



**Greek National Commission for Human Rights**

**GNCHR Reply to OHCHR call for input  
for the preparation of a comprehensive study on human rights and the  
social reintegration of persons released from detention and persons  
subjected to non-custodial measures pursuant to Human Rights Council  
resolution 57/9**

**March 2025**



*The Greek National Commission for Human Rights (GNCHR) is the independent advisory body to the Greek State on matters pertaining to human rights protection and the National Human Rights Institution (NHRI). It was established in accordance with the UN Paris Principles and is governed by Law 4780/2021. Its members are persons appointed by twenty institutions (independent Authorities, third level trade unions, NGOs, universities and research institutions)*

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## 1. Examples of legislation, regulations and policies to facilitate social reintegration of persons released from detention or subjected to non-custodial measures

In Greece, non-custodial measures have long occupied a significant place within the penal system at all stages, pre-trial, sentencing and execution of the sentence.

Such measures of great significance pursuant to the amendments of the Greek Penal Code introduced by Law [5090/2024](#) include: the conversion of a custodial sentence to a monetary penalty (Article 80A of the Penal Code), the imposition of community service as a sentence (Article 81 of the Penal Code), the conversion of imprisonment to community service (Article 104A of the Penal Code), the suspension of the execution of the sentence or part thereof under specific conditions (Article 99 of the PC), the provision for home detention with electronic monitoring (Article 105 of the Penal Code), and the conditions for granting conditional release (Article 106 of the Penal Code).

The [GNCHR](#) welcomed the full-scale implementation of **electronic monitoring** (Law [5187/2025](#)) is now administered by the General Secretariat for Anti-Crime Policy. The GNCHR has also commended the abolition of the financial burden previously imposed on defendants for electronic monitoring, noting its positive impact on reintegration. At the same time, the GNCHR urges caution to prevent a disproportionate expansion of the monitored population, particularly among pre-trial detainees and those granted temporary leave.

**Also, community service**, pursuant to the recent amendments introduced to the Penal Code by ([Article 81, Law 5090/2024](#)), may be imposed either as a principal penalty (Article 104 of the Penal Code) or as an alternative to imprisonment for custodial sentences not exceeding two years. In addition, the Penal Code provides special provisions for mothers with children up to eight years old who have been sentenced to imprisonment of up to eight years (([Serving of Sentence at Home, Article 105, Law 4619/2019](#)).

**Prison leave** (furlough) also contributes to the smooth reintegration of detainees. However, as noted by GNCHR in its [Note](#), it has been rendered more restrictive under the new Penitentiary Code. The minimum length of the sentence required to be served before an application for regular leave may be submitted has been increased. Moreover, the approval of such leave has been more systematically linked to the nature of the offence(s) committed and the length of the sentence imposed.

**In terms of penal mediation** in the Greek penal law, it is noted that the recent expansion of the institution of penal mediation in the context of domestic violence, introduced by Law 5090/2024 (Article 123: Conditions for Penal Mediation – Amendment of Article 11 of Law 3500/2006), provides for the possibility that, in addition to the Public Prosecutor, investigative officers may also refer a case to penal mediation. This is subject to the condition that the offender participates in a specialised counselling or therapeutic programme for addressing domestic violence, offered by a public body or by a private body under state supervision. GNCHR in its [Report](#) stresses that a referral must be safeguarded through strict

guarantees and the application of specific, clearly defined criteria as these programmes for offenders cannot replace criminal prosecution or conviction.

Additional support is provided through provisions for early conditional release of individuals with substance use disorders. Under Article 35 of Law 4139/2013, offenders who complete certified drug rehabilitation programmes may be conditionally released earlier than standard Penal Code limits, provided they remain under treatment and supervision. Time spent in such programmes is credited as part of the sentence served.

Beyond legislative reforms, [EPANODOS](#)—the sole national reintegration body—plays a central role in preparing individuals for social reintegration after detention. The [GNCHR](#) has repeatedly highlighted the need for its institutional strengthening, including the provision of sufficient human and financial resources and the development of structured partnerships with relevant state actors and civil society organisations.

Complementary to the above, the [Joint Ministerial Decision 113582/29.12.2023 \(Government Gazette B 7469/2023\)](#), define the terms and conditions for the granting of the special allowance (Article 22, paragraph 6 of Law 1836/1989) provided by Public Employment Service - DYPA to vulnerable groups of the population. The amount of the allowance amounts to €718.5 (37.5 daily unemployment benefits) and is increased by 10% for each indirectly insured dependent member. It is granted once every two years. DYPA collaborates also with the General Secretariat of Anti-Crime Policy of the Ministry of Citizen Protection and implements special educational programs for prisoners, aiming at preparing them for their social and professional reintegration. The programs and have been conducted in various prisons i.e., in September 2024, [five new vocational training programmes](#) were introduced concerning the facilities in Grevena, Tripoli and Renti.

## **2. Examples of programmes, including public-private partnerships and other initiatives at the local, national and regional levels, that protect persons released from detention or subjected to non-custodial measures from discrimination and violence and facilitate the social reintegration of such persons**

According to Epanodos [2024 annual report](#), between July and August, 18 summer programmes were conducted in several facilities. Among others, the organisation facilitated accommodation, provided language courses, organized theatrical plays, filmed documentaries and published a [guide](#) about the rights of prisoners and ex-prisoners.

Regarding especially after release period there are the [counselling centers](#) of the General Secretariat for Gender Equality and Human Rights and also at the Municipalities i.e. as the [Center for Combating Gender-Based Violence and Multiple Discrimination](#) established at the City of Athens.

In the context of promoting the social reintegration of incarcerated and formerly incarcerated individuals with substance use disorders, two key therapeutic initiatives in Greece—“KETHEA EN DRASI” and the “18 ANO” Prison Program—provide support through counselling, treatment, and post-release reintegration services within and beyond the prison system. In Athens, KETHEA EN DRASEI runs a Welcome Centre for Released Prisoners and a Rehabilitation Centre. Prisoners who have participated in a treatment programme while in prison are referred to the Reception Centre after their release. All ex-prisoners who are drug users can apply to the Welcome Centre; they do not need to have participated in a treatment programme while serving their sentence. Addicted mothers and their children can also be given treatment and accommodation at the Welcome Centre.

“18 ANO” Prison Program operates within Korydallos Prison Facility I, Korydallos Prison Facility II, and the Korydallos Psychiatric Hospital for Inmates. Awareness Groups are held once a week to inform and motivate drug-dependent inmates about the “18 ANO” Therapeutic Program. After release, and if they so wish, individuals may contact “18 ANO” to participate in all phases of its Therapeutic Program (Counseling Center, Psychological Detoxification – Closed Residential Structure, Social Reintegration).

Especially for women, the [Women Prisoners and Ex-prisoners’ Supporting Network](#) amounts to an initiative led by civil society. The Support Network for prisoners and ex-prisoners.

Also, the [Support Office for Released and Detained Persons](#) of the NGO ‘Arsis’ aims to prepare the social integration of detainees who are about to be released or are recently released, as well as provide assistance to their families.

### **3. Examples of initiatives to prevent and eliminate discrimination, violence and harassment against persons released from detention and persons subjected to non-custodial measures, to educate the public and to address the negative social norms**

According to [Epanodos’ 2024 Annual Report](#), the programme, cooperating with other stakeholders, initiated the filming of a documentary in order to endorse the elimination of the social stigma. Also, it presented a theatrical play and organized the distribution of the relevant material, publication of magazine and leaflets, and the information of the public. Additionally, it provided training seminars for volunteers, aiming, among others, to the active participation of the public.

The Greek NGO Diotima organized a [Gender Equality Week at Thiva Prison](#), dedicated to promoting gender equality and addressing violence. By offering information on tools and opportunities for reintegration, the initiative emphasized the importance of empowerment during incarceration to reduce the impact of social exclusion post-release, facilitating their successful reintegration into society.

Similarly, [KETHEA EN DRASEI](#), has adopted a holistic approach and initiatives (i.e. [co-operation with Odyssea](#)) combining the vocational training, therapeutic support, as well as

consultancy, recognizing the complexity of the social discrimination, which stems from the co-existence of the stigma regarding ex-prisoners and drug users. Moreover, it organizes campaigns, press conferences, cultural events, bazaars and social media pages dedicated to this purpose.

Also, two guides have been published by the Anti-Crime General Secretariat the [Guide for the treatment of LGBTQI+ Prisoners](#) and the [Guide for the treatment of prisoners with disabilities](#).

#### **4. Relevant data, studies and research on the impact and effectiveness of policies and programmes for combating discrimination, and for respecting, protecting and fulfilling the human rights of persons released from detention or subjected to non-custodial measures.**

The research of the [Regional Observatory of social reintegration in the region of Attica \(Social Network Attiki\)](#) highlights the social exclusion of released persons, a phenomenon which deteriorates their social reintegration. Finding a job is considered as an extremely strenuous task, especially for those who have been convicted of financial crimes. Moreover, the existence of the individuals' criminal record seems to aggravate the situation, since it is considered that influences the employers, who ground their decision and form their criterion based solely on it. As the study asserts, the social stereotypes and the inability of destigmatization, except illustrating the ineffectiveness of the current policies, affect the engagement of the released to the relevant programmes and facilitate their recidivism.

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