



**HELLENIC REPUBLIC
MINISTRY OF JUSTICE,
TRANSPARENCY AND
HUMAN RIGHTS**



**THE GREEK OMBUDSMAN
Independent Authority**

**Memorandum of Cooperation
between the Ministry of Justice, Transparency and Human Rights and
the Greek Ombudsman**

In Athens today, the 19th of May 2016, the Ministry of Justice, Transparency and Human Rights (hereinafter "the Ministry") based in Athens (96 Mesogeion St.), which is legally represented by the Minister, Mr. Nikolaos Paraskevopoulos, and the Greek Ombudsman (the "Ombudsman"), based in Athens (17 Halkokondyli St.), which is legally represented by the Acting Ombudsman, Mr. Vasileios Karydis, which will hereinafter referred to as the "Parties"

Noting the need to undertake action and develop policies for the penitentiary system, with respect to the rule of law and the protection of human rights,

Recognizing the institutional role of the Ombudsman, as an Independent Authority, in monitoring living conditions in detention premises and the protection of prisoners' rights, as established in national and international law, as well as the Ombudsman's special mandate as a "National Preventive Mechanism Against Torture and Ill-treatment",

Considering the cooperation between the two Parties as necessary in order to improve the operation of detention premise and the penitentiary system in general,

Agree to cooperate in order to implement actions in the field of penitentiary administration, aiming at:

- The improvement of living conditions of prisoners
- The protection of the rights of prisoners
- The ensuring of transparency and accountability of detention premises
- The exchange of knowledge and expertise in order to formulate evidence-based proposals for improving the functioning of the penitentiary system

- The Support on behalf of the Ministry to the Ombudsman when exercising his mandate within detention premises
- The Support on behalf of the Ombudsman to the Ministry by providing views concerning penitentiary issues
- The cooperation in the field of the training of the staff, under the authority of the General Secretariat of Crime Policy, as well as the joint publication of relevant educational material.

In particular, this cooperation will be developed directly in the following areas:

1. Development by the Ministry, on its own initiative, of training programs for the staff of detention premises with the participation of the Ombudsman;
2. Joint Publication of educational or informational material;
3. Implementation by the Ministry of pilot activities in certain detention premises, with the participation of the Ombudsman in the planning phase;
4. Opportunity for prior consultation with the Ombudsman and exchange of views on draft laws concerning the rights of prisoners, in accordance to the provisions of the UN Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture;
5. Ensuring the direct contact between the Parties (appointment of contact persons);
6. Special Attention to the joint participation of the Parties in meetings with international institutions, in particular with the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CPT) of the Council of Europe and the Subcommittee on Prevention of Torture (SPT) of the UN, with the perspective to strengthen joint actions against abuse;
7. Taking in common responsibility for the organization and realization of thematic events in order to raise awareness and accurately inform the administration and the public on operational issues of the penitentiary system and the protection of the human rights of prisoners.

This Memorandum of Cooperation enters into force upon signature by representatives of both Parties.

Athens, May 19, 2016

For the Ministry

For the Ombudsman