

Calimera Country Report

**Cultural Applications:
Local Institutions Mediating Electronic Resources**

Greece

Information on Public Libraries,
Local Museums and Archives



calimera

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Table of Contents

	Page No.
ORGANISATION	2
POLICIES AND STRATEGIC ACTIVITIES	8
STATISTICS	11
INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY IN LOCAL INSTITUTIONS	12
OUTLOOK	15
KEY STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES	16
JOINT ACTIVITIES INVOLVING PUBLIC LIBRARIES, MUSEUMS AND ARCHIVES	16
RESEARCH	16

Organisation

[Back to Contents](#)

A. Public Libraries

Public libraries in Greece are divided into three categories according to their legal status, administrative responsibility and target group: the "**dimosies**" that are governed and supported by the Ministry of Education, the "dimotikes" **municipal** libraries that are the responsibility of the local authorities and are financed by them and the "pedikes" **children's libraries** also supported by the Ministry of Education.

There are 46 "dimosies" public libraries in Greece, one of them being the National Library. Twenty-eight are characterized as central libraries and they serve 2 or 3 counties, a geographic area much larger than their immediate jurisdiction.

There is no national authority in charge of all public libraries. The lack of such a body is a major barrier for development at national level. There is an ongoing discussion about the creation and development of an organization which will be in charge of all public libraries and responsible to allocate grants for specific projects

There is not any regional structure either. An Act dated back to 1949 recommended various structures for the development of public libraries, but so far nothing in that direction has been implemented. Currently the mixed status of all public libraries and the various Ministries and local authorities involved administratively in their organization acts as a main barrier to national and regional development of public libraries.

Moreover, the structure does not reflect the current changes - with the emphasis given to decentralization - now taking place in the Greek public sector. Very little cooperation exists between public and other kinds of libraries. It is only recently, in the Ministerial order put in action in October 2001, that an emphasis on cooperation with other libraries has been stated. There, it is mentioned that public libraries should aim to cooperate with academic libraries in order to provide better services to their users. They should also try to make agreements with other types of libraries in order exchange information and should support interlibrary loan for the benefit of their users.

Books, journals, newspapers, CDs, CD-ROMs and videos are included in the collections of public libraries. In a recent act dealing with services provided by public libraries, all

materials mentioned above are included. 95% of all material is in printed format. Libraries lend materials in other formats, but they mostly have to be used within their premises. Rare books, manuscripts etc are not to be removed from the library premises.

The **National Book Centre** seeks to play an overall [role http://book.culture.gr](http://book.culture.gr). The Centre is an official agent dealing with "the book". It is a public benefit legal entity, founded by the Ministry of Culture in 1994. Its aim is planning and implementing a national policy on books and reading. The NBC is active in four areas:

- research, study and archiving in order to create a basic infrastructure of knowledge concerning the field of books.
- structural support for professionals in that field (authors, translators, publishers, booksellers and librarians).
- creating a single policy framework for books and reading within the state mechanism.
- campaigns, programmes, publications, events, and activities concerning promoting "reading" to a wider public

The Centre develops and keeps up-to-date directories on Greek authors, translators, illustrators, booksellers, binding, literary periodicals, Greek libraries, colleges for the publishing profession and public organizations concerning the book field in the EU. In 1997, the Centre founded the Book Monitoring Unit as an autonomous research unit. Its purpose is to study, record, monitor, and analyze all quantitative and qualitative developments and all statistical and economic data related to the book as a commercial unit and as a means of cultural development. The Book Monitoring Unit has conducted several surveys such as a Survey on Reading Habits, a Survey on Illiteracy, a Survey on Recording and Classification of Greek Libraries, a Survey on the Employment Conditions of Writers and Translators in Greece and a Survey of the Greek Publishing Houses. A new council and director have been appointed recently and soon a new strategy is expected to be announced. It is envisaged that emphasis will be given to developing a reading campaign, which inevitably will also bring public libraries, publishers and public closer together.

The National Documentation Centre (NDC) was established in 1980. It operates within the framework of the National Hellenic Research Foundation (NHRF) and is supervised by the General Secretariat for Research and Technology (GSRT) of the Ministry of Development. It is the main national organization for scientific and technological information services. Its activities include the development and hosting of some national databases and operation of the national Network of Scientific and Technological Libraries in Greece that includes 63 libraries. It participates in and supports RTD activities in the framework of national and Community programmes. It also organises seminars and conferences addressed to the library community in Greece.

More information about Greek libraries can be obtained by a recent article published in Electronic journal in 2001; Changes and Developments in the Greek Libraries by Alexandra Papazoglou and Eva Semertzaki [Papazoglou, Alexandra & Eva Semertzaki, "Changes and developments in Greek Libraries", The Electronic Library, V.19 (2001) no.3, p.p. 158-167]

Funding

In general, most public libraries get very little funding. Local authorities are totally responsible for the funding of Municipal libraries. Every year, the Ministry of Education provides small grants to Municipal libraries. The projection for year 2004 is a total of 240,000 Euro.

Recently all 46 public libraries under the Ministry of Education obtained extra resources through EU Second and Third Support Framework. The 2004 projection was 300,000 Euro with a further 100,000 Euro for Children's libraries.

The relevant Ministerial Orders refer explicitly to the free-of-charge principle which applies to most of the activities taking place in Public libraries. In specific areas, including access to Internet and loan of electronic material, the decision lies with the individual library committees whether to introduce fees or to provide these services free of charge. In most cases where offered Internet access is free, with the exception of one library, which charges users except unemployed people. Membership is free whereas fines for late return of loans again depends upon the specific policies of each public library. New IST-based services if provided are likely to be against payment, with the exemption of some groups (unemployed people, children etc).

Professional development

Although library education in Greece is about 25 years old, the profession of the librarian is not well understood by the public. Many people are still not familiar with the services offered by a library, and the work of the librarian remains rather obscure. As a result, the status of the librarian is rather low in Greek society.

Staff restrictions in the public sector apply equally to the library sector. At the moment, public libraries can recruit staff only on contracts, the length of which which vary from 1 year to 3 years. This mainly applies to librarians. In other cases people with different qualifications are employed, e.g. drivers for the national mobile project, computing assistants for technology projects. Most graduates from library schools work in academic libraries where major development programmes enable the employment of librarians. Most library directors in public libraries have degrees in other subjects, e.g. philosophy, literature, law etc plus in-service training, which took place for many years in the National Library, at the beginning of their careers. This applies mainly to personnel working in public libraries belonging administratively to the Ministry of Education, whereas in most Municipal public libraries, the Directors of libraries hold a mixture of degrees from librarianship and other subjects.

At the moment there is a major gap between technological developments and the competence of library staff. The situation is much better within academic libraries where funds have been allocated for the training of staff in new technology for the next few years. However, it should be mentioned that staff of a few public libraries have worked to gain the ECDL (European Computing Driving License) qualification.

In-service training takes place only for specific purposes, during national projects. For example, the current training programme for Library services to schools through mobile libraries, which was aimed at newly employed librarians and run by the National Documentation Centre, www.ekt.gr

In 1961 the Athens Youth Women Christian Association (YWCA) established the first organized library school program. It was a one-year program in library studies and had the status of a vocational school. Later on, in 1977, the first state library science school was founded in Athens within the Centers of Higher Technical and Professional Education (KATEE). In 1981 another KATEE library science department opened in Thessaloniki. In 1983 both library schools were upgraded to the so-called Technological Educational Institutes (TEI) that form part of the higher education system in Greece. The two departments of Library Science offer a four-year academic programme, including six

semesters of course work, a semester of professional practice in a library and a semester for research and writing of a thesis. As now all TEI are expected to become Universities, both schools will go through some kind of reorganization.

Since there is still no formal programme for post-graduate library / information studies, many librarians interested in enhancing their library education continue their training abroad. Most of them go to the United Kingdom for a Master's degree and a few go to the USA.

A recent development in the field of library science education is the establishment of a new library school at the Ionian University under the name of School of Archives and Library Science. It opened for the first time in the academic year 1993-1994 and it is a four-year programme. It also offers the possibility of a doctoral degree (thesis only, no course work). The aim of the school is the practical and theoretical education of students in all fields related to the theory of the book, information, archives and museum objects.

B. Public Archives

Public archives in Greece are divided into two categories according to their legal status, administrative responsibility and target group: the "**General State Archives**", which are administered and supported directly by the Ministry of Education, and the "**Special Archives**" which are the responsibility of public authorities that have important archives and have obtained official permission to manage them by themselves, under the supervision of the General State Archives. In that case, they are financed by the public organisation.

The "**General State Archives**" are divided in three levels:

1. "**District Archives**", seated in the capital of the district. Their jurisdiction extends to all archival production of the public sector within the district.
2. "**Local Archives**", seated at a town other than the capital of the district, responsible for the archival production of the town, in case that there have been important archives in the area.
3. "**Local Archival Collections**" in some isolated municipalities, supervised by the District Archives of the area.

There are 58 "**General State Archives**" in Greece plus the Central Service, responsible for the archival production of the headquarters of all the ministries and the public organisations of Attiki, the district whose capital is Athens. Forty-five are District Archives and thirteen Local Archives.

The regional structure covers practically every district of Greece.

The national authority in charge of all public archives, the "**Eforia**" of the General State Archives, is the decisive body in matters of archival policy. The director of the General State Archives Central Service, designated as the "Director of the General State Archives", is the person who introduces all subjects to this committee.

An occasional cooperation exists between public and some other kinds of archives (bank archives, social archives and municipal archives for example).

There is a regular collaboration with some schools of Greek Universities in matter for educational purposes (Schools of Law, Social Sciences, History and the Department of Archives and Library Science at the Ionian University).

Archives of the public and private sector are included in the collections of public archives. Almost 97% of the originals are in printed format. Consulting rare documents, manuscripts and other sensitive material is generally avoided in the search room. An increasing percentage of them is microfilmed or/and digitized to prevent further deterioration.

Funding

All Public Archives are financed exclusively by the Ministry of Education on an annual basis. The funds they get every year are insufficient for their proper functioning, considering the increasing volume of the archives, the management of new formats and the needs of the public.

Recently 4 of the Public Archives managed to obtain extra resources through EU Third Support Framework for the digitalization of selected material from their collections.

The relevant Ministerial Orders refer explicitly to the free-of-charge principle which applies to most of the activities taking place in Public Archives. Low cost copies (photocopies, CD-ROMs or microfilms) are provided by the Archives on demand. Internet access is free, when provided.

Professional development

There was no education on archives, at university level, until the 1980s. In the Technological Educational Institute of Librarians, students followed some courses on archival management. The Department of Archives & Library Science at the Ionian University, established in 1992, began operating in the academic year 1993-1994.

Although Public Archives have been strongly developed in Greece since 1989-1990, the profession of the archivist is not well understood by the public. Many people are still not familiar with the services offered by Archives, and the work of the archivist remains rather obscure. As a result, the status of those who work in Archives is relatively low in Greek society.

Staff restrictions in the public sector apply equally to the archives sector. From the total number of 633 posts of various specialties, designated in the archival law of 1991, only about 130 are actually occupied (70 of them by personnel detached from the education sector). According to the law, Public Archives can recruit staff only through the national contest for public servants. During the last 15 years, only five of the 500 vacant posts have been filled (archivists and computer specialists). The older staff assigned as archivists, have degrees in other subjects, e.g. history, literature, law etc, plus in-service training at the beginning of their careers, or have followed international archival courses.

At the moment there is still a gap between technological developments and the competence of Archives staff. This gap is progressively closing, due to in-service seminars on informatics, held during the last five years.

A recent development in the field of archival science education is the possibility of a doctoral degree at the Department of Archives and Library Science. The aim of the school is the practical and theoretical education of students in all fields related to the theory of the book, information, archives and museum objects.

C. Museums

In Greece, museum administration is primarily the responsibility of the Ministry of Culture, which is the main policy making body in the fields of cultural heritage and the arts. According to the Presidential Decree no. 191/13.6.2003, "Organisational Structure of the Ministry of Culture", archaeological museums, including museums holding collections dating to the Byzantine and post-Byzantine period, are supervised by the Directorate of Museums, Exhibitions and Educational Programmes, folk art, ethnographic, history, science and technology, maritime and industrial archaeology museums are supervised by the Directorate of Modern Cultural Heritage, art museums and galleries are supervised by the Directorate of Visual Arts, and finally theatre museums are supervised by the Directorate of Theatre.

Archaeological and Byzantine museums are, with a few exceptions, state- owned museums holding collections from prehistoric times to the 19th century. They are staffed by Ministry officials and receive their budget from the state. In their great majority, they are managed by the regional services of the Ministry, i.e. the *Ephorates of Prehistoric and Classical Antiquities* and the *Ephorates of Byzantine Antiquities* respectively. Regional services (*Ephorates*) care for all movable and immovable cultural heritage within their

designated areas, which means that their staff is entrusted not only with the organisation and operation of museums, but also with the undertaking of excavation work, as well as the protection, restoration, enhancement and management of archaeological sites and monuments. The recently adopted organogram of the Ministry, provides for Departments of a) Museums, Exhibitions and Educational Programmes, b) Documentation and c) Conservation to be established in all regional services managing archaeological museums throughout the country and the staff of these Services to be distributed accordingly. In addition, a small number of archaeological museums have been given special regional service status that enables them to function independently from the *Ephorates* (National Archaeological Museum, Epigraphical Museum, Numismatic Museum, Archaeological Museum of Heraklion, Archaeological Museum of Thessaloniki, Museum of Asian Art, Byzantine & Christian Museum, Museum of Byzantine Culture). These museums have their own budget and specialised staff, engage in their own planning and programming and in general, enjoy a greater degree of autonomy in terms of management and operation.

The Directorate of Museums, Exhibitions and Educational Programmes plays a co-ordinating role in founding (?funding?), organising and operating archaeological and Byzantine museums by supporting the planning of permanent and temporary exhibitions, educational programmes and other activities. It also supervises several archaeological museums, which belong to private foundations, such as the Benaki Museum, as well as **ecclesiastical museums** operating under the auspices of parishes and metropolises.

Folk art and ethnographic museums constitute the main category of museums operating under the authority of the Directorate of Modern Cultural Heritage, other categories including **local history, technology, maritime, natural history museums** etc. Although a large part of these museums are financially supported by the Ministry, they are almost in their entirety owned and run by local authorities or private organisations (e.g. foundations, cultural associations); only four of them are considered as state museums, namely the Museum of Greek Folk Art, the Anogiannakis Museum of Greek Musical Instruments, the Folk Art and Ethnology Museum of Macedonia and Thrace and the Zygomala Museum. Besides providing financial support, the Directorate of Modern Cultural Heritage supports the museums under its supervision in the documentation and conservation of their collections, the development of educational activities and cultural programmes of transnational collaboration, personnel training etc. In addition, it is responsible for granting authorization for the establishment of new museums holding collections of the categories mentioned above.

Museums and galleries of modern and/or contemporary art, including institutions owned by the state, such as the National Gallery - Al. Soutzos Museum (Athens), the National Museum of Contemporary Art (Athens) and the State Museum of Contemporary Art (Thessaloniki), local authorities (i.e. municipal galleries) and private collectors or foundations, operate under the authority of the Directorate of Visual Arts. The major areas of the Directorate's responsibility are the support and promotion of artistic production, art education, the archiving and documentation of artworks, the design and organisation of exhibitions in Greece or abroad for the promotion of artistic creations, the supervision, support and funding of modern and/or contemporary art museums and galleries, as well as granting of authorisation for the establishment of new museums under this category. Moreover, the newly established Department of Photography, itself being part of the Directorate of Visual Arts, is responsible for supervising the Museum of Photography in Thessaloniki, as well as for the establishment of museums of photography throughout the country.

Museums listed in alphabetical order and according to type of collection, information on individual museums and the structure of the Ministry of Culture can be found at <http://www.culture.gr>

Libraries

The National plan for Information Society using EU funds was introduced several years ago. Already, the public libraries under the Ministry of Education ("Dimosies") are participating in the project mobile libraries providing services to schools, which started in 2001 and it will be extended to end of 2004. Two more projects started in 2003, the creation of "Public information centers" in all public libraries under the Ministry of Education and in selected municipal libraries across the country and the development of a portal for 70 Libraries (public and municipal libraries). Finally, there is a project, which is planning to link all mobile libraries with their main library. This facility will enable mobile libraries to provide alongside traditional services more advanced ones such as access to Internet resources, introduction to technology etc.

A new law on the creation and reorganization of public libraries came into force in July 2003 replacing one which dated back to 1949. Immediately after the introduction of the new law, a new Ministerial order came into force, dealing with objectives, collections, policies and services to the public. A special emphasis is given to describing explicitly the information role of public libraries and the context of cooperation with other types of libraries.

All other public libraries governed by local authorities (the so called Municipal libraries) do not operate within a common legal common framework and everything depends upon the policy of individual local authorities.

Legal deposit is included in the Act dealing with National Library.

Archives

The law in force concerning archives (1946/31.5.1991) is still a modern one. It defines in detail the purpose of the General State Archives; their structure; the jurisdiction, the responsibilities and the main tasks of the service; the number, the specialties and the qualifications of the personnel; the composition, the jurisdiction and the responsibilities of the supreme archival committee (the "Eforia"); the rules and the conditions for accessing archival material; and the status of any other archival institution.

In collaboration with **The National Documentation Centre (NDC)** established in 1980, the General State Archives elaborate a system of electronic management for the archival material, which will be applied by all Public Archives. This programme implements the international standards on archival description, set by the International Congress on Archives (ICA) and, beside finding aids at any level, will be able to provide a digital image of the documents.

In addition, a programme for the development and amelioration of Internet services was recently initiated. Its main goal is to inform any potential researcher about the information preserved in the State Archives, the various activities of the Public Archives, the conditions for accessing them and to provide every available guide on line. In a second stage, it will be possible to provide direct access to digitized documents, in combination with the programme mentioned above.

Museums

The establishment and implementation of policy in the field of cultural heritage, and especially museums, lies with the Ministry of Culture. When appropriate, the Ministry of Culture co-operates with other Ministries (such as the Ministry for the Economy) to prepare and introduce legislation, which is approved by the parliament and via presidential decrees.

Legislation related to heritage, culture and the arts originally consisted of an agglomeration of amendments to laws dating back to the 19th and early 20th century. In June 2002 a new law for the "protection of Antiquities and the cultural heritage in general" (Act no 3028) was introduced to regulate issues that required clarification, eliminate ambiguities and, in general, fill existing gaps in prior related legislation.

Act no 3028 deals with key issues relating to the protection of cultural heritage of all cultural traditions and historical periods. The need to protect and preserve cultural heritage is linked with the provision of unrestricted access and participation of all citizens in cultural life.

The Law provides definitions of various cultural heritage goods (such as immovable monuments, movable cultural heritage objects, intangible heritage) as well as regulations for the ownership, import and export of cultural goods, prevention of illicit traffic of cultural heritage objects, excavation and restoration works, museums, collective bodies engaged in the protection and management of cultural heritage etc.

Article 45 of this Law is dedicated to regulations about museums; it is actually the first time that the issue of museums is specifically dealt with in a thorough and comprehensive manner. In this context, it provides a definition of museum, sets specific requirements (e.g. existence of one or more collections, adequacy of building infrastructure and staff) for the foundation of public and private museums and provides regulations concerning their acquisition policy, as well as the ownership status of museum collections. In addition, it provides for the establishment of a National Museum Accreditation scheme. Finally, a Museum Council is set up with the task to offer advice directly to the Minister on museum policy and other museum related issues.

Museums are seen as a key sector for the provision of public access to cultural heritage for aesthetic appreciation, education and enjoyment. Policy priorities emanating from this principle include:

- **Modernisation, improvement and expansion of museum infrastructure**

Expansion of museum infrastructure has resulted in the establishment of new archaeological and art museums (e.g. National Museum of Contemporary Art in Athens, State Museum of Contemporary Art in Thessaloniki, Museum of Byzantine Culture in Thessaloniki). In addition, works of refurbishment including the redisplay of permanent collections, as well as the provision of visitor facilities for people with disabilities are currently under way in many archaeological museums throughout the country.

- **Forging links with schools and the local community**

The principle of equal access to museums is manifested in the provision of educational activities for schools, adults and community groups, such as senior citizens, people with disabilities, drug addicts in rehabilitation, prisoners, cultural minorities and refugees. Educational initiatives in museums have been undertaken from the 1980s onwards with the aim to strengthen the social role of museums as important resources of lifelong learning, to raise awareness of and interest in cultural issues among citizens, and to develop a positive attitude towards cultural heritage and the arts. Within the scope of this policy, several central and regional services of the Ministry of Culture, as well as independent museums have developed educational programmes and exhibitions, produced resource material (e.g. teacher's information packs, children's books, museum kits), arranged in-service training sessions for museum staff and school teachers and developed and supported educational networks.

The majority of museums provide some sort of education service for school children at primary and secondary level. The form and extent of that service vary among museums, but in most cases they concentrate on educational programmes conducted by specialised museum staff or volunteers. These programmes deal with topics inspired by the museum collections and in line with curricular requirements. They often employ different interpretation techniques, such as story telling, drama, role play, workshops, slide shows, in order to provide a stimulating educational experience. Some museums concentrate their efforts on producing resource materials based on their collections for children and/or teachers.

The Ministry of Culture has collaborated with the Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs to develop the "MELINA- Education and Culture" programme, a nationwide pilot initiative aiming to promote education in cultural heritage and the arts; it included the organisation of training seminars for school teachers, the publication of educational material for teachers and pupils and the arrangement of a series of school visits to selected museums.

Another project aiming to make school teachers familiar with education activities in museums and other cultural heritage venues run by the Ministry of Culture is the "Museum and School" Regional Seminar. It was introduced by the National Committee of ICOM in 1990 and has been organised by the Ministry of Culture jointly with the Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs.

During the last ten years museums have taken part in projects of national or European scope aiming to raise awareness of cultural heritage among citizens and promote public accessibility, such as the European Heritage Days, the Springtime of Museums (*Le Printemps des Musées*), the "Music with the Full Moon" and the "Open Days" events. Such initiatives share a common characteristic: they are structured around a rich programme of cultural events offered to visitors of various cultural heritage venues on one or more days of free entrance.

The European Heritage Days (EHD) have been launched by the Council of Europe and are celebrated annually during the last weekend of September. Greece has been participating in the celebration since 1995. Events in museums, ranging from lectures and guided tours to temporary exhibitions, theatrical reenactments and other activities are coordinated and supported financially by the Ministry of Culture.

Since 2002 Greek museums have increasingly taken part in the annual celebration of the Springtime of Museums (*Printemps des Musées*), an initiative launched by the French Directorate of Museums (*Direction des Musées de France*) in 1999 and now placed under the auspices of the Council of Europe. Aiming to promote familiarity with the cultural heritage managed by European museums, the Springtime of Museums is celebrated one Sunday in spring with free admission and diverse events focused on a theme (exhibitions, educational programmes, workshops, competitions, lectures, interventions by artists etc.)

Music with the full Moon was established by the Ministry of Culture in 1999 in collaboration with the National Committee of ICOM. It is celebrated on a full moon evening of August each year and features a wide range of open air musical performances which take place at archaeological sites and museums throughout the country.

Another initiative aiming to strengthen the links between cultural heritage institutions and their local communities is the **Open days** project established by the Department of Byzantine Museums in 2002. Events taking place in museums take the form of "behind the scenes" tours and workshops for individual visitors and various adult groups.

For an updated and accurate overview of cultural policies in Greece, including the museum sector, visit the Compendium web site (Cultural Policies in Europe), which is a joint venture between the Council of Europe and ERICarts realized with a community of practice of independent cultural policy researchers, NGOs and national governments (see <http://www.culturalpolicies.net/>)

Libraries

There are no proper statistics available covering the status and use of Public Libraries. Both Ministries concerned indicated that by January 2002 they would be in position to submit statistics generated from a current survey.

The issue of "Cultural statistics", June 1993 (an annual publication of the National Statistical Agency) contained data for the year 1990 provided by those libraries. In that issue a total number of 682 Public Libraries (Dimosies, Municipal, Children's) is presented. According to geographical location, 138 are based in the Athens area with the remaining 544 in the rest of Greece.

In some cases, 10% to 20% of the population is registered in public libraries. It is true to say that there is a considerable difference between the services which different public library authorities provide. That can be explained, mainly, by the lack of a national strategy for the development of public libraries, the lack of a single law governing all categories of public libraries, the differences of funding, standards of service etc, which all together make it very difficult to define and identify the precise role or purpose of the public library in Greece today.

Veria Public Library (Central Macedonia) <http://www.libver.gr> as an example shows how easily the attitude of the general public can be changed in a positive way provided that the services offered are of high quality. At the moment, nearly half of the population of the city is registered with the library (19,000 people) and the number of loans is over 230,000 items per year.

Archives

There are no overall statistics available covering the use of Public Archives.

It is true that there is a considerable difference between the services provided by different Public Archives. This can be explained by the difference in infrastructure (proper buildings e.g.), the lack of adequate specialised personnel, the differences of funding, and mainly by the lack of long term planning, which all together make it very difficult to define, identify and estimate the efficiency of the Greek archival service today.

For example, the statistics of the Historical Archives of Macedonia (Thessaloniki), during the last five years, albeit not representative of the overall statistics, are as follows: with a staff of twelve persons, an average per year of 40 accessions, 250 researchers, 15 visits by elementary and secondary schools for educational purposes, 2 expositions, and the delivery of 4,500 copies of archival material.

Museums

Statistical data representing Greek museums in their entirety are not available. However, data on museum visits and receipts from admissions to a large number of state archaeological museums, as well as the Museum of Greek folk Art, the National Gallery, the Benaki Museum, and the Museum of the History of Modern Greece, are gathered on a monthly basis by the National Statistical Service of Greece (NSSG). Data concerning museum visits are quantitative and not indicative of various visitor categories. Such data for the period 1998-2003 have been published on the NSSG website (www.statistics.gr).

Regarding specifically state archaeological museums, it should be taken into account that the number of visits to museums located within archaeological sites is not included in the tables published by the NSSG. Moreover, figures on free admissions for the years prior to 2002 are not available.

The National Museum Accreditation Scheme, currently under formulation and hopefully in enforcement in the near future, would enable the establishment of the precise number of museums in Greece and provide comprehensive and accurate museum data.

Information and Communication Technology in Local Institutions

[Back to Contents](#)

A. Libraries

There is a programme for upgrading technologically all public libraries. So far, only a small section of all public libraries have Internet access and services. A survey is taking place to record the exact situation. The percentage is even lower when it comes to local public libraries offering Internet access to their users.

No statistics exist so far as for the percentage of public libraries with home pages. Most of the big regional public libraries based in big cities however have homepages but without many functions or information services. Very few new Internet services have been developed and produced by local public libraries. This again comes as a result of the low diffusion of the Internet in society and the lack of necessary resources in most public libraries. Interesting examples do exist to show the dynamic role which public libraries can have within the information society.

According to a survey done in 1998 by the National Book Centre and the Department of Archives and Library Science of the Ionian University in the area of automation, 63.5% of the libraries were not using an automated system for the support of their various functions. Only 8.8% used an integrated library system and 27.7% had automated some of their functions. However, this picture is changing rapidly.

Public libraries mostly use AVEKT www.ekt.gr, a software developed by the National Documentation Centre and distributed free to all libraries. AVEKT has also been selected as the automation system to be used by the newly established school libraries. In some cases, public libraries have managed to put their catalogue on the web (e.g. Public Library of Serres www.serrelib.gr). One library, the Public Library of Veria www.libver.gr uses the software Advance developed by GEAC. It also has also its catalogue on the web. Both systems support Z39.50.

Recently, the Greek Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs in its strategic planning for the "Information Society" program has paid particular attention to libraries and archives.

In particular, in measure 1.1., which aims to create infrastructure and networks in all levels of education, two special projects for public libraries have been incorporated. Namely, the creation of Information Centres within the public library setting and the development of a public library portal which at the beginning will host 70 state and municipal libraries.

Public Information Centers

The project aims to:

- a) supply the infrastructure for the centre;
- b) create the network upon which the information flow will be built.

Library users will have access to organized material and relevant web pages. Bookmobiles will also be connected through satellite to the main Library Information Centres, thus offering access to remote users. It is worth mentioning that 100 Public Information Centres are being created in Public Libraries throughout Greece. Thirty-two bookmobiles will be offering info services at approximately 1000 points.

The new portal for state/municipal libraries <http://www.infolibraries.gr> will be available on the net by the end of 2004. This portal will be the main source for information about public library services across the country both for professionals and the general public. The content management tool which has been used to develop the portal will allow all participating libraries to handle and update their sites much better and thus help to improve the profile of the libraries on the web.

Digitisation

Currently there is no national policy concerning digitisation. It is expected that a policy might be formulated later as digitisation is included as a key action at the Operational Programme for Education and Initial Training, a programme funded by the EU Third Community Support Framework. Unfortunately, this programme at the moment refers only to Academic libraries but synergies will be developed soon and public libraries will benefit for such developments. There is no national digitisation project but only small-scale projects.

A very few libraries provide educational services on the use of the Internet, mainly in cooperation with secondary educational schools. In all cases those sessions are free of charge. It is believed that a national project for the provision of educational services on the Internet through Public libraries will be announced soon under the responsibility of the Ministry of Education. Public libraries do not provide any e-learning services to the public.

A library consortium comprised of the 32 higher education institutions plus the National Library of Greece and the Academy of Athens developed the Hellenic Academic Libraries Link (HEAL LINK). The consortium among other things arranged several licence agreements with several major electronic information providers. No licenses have been purchased for public libraries so far except by Veria Public Library where in 2001 in cooperation with Greek Academic Libraries, one license (Emerald) was purchased.

Two articles published in the journal *Program* are of help in understanding the status of public libraries although this has changed significantly fourteen years after the articles were published:

1. Information technology in Greek libraries: problems and prospects by R.J. Hartley and Io. Trohopoulos (Program, vol. 24. no.4, October 1990, pp. 333-342).
2. Information technology in Greek libraries: an update by R.J. Hartley and Io. Trohopoulos (Program, vol. 25, no. 3, July 1991, pp. 251-256).

B. Archives

There are two programmes for upgrading technologically all public Archives (mentioned in Policies and strategic activities). Almost all public Archives have access to the Internet due to the fact that they have been incorporated to the educational network, established by the Ministry of Education, which was initially created for schools. From the 59 public Archives of every administrative level, 18 have already a WEB page and provide some services (on-line demand of information or material). According to the project, at least every District Archive will have a WEB page within the next eighteen months, providing a standard minimum of information.

It must be noted that the designing and maintenance of these pages is carried out by the staff of the General State Archives and costs nothing.

In the area of automation, less than 60% of the Archives are using an automated system for the support of their various functions and especially for the management of their collections. However, this picture is changing rapidly and will be completely different when the standard programme of electronic management, elaborated by GSA and NDC, will be applied.

In collaboration with The National Documentation Centre (NDC established in 1980), the General State Archives elaborate a system of electronic management for the archival material, which will be applied by all public Archives. This programme implements the international standards on archival description, set by the International Congress on Archives (ICA) and, beside the finding aids of any level, will be able to provide a digital image of the documents.

Besides a program for the development and amelioration of Internet services was recently initiated. Its main goal is to inform any potential researcher about the information preserved in the State Archives, the various activities of the public Archives, the conditions for accessing them and provide every available guide on line. In a second stage, it will be possible to provide direct access to digitized documents, in combination with the program mentioned above.

Digitisation

Currently there is no national policy concerning digitisation. It is expected that a policy might be formulated later as digitisation is included as a key action at the Operational programme for Education and Initial Training, a programme funded by the EU Third Community Support Framework. Unfortunately, this programme at the moment refers only to academic libraries but synergies will be developed soon and public Archives will benefit from such developments.

There is no national digitisation project, only small-scale projects, funded mainly as autonomous actions included in the EU Third Community Support Framework.

C. Museums

Basic information about museums, including contact details, opening hours, entrance fees and main features of their collections, is provided through the Ministry of Culture portal "ΟΔΥΣΣΕΑΣ" (www.culture.gr). Museum web pages presented through this portal are elaborated, maintained and updated by the central service; only a small number of museums have engaged in creating and managing sites on their own. Temporary exhibitions and various cultural events organized or hosted by museums are presented through cultureguide.gr, a recently launched extensive portal covering all cultural and artistic events and activities connected to the Ministry of Culture, as well as arms-length cultural organizations, artists and volunteer groups in the arts.

In general, the use of ICT in the museum sector is relatively limited and in most cases associated with the development of collection management rather than communication or research-based activities.

Digital applications in the field of cultural heritage were recently given impetus under the Third Support Framework Programme, co-funded by the Greek State and the European Commission for the period 2002-2006. The Ministry of Culture has put forward a set of actions to support the digitisation of cultural heritage resources, including museum collections, the design and production of multilingual electronic publications in the form of museum guides or used for educational purposes, the installation of information kiosks and VR based exhibits in major archaeological sites and museums, as well as the development of information systems supporting customer relationship management for museums and other cultural venues.

- For an overview of the National Digitization Committee's activities, see <http://www.hdpweb.org>
- Information on current policy initiatives and ICT based projects in the field of cultural heritage can be obtained from the Digital Applications Directorate of the Hellenic Cultural Heritage S.A., email: dpse@hch.culture.gr (see also <http://www.hch.culture.gr>).

Outlook

[Back to Contents](#)

Libraries

The situation of Public Libraries in Greece has improved significantly in the last ten years. The emphasis has moved somewhat from collection to customers and some very inspiring examples are now in place. However, the complicated administrative context under which they operate and the lack of any National Policy are posing considerable barriers towards further improvements.

It is clear that central government, local authorities etc should take a much more active role in supporting and co-ordinating policies and programs to enhance the role of Public Libraries in providing public access to the Internet. On the other hand, it has been proved as a sine qua non condition that the creation of partnerships is needed among and between the library community, information providers, local and state government and other institutions/organizations to improve the profile of libraries within the community and to offer better quality services to the public.

Archives

The situation of Public Archives in Greece has improved significantly during the 1990s. The archival law, the foundation of the Department of Archives and Libraries Science, and the establishment and staffing of new District Archives are the main events of that period. However, the continuous administrative changes at ministerial level and the lack of a consistent National Policy are posing considerable barriers towards further improvements.

It is clear that central government should take much more into consideration the benefits for citizens of a well functioning archival service. On the other hand, it has been proved that in the domain of information, the creation of partnerships is needed among and between archival institutions, libraries, information providers and other institutions/organizations to improve the profile of Archives within the community and to offer better quality services to the public.

Museums

Since the 190s, there has been a consistent effort to raise the profile of museums by setting higher standards of museum provision and professionalism, improve museum infrastructure and increase public access to museum resources. This effort has been manifested in the modernisation of museum related legislation, the public investment in new museum building projects, the acknowledgement of the educational potential of museums, the development of initiatives intended to strengthen links between museums and local communities, the establishment of links with the international museum community, and finally, the growing recognition of the opportunities presented by Information and Communication Technologies for utilising museum resources.

Electronic bibliographic format	43.1% of libraries in Greece use UNIMARC
Cataloguing standard	The 46 'dimosies' libraries adapted the use of AACR2, as a common policy and the DDC system. Municipal libraries follow these rules sporadically.
Electronic communication standards	(AVEKT) with UNIMARC and Z39.50 are used.

Joint activities between Libraries, Museums and Archives

Although there is not, in general, any formal cooperation between Libraries, Museums and Archives several common activities appear to have been initiated at local level and there is a hope that this trend will take more formal shape and will help to provide better quality services to the public.

Research

– So far, no major research activities have been reported. It is to be seen in what extent the use of the structural funds and the increasing participation, especially of Museums, in European projects will create the framework for all cultural institutions to play a more active role in research activities.