



PERMANENT MISSION OF GREECE  
GENEVA

**VERY URGENT**

Ref. No. 6171.3/93/AS 1522

**NOTE VERBALE**

The Permanent Mission of Greece to the United Nations Office at Geneva and other International Organizations in Switzerland presents its compliments to the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and, following the latter's Note Verbale, dated 18 June 2012, on the children's right to health, has the honour to forward relevant information, by the Greek Government (Ministries of Education and Health).

The Permanent Mission of Greece to the United Nations Office at Geneva and other International Organizations in Switzerland avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights the assurances of its highest consideration.



Geneva, September 17 2012

To: **The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights**  
Palais des Nations, CH-1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland  
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Pages attached: 15

**OHCHR REGISTRY**

**17 SEP 2012**

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Health education in the Greek educational system does not constitute a separate subject as such. Issues related to prevention and health promotion of students are taught in an either cross-curricular approach, by diffusion in various subjects, or they have been included in Health Education Programmes, so that they are part of school curricula or activities. Health Education Programmes also include Consumer as well as Traffic Education. Teachers attend initial seminar training in order to get acquainted with innovative ways to implement Health Education Programmes, but also to get theoretical and pedagogical support.

The aim of the Health Education programmes is to protect, improve and promote the students' physical and social health by developing their personal and social skills on the one hand, and by upgrading their social and natural environment on the other. They are mainly implemented through project-based learning and rely on new teaching methods which encourage student participation and enhance the development of certain skills, such as decision making, drawing conclusions and evaluating consequences.

The thematic units of Health Education Programmes may vary as follows:

- \* Addictive substances (drugs - alcohol - tobacco)
- \* Diet and eating habits - Genetically modified products
- \* Transgender relationships - Sexual Education
- \* Sexually transmitted diseases
- \* HIV - Hepatitis B
- \* Interpersonal Relations - Mental Health (Racism - Violence - Mourning - Xenophobia)
- \* Traffic Education - Accidents
- \* Dealing with stress (school - work)
- \* Oral Hygiene
- \* Cancer - Smoking - Nutrition
- \* Exposure to toxic substances and excessive sunlight
- \* Environment and Health
- \* Volunteering (Blood Donation - Tissue and organ donation - First Aid - Volunteer work - Volunteer school traffic warden)
- \* Anaemia
- \* Cardiovascular diseases
- \* Consumption and Health
- \* Gender equality
- \* Social exclusion - Equal opportunities
- \* Prevention and management of emergencies (such as earthquakes, floods or fires)
- \* Physical Fitness.

For the successful implementation of health education programmes the Ministry of Education collaborates on Road Safety with the Ministry of Public Order & Citizen Protection and the Ministry of Transport, on health education with the Ministry of Health & Social Solidarity, but also with many governmental and non-governmental organizations such as

the National School of Public Health, the Center for Disease Control & Prevention, the General Secretariat for Youth, the Organisation Against Drugs (O.KA.NA), the Institute of Child Health, as well as with scientific bodies such as the Hellenic Medical and Dental Society, the Hellenic Society against Cancer, the Research Centre for Gender Equality (KE.TH.I.) and others.

Additionally, in the context of the implementation of these programmes students may carry out visits to sites and bodies associated with the programme they implement (e.g. traffic education parks, mental health places, exhibitions, factories, hospitals, institutions, etc.). The training material (printed or electronic) which is used to implement health education programmes, based on the principles of active-experiential learning, includes booklets for both teachers and students, as well as information material.

Finally, each school year, free Health Education interventions are implemented in schools by Hospitals, Health Centres, Medical Associations, Institutes of Health and other bodies, which provide preventive controls, tests and information for student health prevention

The number of Health Education programmes undertaken each school year, when funded by the European Social Fund, may come up to 5,500.

**HELLENIC REPUBLIC**  
**MINISTRY OF HEALTH**  
**GENERAL DIRECTORATE OF HEALTH**  
**DIRECTORATE OF PRIMARY HEALTHCARE**  
**OFFICE OF HEAD OF DIRECTORATE**

**Section 2: Please indicate the current status of the child's right to health under your country's legal framework**

1. The Greek Constitution does not make any special reference to children, apart from Article 21, which states that the family, being the cornerstone of the preservation and the advancement of the Nation, as well as marriage, motherhood and childhood, shall be under the protection of the State. The protection of children's rights is ensured indirectly, namely to the extent that children are included in the provisions relating to the overall protection of individual and social rights.

2. Law 2519/21 Aug 1997 (Government Gazette 165 A) "Development and modernisation of the National Healthcare System, organisation of healthcare services and other provisions"

The Department of School Health of the Ministry of Health is responsible for preparing, monitoring and implementing programmes for the provision of prevention, treatment and promotion of health and overall psychosocial support of children in kindergartens, primary schools, junior high schools and high schools, supervising the school environment as regards compliance with public health regulations, as well as recording and filing information on pupils' individual state of health.

To this end, it collaborates with the Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs, Culture and Sports, closely monitors matters of health of the country's pupils and intervenes with specific actions where necessary.

3. Pursuant to paragraphs 10 and 11 of Section C (Preparation of Programmes) of article 12, Structure-Powers of the Directorate (Y3) of Primary Healthcare, of presidential decree 95/10 March 2000, "Regulations of the Ministry of Health and Welfare" (Government Gazette 76 A), our department is jointly competent for the management of matters relating to the preparation, monitoring and implementation of programmes

for the provision of preventive services, overall psychosocial support of children in kindergartens, primary schools, junior high schools and high schools, and for the collection and evaluation of data relating to the morbidity of school-age children and teachers and general preventive tests for pupils on the basis of the individual health card, with the purpose of making relevant recommendations and launching appropriate prevention programmes, in collaboration with the Department of School Health, Directorate of Public Health, Ministry of Health.

**4. Joint ministerial decision No. 16065/2002 (Government Gazette 497 A), "Model Regulations for Municipal and Community Nurseries and Kindergartens being legal persons in public law"**

The purpose of nurseries and kindergartens is, inter alia, to eliminate as far as possible any differences in the cultural, financial and educational level of their parents and provide day care and nutrition to the children they accommodate, in compliance with health and safety regulations.

The legal person is responsible for monitoring the health of children, in parallel with their families; children are examined by a paediatrician once a week. A health record is kept for every child, updated by the physician. Parents are informed once a month on matters of children's health.

The protection of the children's health is another responsibility of the nursery staff, that strictly abides with all necessary health and safety measures and is liable for any negligence or omission that might affect the children's health. The staff undergoes preventive tests and has a special individual health booklet, certified by the competent healthcare agency.

**5. Presidential decree 200/1998 (Government Gazette 161/1998 A), "Organisation and operation of preschools"**

**6. Presidential decree 201/1998 (Government Gazette 161/1998 A), "Organisation and operation of elementary schools"**

**7. Law 3687/2008 (Government Gazette 159/2008 A), "Matters relating to the personnel of the Ministry of National Education and Religious Affairs and other provisions"**

Pursuant to the above legislation, the medical documentation required for enrolment in preschool and the first grade of elementary school

include the children's health book (vaccinations) and certificates of dental, cardiologic and ophthalmologic examination.

**8. Law 3194/2003 (Government Gazette 267 A), "Regulation of educational matters and other provisions"**

**9. Joint ministerial decision No.58410/Γ4/2005 (Government Gazette 859 B), "Determination of the type, content and method of updating of the personal health card (ADY)"**

Principals of primary and secondary schools procure that the schools keep records of their pupils' ADY, whose role is preventive and aims at protecting the life of pupils. In case of uninsured Greeks or foreigners and in case that parents or guardians are financially unable to produce the ADY, the school principal shall, with the consent of the parent or guardian in writing, refer the pupil to the nearest Health Centre or Regional General Hospital in order to fill out the ADY free of charge.

**10. Law 3730/2008 (Government Gazette 262 A), "Protection of children from tobacco and alcoholic beverages and other provisions"**

**11. Law 3868/2010 (Government Gazette 129/3 Aug 2010 A), chapter G, "Measures for the general prohibition of smoking in public areas, amendment to Laws 3730/2008 and 3370/2005"**

Pursuant to the above provisions, it is prohibited to sell tobacco products to and by children, to advertise and sell tobacco products in the premises of Health Services and educational establishments of all grades in public and private law, as well as in the canteens of such services and establishments. Smoking is also prohibited in all indoor and roofed public areas.

**12. Circular No. Y1/Γ.II.ouκ.140202/20 Dec 2011, "New National Programme for the Vaccination of Children and Adolescents 2011" (ADA: 45Ψ6Θ-Θ0K)**

**13. Law 2676/1999 (Government Gazette 1A), "Organisational and operational restructuring of social security bodies and other provisions"**

**14. Ministerial decision No.Φ7/ouκ.1624, "Preventive medicine services provided to persons insured with the State and Insurance Organisations"**

Pursuant to the foregoing, the cost of children's vaccines, according to the National Programme for Vaccinations, and prenatal tests is solely incurred by Insurance Organisations.

The Directorate of Public Health of the Ministry of Health provides vaccines from the national stock for the destitute and the uninsured.

15. Joint ministerial decision No.13941 (Government Gazette 747 B), "Determination of conditions, criteria and procedures for access to the nursing, medical and pharmaceutical care system for uninsured and financially weak citizens"

Hospital, medical and pharmaceutical care free of charge is provided to the following persons, on condition that they are not directly or indirectly entitled to such care by any insurance organisation and are legitimate and permanent residents of the country:

- Uninsured and unmarried pregnant women and mothers and their children;
- Children accommodated in Social Care Units or other foundations being legal persons in public or private law;
- Children placed with foster families;
- Persons detained in prisons, persons put up in children's institutions and persons put up in children's accommodation houses of children's societies (legal persons in public law).

## **16. HEALTH EDUCATION IN SCHOOLS**

**I. Ministerial decision No. Γ1/377/865/18 Sep 1992 (Government Gazette 577B/1992), "Regulation of school activities in primary education";**

**II. Ministerial decision No.Γ2/4867/28 Aug 1992 (Government Gazette 629B/1992), "Regulation of school activities in secondary education";**

**III. Law 2817/2000 (Government Gazette 78A), "Education for persons with special educational needs and other provisions";**

**IV. Circular No.81687/Γ7/9 July 2009 of the Ministry of Education, Lifelong Learning and Religions Affairs, "Planning and implementing school activities programmes (Career Education, Health Education, Environmental Education, Cultural matters, Comenius – Leonardo da Vinci and eTwinning) for the school year 2009-10";**

**V. Circular No.119236/T7/24 Sep 2010 of the Ministry of Education, Lifelong Learning and Religions Affairs, "Planning and implementing school activities programmes (Career Education, Health Education, Environmental Education, Cultural matters, Comenius – Leonardo da Vinci and eTwinning) for the school year 2010-11";**

17. The child's health booklet is an institution launched in 1976 (Ministerial decision No. A29/oux5648/27 Nov 1976 – Government Gazette 1425 B) to document health information of the child population of the country;

18. Law 1036/80 (Government Gazette 66 A) on family planning and other provisions;

19. Law 3996/5 Aug 2011 (Government Gazette 170 A), "Reform of the Labour Inspectors Body, settlement of matters of Social Security and other provisions", article 48, para. 10, stipulates that children of insured persons or old age or disability pensioners of the insurance organisations of the Ministry of Labour and Social Security shall be insured as family members and, therefore, shall be covered for healthcare by the insurance organisations to which their parents are subject for such care. Care provided by insurance organisations includes medical, pharmaceutical and hospital care and any prostheses and auxiliary means of treatment whose aim is to restore their health or alleviate their condition, according to the specific provisions of their regulations.

20. Law 2676/5 Jan 1999 (Government Gazette 1 A), "Organisational and operational restructuring of social security bodies and other provisions", article 33, establishes mandatory preventive medicine with an aim to make timely diagnoses and take measures to prevent or avert disease. Especially for children, preventive medicine includes free of charge vaccination pursuant to the National Programme for Vaccinations and preventive dental work for children aged up to 14 years.

21. Insurance organisations pay a per diem for the participation of the children of insured, pensioners or employees in camping programmes. The amount of per diem is determined annually by joint ministerial decision.

**Section 3: Please provide information on national policies, strategies and plans of action for addressing the priority concerns and challenges identified in question 1**