



Greece

Assessment of the 2008-2010 National Reform Programmes for Growth and Jobs from a social inclusion perspective: The extent of synergies between growth and jobs policies and social inclusion policies

A Study of National Policies

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October 2008



On behalf of the
European Commission
DG Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities



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Summary

The Greek revised National Reform Programme (NRP) presents no impact assessment of the policies pursued over the 2007-2008 period from a social inclusion perspective, the only exception being, some progress reporting with regard to employment, education and vocational training policy areas. Thus, no clear reference has been made to the contribution of the growth policies pursued towards enhancing social cohesion or to the contribution of social policies to growth and jobs. In short, the NRP clearly lacks any explicit reference to the 'feeding in' and 'feeding out' effects of the policies pursued over the period 2005-2008.

As far as the period 2008-2010 is concerned, although the NRP states that policies and programmes in various areas are expected to contribute to enhancing and promoting social cohesion, no reference is there on any concrete outcome to be expected, and in particular on jobless households, working poor, low income earners etc. Moreover, the benefit of measures to prevent poverty, other than those aimed at strengthening employment, has been left out of any detailed reference in the NRP for the promotion of growth, while no evidence is there that the 3-pillar EU approach to active inclusion has been taken into consideration.

It is thus evident that the 'feeding in' and 'feeding out' approach has not been taken on board the revised NRP. It seems that the Greek NRP relies implicitly on the assumption that economic growth could alone solve the social problems that the country is facing. The fact that poverty in Greece remains for some years now at high levels, indicates that a sizable part of the Greek population has not been much benefited by the economic growth, thus far. And although the current international economic crisis is expected to have an impact on poverty and social exclusion, no particular reference has been made as to any plans for specific measures to be taken in this direction, partly explained by the fact that the extent of the crisis is yet to unfold in Greece.

In general, no evidence is there that a clear strategy exists to ensure that the "partnership for Growth and Jobs" process and the social OMC process are mutually reinforcing. It would not be an exaggeration to say that, instead, there seems to be a mutual reluctance by both processes to acknowledge the role of each other. It is thus of utmost importance that appropriate mechanisms are established in Greece to systematically promote and ensure synergy and co-operation between the NRP and the Social Protection and Social Inclusion Process. Priority of action should also be given to put in place monitoring arrangements, as well as to ensuring the active involvement of relevant stakeholders and, in particular, of those experiencing poverty and social exclusion, in all processes.

A. Overall assessment of implementation of the 2005-2008 NRPs during the past year from a social inclusion perspective

The Greek revised NRP provides no distinct section or sections under each policy area with regard to the progress of implementation during the period 2007-2008, the only exception being the section on 'Digital Strategy'. Instead, it provides a detailed presentation of the developments that have taken place in the various policy areas during the whole implementation period 2005-2008, though, in many areas, recent and current developments are identified.

It should be noted, however, that none of these developments are being accompanied by an impact assessment, especially from a social inclusion perspective. The only effort that can be

identified in this respect is an attempt to provide an assessment of the labour market policy interventions implemented during the period 2005-2008. Yet, this is confined mainly to presenting the number of the various employment subsidy and training programmes implemented, together with data on the number of beneficiaries of each of these programmes, some of which are broken down by age and gender. In other words, no evidence is provided as to whether these interventions led to regular employment and/or the extent to which these have benefited the most vulnerable groups and/or whether the interventions had an impact on regional imbalances, and so on.

In general, impact assessment presupposes the existence of hard evidence and the carrying out of evaluation studies, let alone of appropriate monitoring mechanisms. These elements, however, are hard to come by in Greece, especially from a social inclusion perspective. This is certainly reflected in the Greek NRP, which fails to present any assessment – not even partial- as to the contribution to date of the growth policies pursued towards enhancing social cohesion, neither as to the contribution of social policies to growth and jobs.

Moreover, with the exception of some measures and programmes pursued in the employment and education – vocational training policy areas, where increased attention is paid to strengthen their social dimension, no evidence is there that efforts have been made in this direction in the various growth policies implemented over the same period. It seems that the developmental character of social policy is still underplayed in Greece and action should be taken to strengthen it.

Following from above, it becomes obvious that no example of such a ‘feeding in’ and ‘feeding out’ approach can be identified for the implementation period 2005-08, in the Greek revised NRP.

B. Assessment of the 2008-2010 NRPs from the perspective of social inclusion

B.1 Overall assessment

B.1.1 It should be stated right from the outset that, in spite of the fact that the Spring European Council strongly underlined the need to provide a mutually reinforcing feedback between economic, employment and social policies, the Greek NRP 2008-2010 has not been structured on the basis of such a ‘feeding in and feeding out’ analysis. Besides, no activity has been recorded so far neither any serious effort is evident in the revised NRP, indicating that a process of impact assessment has been launched or that any plans in this direction have been made.

In particular, as it has been the case with the Greek NRP 2005-2008 and the Implementation Reports 2006 and 2007, while it makes a few general statements, such as *‘that the policies and programmes implemented in various areas are expected to contribute to enhancing and promoting social cohesion’*, the revised NRP fails to identify how this will be achieved, neither who will be the beneficiaries of this achievement. It seems that the Greek NRP relies implicitly on the assumption that economic growth on its own can solve the social problems of the country. Needless to say, that no reference is made as to how the policies implemented and planned to address social problems will contribute to the economic growth. Given this, it appears that social policy fails to come out explicitly in the NRP as a factor of development.

Overall, it may be said that no action can be identified of a move towards establishing mutually reinforcing links between economic growth and social policies. It seems therefore that the 'feeding in and feeding out' approach has not been taken on board the wide range of measures, institutional arrangements and policy reforms undergoing or planned in various policy areas under the Greek revised NRP.

On the other hand, it should be acknowledged that the links between employment policy and other social policy related measures appear to be more evident in the NRP. Yet, no mechanisms have been established to facilitate -on a permanent basis- impact assessments of the wide range of employment measures taken or planned on alleviating poverty and social exclusion.

B.1.2 Although some reference is made to the 'current juncture of adverse economic developments internationally', which are expected to result, among other things, to a deceleration of the rate of both economic growth and employment growth, as well as to an acceleration of the inflation rate, no other references are made in the revised NRP as to the expected impact of these negative developments on poverty and social exclusion. That is, no measures have been specified in the Greek NRP to deal with the potential impact of the current and on-going economic and financial international crisis on the most vulnerable population groups.

The only response given in this respect is a statement that *'the National Fund for Social Cohesion is expected, in the current conjuncture, to be fully activated in the near future through the implementation of specific actions aimed at supporting those who are most affected'*. Yet, this general statement is not followed by a concrete action plan, neither by an identification of the main actions to be taken, nor by any indication of which population groups are likely to be mostly affected by this current economic conjuncture. Needless to say, that although this Fund was established almost a year ago –and certain statements about its functioning and operation have been occasionally made by the competent Ministers- its actual operation is still pending.

B.1.3 Following from Section B.1.1, it goes without saying, that no strengthening of links is evident between the revised NRP and the Social Protection and Social Inclusion Process. It seems that an interaction between these two processes is clearly missing, which is mainly due to a persisting lack of proper mechanisms in place. And this is reflected in the two distinct Reports, which though have been prepared and submitted almost at the same period of time, these have failed to establish any explicit - let alone substantial - links between each other, apart from a repetition of policies and measures taken or planned in the fields of employment, education and life-long learning, as well as actions related to gender equality.

Given the above, it would not be an exaggeration to say that **there seems to be a mutual reluctance by both processes to acknowledge the role of each other.**

B.2 Feeding out

B.2.1 Employment and feeding out

Flexicurity

Despite the existence of an adequate legal framework, flexible employment contracts are not as diffused in Greece as in the majority of the EU Member States. This is reflected in the fact that the rate of part time employment in Greece continues to be very low i.e 5.6% in 2007, in relation to the EU-25 respective average. It should be noted that 41.5% of those in part-time jobs made this choice because they could not find a full-time job, while only 10.8% opted for part-time employment in order to reconcile work and family life. It is thus evident that the majority of those in part-time employment had no other choice either because full time jobs are not available or because provision of services relating to the care of dependent family members (children, elderly, etc) is still not adequate.

In general, part-time employment and other forms of flexible employment seem not to be attractive in Greece by both the members of the labour force and the employers, though due to different reasons. As stated in the revised NRP, one of these reasons is related to the fact that employment protection has not yet been extended to cover the new 'flexible' forms of employment. And to this end the following four priorities have been identified in the NRP: a. extending employment protection to all informal forms of employment, b. clearly defining the framework for dependent employment, c. combating undeclared work and d. facilitating the transition between various forms of employment and unemployment.

Notwithstanding the fact that these priorities move in the right direction, these are not accompanied by specific action or arrangements neither by an implementation time-table. In other words, it is not clear how these priorities will be translated into concrete action neither what other measures are considered necessary to be taken in other related policy areas, such as tax policies, gender equality policies, family support policies, etc. Besides, no reference is made as to the expected impact of these priorities on unemployment and poverty and especially on the socioeconomic situation of vulnerable groups.

In short, a lot remains to be done in the domain of flexicurity in Greece.

Job creation

The reported increase of employment rates and the decrease of unemployment rates over the last few years, give no indication as to whether these developments have had a positive impact upon the labour market situation of the whole range of vulnerable groups, with only a few exceptions. Available data suggest that the higher employment rates are due to an increase in the employment of young and women, but neither all women nor all young people are confronted with poverty and social exclusion.

The job creation initiatives presented in the NRP are based mainly on existing employment and entrepreneurship programmes and actions which have been under implementation over recent years, being largely co-financed by the European Social Fund. These programmes are targeted in the main at the unemployed persons (young, women, persons aged more than 55 years old, disabled and other vulnerable groups), while accompanying- support services are provided to

specific categories, such as the disabled. These comprise, in particular, actions such as: employment subsidies and quotas, business start-up incentives, training-retraining programmes and accompanying-support services.

However, and notwithstanding the fact that these programmes have been on the increase over recent years and that efforts have increasingly been under way to implementing an individualized approach, no evidence is there as to the extent that opportunities for participation in these programmes have been offered to the most vulnerable groups. Besides, there are no specific measures or programmes targeted at the jobless households and the working poor.

Adequate income from work.

In spite of the fact that working poor remain at very high levels (14% against 8% EU-25 respective average), no measures have been planned to improve this situation. And this, despite the fact that one of the issues which have been at the centre of the public debate, over the last few years, is the emergence of the so called '700 euro salary young generation'. In this respect it should be emphasized that, thus far, no specific major policy initiatives such as "make work pay" policies or "welfare to work" policies have been introduced in Greece as opposed to most of the European Union Member-States.

In short, apart from a statement that the Government will ensure that pay rises will remain at the same level or just above the official annual inflation rate, the problem of 'in work poverty' is not dealt with by any of the measures presented in the revised NRP. Neither any plans or intentions have been presented for taking action to combine wages, tax exceptions and in-work and family benefits, so as to ensure that people moving into employment are also moving out of poverty.

Thus, it would be hard to expect a decrease in the work at-risk-of poverty rate in the near future in Greece. Instead, fears are expressed by some analysts and by the General Confederation of the Greek Trade Unions for a possible further increase.

Reconciliation of work and family life

The reconciliation of work and family life is expected to be promoted by the recent legislation on parental leave and, in particular, by the provisions on special leave for maternity protection, as well as, by improving available infrastructure with regard to social care and child care facilities. Reference is also made to some targeted active labour market measures for women, which will continue to be implemented so as to support women's employment.

Yet, and although this issue is being highlighted in the revised NRP as a policy priority, in practice the existing provisions, especially as regards social and child care facilities, are inadequate to serve this priority. Their capacity, let alone the quality of their provisions remain still short of meeting the identified needs in this policy area. Childcare provision, in particular, remains a core problem for working parents and especially mothers. The number of public kindergartens is still not enough, while the so called "all day classes" in the primary schools, apart from not being adequate, are not properly adjusted to cover the existing needs.

In short, in spite of the good intentions expressed and the emphasis placed, especially in the Greek NSRSPSI, the effort to promote the reconciliation of work and family life in Greece, relies

on various social policy related measures, which are rather fragmented and are not underpinned by a comprehensive policy approach. No visibility of action can be identified in the NRP towards ensuring their complementarity and effective combination, let alone towards developing new measures so as to fill the gaps in this area.

Older workers and active ageing

The active ageing challenge still lacks a comprehensive strategy and the development of an integrated policy. To date, the action taken in this respect is merely exhausted in the provision of employment related projects (employment subsidies, retraining programmes etc.) for unemployed persons aged more than 45 years old, while contribution in this direction is also expected from certain provisions of the recently adopted reform of the Social Security System. The latter provisions concern the restriction of the existing special provisions that allowed early retirement before the “normal” retirement age of 65, as well as financial incentives to those who stay at work beyond the “normal” retirement age.

All these measures, however, do not reflect a well designed integrated strategy for active ageing. The employment related measures are taken in order to deal with the emerging phenomenon of unemployed persons aged more than 50 years old, who lost their jobs and have great difficulties in re-entering the labour market. As to the scope of the provisions relating to the arrangements for the restriction of early retirement, this is merely a partial response, which, together with a series of other measures, aims at addressing the serious financial viability problems facing the social security system in Greece.

Moreover, it should be pointed out that in the planning process of these measures and reforms, involvement of those who are mostly concerned has been rather limited. It is thus questionable, whether the measures introduced to date are adequate to meet their needs. Besides, there is an obvious need for the introduction of specific complementary measures in other policy areas, but no evidence is provided in the NRP of any plans towards this direction.

Small and Medium Enterprises

No references are made and no plans or institutional arrangements have been presented concerning specific measures and support to SMEs with a view to creating employment for those distant from the labour market. The only measures in this respect are certain existing programmes which provide employment subsidies to firms for the jobs offered to the unemployed, including persons from social vulnerable groups.

B.2.2 Economic growth, financial sustainability and feeding out

Impact of ‘fiscal consolidation’ efforts

As stated in the revised NRP, the emphasis placed by the government during the last four years has been on fiscal consolidation and on the implementation of major reforms such as: the tax reform so as to reduce the tax burden of firms and individuals, the new framework for tackling tax evasion, the reform of the social security system etc. Yet, no cross analysis or reference is made as to the potential impact that the ‘fiscal consolidation’ efforts are expected to have on improving

the social protection system in Greece or other social policy related systems such as: Health and long-term care, education etc.

In general, no clear-cut and specific plans are evident as to how the Government's efforts towards reducing deficits and debt accumulation will make way for the modernization of the social protection system and the desired improvements in the sectors of health, long-term care and education, which are all pending.

Neither any argumentation is there as to how the reform of the social security system (which just came into force), the recent restructuring of the National Health System, the tax reform, etc will bring about improvements in the abovementioned sectors. Needless to say that such an argumentation presupposes the identification of policy gaps and needs in these sectors, an element which is rather missing -at least in a direct and clear manner-throughout the revised NRP.

Impact of fiscal policies

Public fiscal policies in Greece remain rather short of being able to address adequately the financial needs of social policy related areas, although there has been a steady increase in social expenditure over the years. The fact that public expenditures on the education system and the labour market measures, as a percentage of GDP, remain for some years now considerably low is indicative of this situation. And this despite the fact that the annual real GDP growth rate has been kept steadily high over the last twelve years and the general government deficit has been reduced drastically over the last four years.

Moreover, evidence suggest that public fiscal policies and, in particular, taxation policy have failed thus far to act as a mechanism for redistribution in favour of the vulnerable groups. And no changes are planned that would take into account their impact on social inclusion. The taxation policy pursued, in spite of the consecutive reforms that have taken place, continues to rely more on indirect rather than on direct taxes and, as a result, it rather penalizes the poorest group in society and less so the richest group. For, the lowering of direct taxes to persons has a disproportional impact on persons with low incomes through the increase of indirect taxes on consumption of goods and services. Besides, tax relief does not affect low income persons or families whose yearly incomes are not taxable.

Furthermore, it should be noted that the latest reform of the social security system, which is not as yet fully operational, entails no provisions relating to the introduction of some kind of guaranteed minimum pension scheme. The only relevant provision which has been introduced is a set of financial incentives for those prolonging working life behind the statutory exit age.

Territorial differences and regional gaps.

Territorial differences and regional gaps still exist in terms of regional disparities in employment, income distribution and poverty rates, although structural interventions have been under way over a number of years in order to alleviate them. The planned interventions regarding the development of rural areas and the geographically less favoured areas for the time period 2007-2013 are not counterparted by an estimation of their impact on the decrease of poverty and social exclusion in these areas. In general, this kind of structural interventions aims at the economic

development of the areas under consideration, which in turn would contribute to the upgrading of the standard of living of these areas. In practice, this relationship between economic development and the decrease of poverty at national or local level is not so direct and depends heavily upon the distribution of gains among the inhabitants of a local area.

In other words, the planned structural interventions in the domain of regional cohesion aim mainly at the economic development of local areas, while the social cohesion goal, in terms of increasing employment opportunities to vulnerable groups and promoting, in general, their social inclusion, seems not to be a direct objective of these interventions.

Access to internet

Although measures have been on the increase over the last few years to widen accessibility to internet, no particular attention has been paid by any of the measures to ensure access for those experiencing poverty and social exclusion.

Financial inclusion

No measures or relevant institutional arrangements have been presented which aim at facilitating access to bank accounts and banking services, especially for those at risk of poverty and social exclusion. Neither any measures have been presented to address over-indebtedness in general and, in particular, among people experiencing poverty.

Access to housing

Though no measures have been presented in the NRP with regard to improving access to housing, specific measures are in force which provide, among other things, rent allowances and subsidized housing loans (mortgages) to families with low income.

B.3 Feeding in

It would be hard to maintain that in Greece there exists a clear strategy which ensures that the “partnership for Growth and Jobs” process and the social OMC process are mutually reinforcing. On the contrary, as mentioned earlier, it seems that **there is a mutual reluctance by both processes to acknowledge the role of each other**. This is confirmed by the fact that nowhere in the revised Greek NRP the social OMC process is mentioned, while only one ‘fleeting’ reference is made to the Greek 2008-2010 National Strategy Report for Social Protection and Social Inclusion. This reference reads as follows: “*National employment and social cohesion policies are presented in documents such as the NRP 2005-2008, the National Strategic Framework 2007-2013, the National Strategy Report on Social Protection and Social Inclusion, National Legislation in Growth and Development*” (p.53 of the revised NRP 2008-2010).

Similarly, only two very short references are made in the Greek NSRSPSI 2008-2010 to the NRP, taking the form of statements such as: “*The country’s strategy, as this has been formed by the NRP 2005-2008, has set the promotion of employment and social cohesion, as one of its basic objectives*” (in p. 6 and a similar statement in p. 9).

Active Inclusion

As regards the active inclusion policy, this still lacks an overall strategy and it continues to be heavily based upon the provision of uncoordinated and not related active labour market measures and certain financial transfers which are addressed to people in need or to people suffering a severe disease.

No evidence can be found in the revised NRP, that there is a shift of policies towards combining active employment measures, adequate income support and access to services. Neither any intention has been expressed to alter the system of social benefits so as to provide incentives for facilitating labour market integration of welfare recipients. Such measures, in turn, if taken, would have a positive impact on reducing the high percentage of those who are far from the labour market.

Education, training and lifelong learning

Undoubtedly, efforts have been under way over recent years for upgrading the educational system and for the systematic application of life-long learning programmes. Yet, despite these efforts, the drop-out rate has not been reduced significantly, while the functioning of an integrated system of life-long learning linking formal and informal (initial and continuous) vocational education and training schemes is still pending in Greece.

It should be pointed out, however, that, apart from partial references to certain social inclusion benefits, no attention has been paid by the NRP to provide any kind of argumentation or assessment of how these policy proposals are linked –or are expected to contribute- to specific objectives that are set by the growth and jobs policies. The absence of appropriate monitoring and evaluation mechanisms has certainly a bearing upon this situation.

Gender equality

The gender equality dimension has certainly been taken on board the various employment policy measures included in the NRP with a view to increasing female participation in the Labour Market. In general, a number of legislative and other related arrangements have contributed to the strengthening of gender equality in various social policy related areas. However, no evidence is there that consideration has been given by growth policies on the importance of gender equality in achieving their stated objectives.

Anti-discrimination

No reference has been made in the NRP as to the range of anti-discrimination measures to be taken on board the growth and jobs policies planned. Only some implicit references can be identified with regard to the policies for the integration of immigrants and the disabled, which are briefly presented under the “Social Cohesion” section of the NRP.

Child and family poverty and social exclusion

As it has been repeatedly emphasized in previous assessment reports, in contrast to the positive economic developments and the recent encouraging signs as regards the labour market situation in Greece, the problems of poverty and social exclusion remain almost unchanged. This is reflected in that the poverty rate continues for some years now to remain at high levels, i.e. around 21% in 2006, which is well above the EU-25 respective average. And this despite the fact that the social protection expenditures, as a percentage of the Greek GDP, have been over recent years very close to the EU-25 respective average. Indeed, as evidence suggests, the impact of social transfers – except pensions- on reducing the at-risk of poverty rate in Greece remains constantly limited, i.e. around 2 percentage points.

Yet, the “Social Cohesion” Section (of only two pages length) of the NRP, fails to provide the specific measures to be taken so as to respond to this challenge. This does not even come out clearly as a challenge in the revised NRP, neither any reference has been made as to the targets set for reducing poverty and, in particular, child poverty.

The anti-poverty policy presented, apart from certain measures for the promotion of employment of vulnerable groups, relies largely, once again, on the activation of the recently established National Fund for Social Cohesion. Yet, no reference is made as to how this will contribute to the objectives of growth and employment policies. Besides, identification of critical issues, such as the issue of stopping the transmission of poverty among generations, have been left entirely out of the growth policies’ consideration.

Overall, it may be said that social policy and, in particular, the policy to combating poverty and social exclusion, is attributed by far less importance than the economic and employment policies. Thus, the benefit of measures to prevent poverty, other than those aimed at strengthening employment, has been left out of any detailed reference in the NRP for the promotion of growth.

Social Economy

Strengthening the social economy sector in Greece has recently begun to attain some position in the employment policies pursued by the Ministry of Employment and Social Protection. This is reflected in the fact that this sector constitutes one of the ‘intervention axes’ for promoting the social inclusion of vulnerable population groups, which are included in the Greek Strategic Framework 2007-2013.

It should be pointed out, however, that in the revised NRP, no reference is made at all to any plans for the exploitation of job creation potential of new activities such as those in the Social Economy Sector, neither to any actions aimed at facilitating the development of the sector. Even the term “Social Economy” is completely missing in the revised NRP, implying thus that this sector is yet to be accorded certain legitimacy in the plans for Growth and Jobs in Greece.

The fact that no such plans have been included in the NRP, confirms, once more, that mutually reinforcing links between the policies for growth, jobs and social cohesion remain weak. It also raises serious doubts as to whether specific public policy interventions aiming at the promotion of the Social Economy Sector, ranging from legislation to adequate alternative sources of financing and other supporting measures, will be given a priority for action in the near future.

B.4 Governance

As it has been repeatedly emphasized in previous Assessment Reports, in spite the good intentions expressed in all consecutive Greek NAPs for Social Inclusion, the actions taken in improving governance in the social policy area are very limited. And this situation remains almost the same and has a profound bearing upon the fact that the impact of the related measures on alleviating poverty and social exclusion in Greece remains extremely low.

In particular, turning into examining whether specific governance arrangements -either related to social policy or with a view to strengthen the social dimension of the growth and jobs policies- are included in the revised NRP, one observes that no such arrangements can be identified. And this, despite the fact that in the NRP emphasis has been placed on the plans for the modernization of public administration in Greece, the implementation of which will be co-financed by the European Social Fund under the Operational Programme "Administrative Reform 2007-2013". Among the policy fields or axes of intervention described, nowhere explicit references have been made as to any action planned to establish the necessary mechanisms that would be linking, on a permanent basis, social policies with growth and employment policies.

B.4.1 Monitoring and assessment

No appropriate arrangements are in place, neither any plans are presented in the revised NRP to monitor and assess the impact of economic and employment policies on social inclusion and, vice-versa, of social inclusion/social protection policies on economic and employment growth. And this is greatly related to the absence of an 'evaluation spirit and culture' in the country.

B.4.2 Involvement of stakeholders

As stated in the revised NRP, the Standing Lisbon Committee established in Greece, in which competent Government Departments, the Social Partners, the Regions and NGOs are represented, was somehow involved in the preparation of the Greek NRP. Yet, it does not specify the actual involvement of this Committee in the process of preparation, neither the actual coordination nor the reporting procedure, which have been in place in this regard. Moreover, no reference is made as to the nature of civil organisations involved in this Committee, neither as to whether their views have been taken on board when drafting the NRP.

In general, genuine consultation and acting involvement of civil organisation stakeholders in the decision making processes constitute issues which are profoundly underplayed in Greece. And certainly no provisions or arrangements are there as regards participation of people suffering poverty and social exclusion in any process at all, let alone in the preparation process of the NRP.

B.4.3 Coordination

Given the lack of any permanent institutional mechanism or structure that ensures coordination among social policy related Departments, let alone among Departments in different policy areas, it is rather hard to assess the adequacy of the arrangements for the coordination and joining up of economic, employment and social policies. It seems that the prerequisites are missing to mainstreaming social inclusion policies and articulating their objectives in the growth and employment policies pursued in Greece.