ages who work in countries around the world;
- 🌐 informed decision making by employers who want to be employers-of-choice in different countries; and
- 🌐 innovative thinking about private-public partnerships that promote sustainable, quality employment.

Apart from the Mind the Gap series, the Global Perspectives Institute publishes a Statistical Profile Series highlighting workforce demographic trends in different countries as well as a Global Policy Series focusing on selected workforce policy in certain country contexts.

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The Sloan Center on Aging & Work is grateful for the continued support of the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation.

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