



HELLENIC PARLIAMENT

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HELLENIC PARLIAMENT

THE INSTITUTION THE HISTORY THE BUILDING

HELLENIC
PARLIAMENT

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HELLENIC

PARLIAMENT



The Hellenic Parliament constitutes the upmost representative institution of the Greek people, as it represents the popular will and sovereignty. The Hellenic Parliament is an institution of high authority and universal recognition. It is even more the core of Democracy, the most powerful democratic symbol.

The institutional, legislative and controlling function of the Parliament is sustained and supported by a dynamic structural system of parallel activities, constantly evolving in such a way as to correspond to the expectations of the people and to the needs for a most effective function of the House, its members and its staff.

Achievements of our time - such as technology advances, the need to tread a path of peace and cooperation between nations, the demand for more flexible administrative structures, interactive educational, environmental and cultural proposals, as well as sufficient modern building infrastructures - constitute high priority targets which place the Hellenic Parliament on a steady track of ongoing development.

This may clearly be seen through the variety and diversity of the parliamentary activities which are thoroughly described in the present publication.

The Hellenic Parliament opens the doors to Society. It hosts ten of thousands of visitors annually, "opens its doors" to young people, invests in the communication with the citizens, upgrades its administrative structures, has an active presence in the world. It keeps abreast with developments and adapts to them successfully. In close co-operation with the Hellenic Parliament Foundation for Parliamentarism and Democracy, it undertakes multifarious activities pertaining to democracy, the Greek history and culture, the protection of the environment, international co-operation as well as the two-way communication with civil society.

We would like the 'face of the Hellenic Parliament' to become familiar to all citizens and their families and be close to the young generation of our country.

To this end, we make use of every contact point with society and we seize on every opportunity to make known the contemporary profile of the Parliament, its role and its work.

This is after all, the reason for the present edition : by providing useful information it aims at rendering parliamentary procedures well known to all people.

In the hope that 'bringing Parliament to People' will attract more visitors to the Parliament's Building, to the Plenum Hall, to the Parliament's Library, to the multi-space complex which is under construction in Lenormant Street, to the exhibitions, the cultural premises, the website of the House, the parliamentary TV channel and, soon to the Parliament's radio broadcasting, I cordially welcome this publication.

The Hellenic Parliament is working to bring citizens closer to the parliamentary procedures, parliamentary history and the evolution of Democracy. This is a joint commitment.

Dimitrios G. Sioufas

**President of the Hellenic Parliament
President of the Hellenic Parliament Foundation
for Parliamentarism and Democracy**

did you know that...

...since 1974 and up to date, 12 national elections and 6 European Parliament elections have taken place?

The number of M.P.s and MEPs elected since 1974 stands at 1.386.

...in the period December 1974 - September 2008 at the Parliament:

4.173 Bills were submitted

3.708 Bills were voted (of which 11 were law proposals)

547 legislative Bills were submitted

218 legislative Bills were debated

during the period in question, were submitted to the Parliament:

211.893 Petitions

227.384 Questions

7.197 Interpellations and current interpellations and **2.013** were debated

from 1987 up to October, 3rd 2008 were submitted::

14.686 Current Questions to Ministers and were debated **7.667**

from 1990 up to October, 3rd 2008:

728 Current Questions to the Prime Minister were submitted and **311** were debated.

... the Members of the Parliament exercise their duties, even if not present at the Plenary Room?

This is so because M.P.s have many obligations to carry out on a daily basis. They participate in Parliamentary Committees and Sub-committees' meetings, in working meetings with experts, citizens, journalists and collective bodies. In addition, they represent the Parliament at international parliamentary meetings and participate in international organizations assemblies, whilst at the same time they take care of issues pertaining to their constituency.

... the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), where the Hellenic Parliament participates, has 154 members and 8 associate members?

The Hellenic Parliament is a member of the Inter-Parliamentary Union which brings together as members 154 national parliaments worldwide and 8 other parliaments which do not have the right to vote. The IPU's mission is to promote parliamentary dialogue and peace, defend human rights, ensure firm establishment of all representative institutions and support the United Nations efforts.

... out of 1.386 M.P.s and MEPs from 1974 up to date, 425 M.P.s and MEPs have published at least one book?

The parliament's exhibition entitled 'Authors M.P.s and MEPs: 1974-2008' illustrates that most books have been written by M.P.s and MEPs in profession lawyers, university professors, economists and journalists. In addition, 68% of the books were published after 1980 and out of the 123 female M.P.s, 41 are involved in writing activity.

6 ... more than 75.000 visitors are guided to the Parliament's premises every year?

Approximately 10.000 citizens and 65.000 pupils and students from public and private educational institutes, associations, and foreign students and pupils' delegations visit the Hellenic Parliament annually.

7 ... approximately 400 pieces of art decorate the Parliament's premises today?

The paintings consist part of the Hellenic Parliament's Collection of Works of Art and are mainly pieces of art by Greek artists of the 19th and 20th centuries.

8 ...you may visit the Hellenic Parliament every Saturday and Sunday and on school holidays from 10.00am to 20.00pm upon simple display of your identity card?

Did you know that...

9 ...the building housing the Hellenic Parliament was initially King Otto's Palace?

The Royal Palace was erected in 1836 on the designs by the Bavarian architect Friedrich von Gaertner and the works lasted for 7 years. In November 1929, the Government of Eleftherios Venizelos decided to transfer the Parliament from the old Parliament building (in Stadiou street) to the Old Palace building..

10 ... on the 1st of July 1935, the first Plenary Session of the Parliament was convened at the renovated Old Palace Building? Thus began the work of the fifth National Assembly with interim Speaker Antonios Athinogenis and Prime Minister Panagis Tsaldaris.

11 ... heirlooms from E. Venizelos are being kept at the Eleftherios Venizelos Hall in the Parliament?

The Parliament, at an auction of Sotheby's House, bought the golden wild olive tree wreath, offered by the country's municipal dignitaries to Eleftherios Venizelos on September 15, 1920 as a token of gratitude for signing the Treaty of Sèvres. The wreath had been lost after Venizelos self-exile in 1935. Today, the golden wreath, together with the typical cap he used to wear, a relief plate by Roque-Mela depicting his profile as well as a portrait by the painter Georgios Rorris are exhibited at the Parliament's Hall named after him.

12 ...Parliament collection includes around 650.000 volumes of books, newspapers, magazines, rare editions, manuscripts, maps, historical archives etc.?

The Hellenic Parliament disposes also complete series of the Official Government Gazettes, as well as the Parliament and Senate meetings' minutes. It is a library open not solely to M.P.s but also to Parliament's visitors.



What is the Parliament?

The Hellenic Parliament constitutes the upmost democratic institution which represents the people.

The Plenary Session and the Section

The Parliament's Plenum is formed by the entire number of M.P.s who are elected at the parliamentary elections. Parliamentary elections are carried out every four years, unless the Parliament is dissolved earlier.

The time interval between two elections constitutes a 'Parliamentary Term'. Parliamentary Terms are numbered on a continuous sequencing since 1974, following the Greek numbering. Today we run through the twelfth (i.e. in Greek IB) Parliamentary Term.

During the Parliamentary Term, the Parliament convenes in regular sessions (the Constitution foresees the convocation of the Parliament in extraordinary and special sessions, as well).

The Parliament's Plenum convenes in regular session on the first Monday of October of each year. Its duration cannot be less than five months. The Parliament's regular session is convened within thirty days after the Parliamentary elections.

The legislative work of the Parliament and the exercise of parliamentary control to the Government lie within the principal responsibilities of the Plenum.

During the Parliament's recess, namely during the time period between two sessions, part of the legislative work and parliamentary control are exercised by the Recess Section of the Parliament.

Each Recess Section is composed by one third of the total number of M.P.s. Its synthesis changes periodically so as to ensure, as much as possible, the equal in time participation of all M.P.s.

The Parliament decides

The Plenary decides on absolute majority of its members being present, which cannot be less than the 1/4 of the entire number of M.P.s (75 Members of the Parliament). The cases requiring qualified majority are outlined in the Constitution and the Parliament Standing Orders.



Entrance to the
Parliament's Plenum Hall
from the peristyle

The Parliament legislates

The legislative function, i.e. the voting of laws (in precise ‘Statute Laws’, as opposed to other kind of legislation such as Presidential Decrees, Ministerial Decisions, etc) and the exercise of parliamentary control to the Government constitute the hard core of parliamentary work.

Legislative initiative is assumed either by the Government (namely one or more of its Ministers) or by the M.P.s (individually or collectively). Ministers submit to the Parliament Bills, amendments and additions.

Respectively, M.P.s submit to the Parliament law proposals, amendments and additions, according to the terms and conditions provided by the Constitution and the Standing Orders of the House.

Submission of Bills and law proposals to the Parliament

Bills and law proposals are accompanied by an **explanatory report**, analyzing explicitly the goals of Bills and law proposals. If the proposed legislation entails a burden to the budget, it is accompanied by a **report from the National General Accounting Office**, determining the amount of income and expenditure deriving from the application of the proposed provisions. In case a Bill entails an expenditure or decrease of income, a **special report by the Ministry of Finance and by the competent Minister** must also be submitted, describing the way in which this expenditure will be covered. Furthermore, a **report by the Scientific Services of the Parliament** is also submitted which elaborates arte legis the provisions of the Bill or law proposal.

Bills and law proposals are first submitted to the Directorate of Legislative Work. They are then announced to the House, in the presence of M.P.s and are transmitted for elaboration or for debate and voting to the competent Standing Committee of the House.

The Parliament debates and passes Bills and law proposals

Following their elaboration or debate and voting by the competent each time Standing Committee, Bills and law proposals are inscribed on the Legislative Work Agenda for debate and voting by the Parliament’s Plenary Session. The Parliament’s Recess Section may debate any Bill except for those which come under the Plenum’s responsibility.



Bills are debated and voted in three stages...

Are debated and voted in principle

At this stage, the competent Ministers and M.P.s express their views on the scope and content of the proposed provisions.



Are debated and voted by article

Once the Parliament votes the Bill in principle, it then debates and subsequently votes each one article in the Bill.



Vote of the Bill as a whole

Following the voting of the articles, the Parliament votes the Bill as a whole, in its entirety, as it has been formulated by any eventual additions or amendments which were submitted and accepted during the discussion of the articles.



The President of the Republic issues and promulgates the laws (i.e. 'Statute laws') which have passed by the Parliament, after having been signed by the competent Ministers.



Moreover...

Besides passing laws, the Parliament's legislative work includes the following responsibilities:

- **Revision of the Constitution**
- **Voting of the Standing Orders of the Parliament**
- **Voting of the Budget, the Financial Statement and the General Balance Sheet of the State as well as the Budget and the Financial Statement of the Parliament**
- **Approval of the programs on economic and social development**
- **Decision to proclaim a referendum**



The Parliament controls

The Government is subject to parliamentary control, as provided by the Constitution and the Standing Orders of the House.

Vote of confidence

The Government must enjoy the confidence of Parliament. Each time a new Government is formed (after parliamentary elections or following resignation of the previous Cabinet), it is obliged to request a vote of confidence by Parliament. The Government may also request a vote of confidence by Parliament at any time during its parliamentary term. Respectively, the Parliament itself may submit a motion of censure, in other words contest the Parliament's confidence to the Government. This motion of censure must be signed by at least 50 M.P.s (1/6 of the total number of M.P.s) and must explicitly state the subjects on which the debate is to be held. A motion of censure shall be adopted, (in other words be accepted that the Government no longer enjoys the confidence of Parliament) only if it is approved by an absolute majority of the total number of M.P.s, i.e. 151 M.P.s.

Other means of parliamentary control...

The motion of censure is not the only way by which Parliament may exercise control over the Government. The Constitution and basically the Standing Orders of the House, provide various means of parliamentary control (eg. petitions, questions, interpellations etc). These means are applied either to request information and clarifications by the Government or to exercise control to its policy on any acts or omissions.

Petitions

Individuals or groups of citizens may address their complaints and requests officially and in writing to the Parliament. If they wish, M.P.s may adopt a petition by endorsing it upon its submission or by making a statement upon its announcement at the Parliament. The Minister has to reply in writing to any petition adopted by a M.P., within twenty five days.

Questions

M.P.s have the right to submit written questions to the Ministers on any public issue. These questions aim at the updating of the Parliament on that specific issue. The Ministers are obliged to reply in writing within twenty five days.





Current questions

As regards questions concerning current issues, every M.P. has the right to submit a question addressed to the Prime Minister or the Ministers, who answer orally. Current questions are debated in the Plenary Session as well as in the first and third sitting of the Recess Section.

Interpellations

Interpellations aim at the control of the Government for its actions and omissions. The interpellations are debated by the Plenary Session. If there are more interpellations on the same issue, the Parliament may decide their debate at one time or even the generalization of the debate.

Current interpellations

For matters regarding current issues, every M.P. has the right to submit current interpellations. Current interpellations are debated every Monday in the Plenary Session as well as in certain sittings of the Recess Section. As a rule, the debate procedures provided in the Standing Orders for the interpellations, also apply to the current interpellations.

Current questions to the Prime Minister (Prime Minister's Hour)

The Prime Minister answers to at least two current questions addressed to him once a week. At the Plenary Session discussion, the Prime Minister and the M.P. submitting the question take the floor. The majority of current questions are submitted by the Presidents of Parliamentary groups; however, M.P.s also have the opportunity to address a question to the Prime Minister. If the topic of the current question addressed to the Prime Minister falls under the exclusive responsibility of a Minister, then the Minister in charge provides the answer.

As from October 2007 and up to June 2008, 43 current questions addressed to the Prime Minister were discussed.

The Prime Minister answered to 30 of them and the Ministers in charge answered to 13.

Request to submit documents

M.P.s have the right to request Ministers in writing, to submit documents related to a public issue. The Minister must submit the requested documents within 30 days. However, no documents relating to diplomatic, military or national security issues may be submitted.

Debates on M.P.s' initiative

On M.P.s' initiative, and according to specific conditions provided in the Standing Orders of the House, debates concerning issues of general interest or concern may take place in the Plenum or the Standing Committees.

Control over independent authorities

Every Independent Authority submits to the President of the House (Speaker) by the end of each March, a detailed report on its activities in the previous year. The report is submitted to the Special Permanent Committee on Institutions and Transparency, to the competent Standing Committee or to any other ad hoc committee which will then submit their findings to the Speaker. The Speaker will communicate them to the Government and the authority concerned. A debate on the findings may be carried out at the Plenary Session of the House without carrying out a ballot.

Debates on items ‘off the Agenda’

These debates are on national issues or issues of a more general concern and are carried out at the level of leaders of political parties. The Prime Minister, the Presidents of Parliamentary Groups as well as one or two Ministers only, may take the floor at these debates. In each session five ‘off the agenda debates’ are determined by the Opposition Parties.

In addition...

For a prompt and reliable briefing of the Parliament, the Prime Minister may request to make announcements or statements to the Parliament on any serious public issue of major interest.

In such a case, a short discussion takes place in which only the presiding officers of the Parliamentary Groups may participate. According to the recent amendment of the Standing Orders in 2008, Ministers may also inform the Parliament on any important issues within their competence.

Other responsibilities of the Parliament

In addition to the legislative work and parliamentary control the Parliament is also responsible for:

- **The election of the President of the Republic.**
- **The election of the President of the House (Speaker) as well as the election of the Parliament’s Presidium.**

The Hellenic Parliament’s weekly agenda

	Plenary Sessions		Committees
	Legislative work	Parliamentary Control	
Monday	-	Time: 18.00 Current questions and interpellation	Starting from 14.00
Tuesday	Time: 18.00	Time: 18.00 Petitions-Questions	Morning and until 18.00
Wednesday	Time: 10.00	-	From 15.00 to 19.00
Thursday	Time: 09.30	Time: 09.30 Current questions	From 15.00 to 19.00
Friday	-	Time: 10.00 Current questions and interpellation	-



National Elections and Members of the Parliament

Elections and the right to vote

National parliamentary elections are held simultaneously throughout the country every 4 years (or earlier, according to the Constitution). Statute Law passed by increased majority of the 2/3 of the total number of M.P.s may define the conditions for the exercise of the right to vote for Greek citizens outside the Greek territory.

Citizens holding the right to vote (i.e. the electoral body, voters), may freely choose their representatives for each parliamentary period who will perform their duties according to the Constitution and the laws.

The right to vote is granted to all citizens who...

- hold the Greek citizenship
- have attained their eighteenth year of age
- have legal capacity
- have not been subject to irrevocable criminal conviction for any of the crimes incurring deprivation of the voting right

M.P.s and the right for candidature

The Hellenic Parliament consists of 300 M.P.s, elected on a four-year term as from the election day. The precise number of M.P.s, however, is defined by statute and cannot be less than 200 or more than 300. The number of M.P.s per constituency is determined by Presidential Decree, on the basis of the constituency's legal population, as this was derived from the latest census.

The right to be elected as M.P. is granted to ...

- those who hold the Greek citizenship
- those who have the legal capacity to vote
- those who have attained the twenty-fifth year of age, on the election day
- those who do not come under any of the electoral impediments (disqualifications) provided by the Constitution





New Democracy Party
(N.D.)



Panhellenic Socialist
Movement (P.A.S.O.K.)



Communist Party
of Greece (K.K.E.)



Coalition of Radical Left
(S.Y.R.I.Z.A.)



People's Orthodox Rally
(L.A.O.S.)

State Constituency M.P.s

Part of the Parliament, comprising not more than the 1/20 of the entire number of its members may be elected throughout the Country at large.

Law provides the distribution of seats for the State Constituency M.P.s among the political parties. Today, the State Constituency M.P.s are 12.

Independent M.P.s

M.P.s not belonging to any Parliamentary Group are considered as independent.

Results of elections on September 16th, 2007

Enrolled	9.921.343	Voted	74.14%
Valid ballots	97.33%	Void/Blanks	2.67%

Political Party	%	Votes	Seats
N.D.	41,83	2.995.321	152
P.A.S.O.K.	38,10	2.727.702	102
K.K.E.	8,15	583.768	22
S.Y.R.I.Z.A.	5,04	361.216	14
L.A.O.S.	3,80	271.761	10
Other parties	3,08	220.142	-

**Hellenic Parliament Synthesis
(November 2008)**



	N.D.	151
	PA.SO.K.	102
	K.K.E.	22
	SY.RIZ.A.	14
	LA.O.S.	10
	INDEPENDENT	1



Presidents of the Republic and Prime Ministers from 1974 up to date

Presidents of the Republic

The President of the Republic is elected by the Parliament on an open voting by roll-call for a term of five years. Re-election of the same person as President is permitted only once.

In conformity with the Constitution, the President of the Republic is elected on a two-thirds majority (i.e. 200 votes) out of the total number of M.P.s. In case of no majority, the ballot is repeated after five days. Should the second ballot fail, the process is repeated after five days and President of the Republic is elected the person receiving a majority of 3/5 (namely 180 votes) out of the total number of M.P.s.

Should the third ballot fail to produce the said qualified majority of three-fifths (namely 180 votes), the Parliament shall be dissolved within ten days of the ballot and elections for a new Parliament shall be called.

The new Parliament, once constituted itself as a body, elects the President of the Republic on a three-fifths majority of the total number of M.P.s (i.e. 180 votes). Should the said majority not be attained, the ballot is repeated within five days; President of the Republic is elected the person receiving the absolute majority of the total number of M.P.s (namely 151 votes). Should this majority also not be attained, the ballot shall once more be repeated and the person receiving a relative majority shall be deemed elected President of the Republic.

It is worth mentioning that all Presidents of the Republic as from 1975 until now have been elected by the qualified majorities of any of the three first ballots (i.e. 200 or 180 votes).

PRESIDENTS OF THE REPUBLIC



Michael Stasinopoulos
(1974 - 1975)



Konstantinos Tsatsos
(1975 - 1980)



Konstantinos Karamanlis
(1980 - 1985, 1990 - 1995)



Christos Sartzetakis
(1985 - 1990)



Konstantinos Stefanopoulos
(1995 - 2005)



Karolos Papoulias
(2005 - ...)

Presidents of the Republic since 1974 to date

The Presidents of the Republic elected since 1974 to date are the following:

- **Michael Stasinopoulos**
(Interim President of the Republic)
from 18-12-1974 until 18-06-1975
- **Konstantinos Tsatsos**
from 19-06-1975 until 04-05-1980
- **Konstantinos Karamanlis**
from 05-05-1980 until 10-03-1985 and
from 04-05-1990 until 09-03-1995

Note: during the period from 10-03-1985 until 28-03-1985 the duties of the President of the Republic were assumed by the President of the Parliament Ioannis Alevras, pursuant to the Greek Constitution.

- **Christos Sartzetakis**
from 28-03-1985 until 03-05-1990
- **Konstantinos Stefanopoulos**
from 10-03-1995 until 10-03-2000
and from 11-03-2000 until 11-03-2005
- **Karolos Papoulias**
since 12-03-2005 - ...

Prime Ministers

Following the elections, the President of the Republic shall give the mandate to form a Cabinet to the leader of the political party having the absolute majority of seats in Parliament (at least 151 seats).

If no party has the absolute majority, the President of the Republic shall give the leader of the political party with a relative majority an exploratory mandate in order to ascertain the possibility of forming a Government that would enjoy the confidence of the Parliament.

If this possibility cannot be ascertained, the President of the Republic assigns an exploratory mandate to the leader of the second largest party in Parliament, and if this proves to be unsuccessful, to the leader of the third largest party in Parliament. Each exploratory mandate shall be in force for three days. If all exploratory mandates prove to be unsuccessful, the President of the Republic summons all party leaders and, if the impossibility to form a Cabinet enjoying the Parliament's confidence is confirmed, he shall attempt to form a Cabinet composed of all parties in Parliament for the purpose of holding parliamentary elections. If this fails, he shall entrust the President of the Supreme Administrative Court or of the Supreme Civil and Criminal Court or of the Court of Audit to form a Cabinet as widely accepted as possible to carry out

PRIME MINISTERS OF GREECE



Konstantinos Karamanlis
(1974 - 1980)



Georgios Rallis
(1980 - 1981)



Andreas Papandreou
(1981 - 1989, 1993 - 1996)



Tzannis Tzanetakis
(02.07.1989 - 12.10.1989)



Xenophon Zolotas
(23.II.1989 - 11.04.1990)



Konstantinos Mitsotakis
(1990 - 1993)



Costas Simitis
(1996 - 2004)



Costas Karamanlis
(2004 - ...)

elections and dissolves the Parliament. In Greece, since 1974, the rule is the forming of autonomous governments by the first in power political party. Exception to this, were the governments formed following the elections in June 18, 1989 and November 5, 1989, with the participation of more than one political parties.

Prime Ministers since 1974 to date

In the period which followed the fall of the military dictatorship in 1974 and up to date, the Prime Ministers who received vote of confidence were the following:

- **Konstantinos Karamanlis**
from 21-11-1974 until 28-11-1977 and
from 28-11-1977 until 10-05-1980

Note: He served as Prime Minister in the Government of National Unity from 24-07-1974 until 21-11-1974.

- **Georgios Rallis**
from 10-05-1980 until 21-10-1981
- **Andreas Papandreou**
from 21-10-1981 until 05-06-1985,
from 05-06-1985 until 02-07-1989 and
from 13-10-1993 until 22-01-1996
- **Tzannis Tzanetakis**
from 02-07-1989 until 12-10-1989
- **Xenophon Zolotas**
from 23-11-1989 until 11-04-1990
- **Konstantinos Mitsotakis**
from 11-04-1990 until 13-10-1993
- **Costas Simitis**
from 22-01-1996 until 25-09-1996,
from 25-09-1996 until 13-04-2000 and
from 13-04-2000 until 10-03-2004
- **Costas Karamanlis**
from 10-03-2004 until 19-09-2007 and
since 19-09-2007 - ...



Organization and Function of the Parliament

Presidium

The Presidium of the Hellenic Parliament is comprised of:

- **the President of the Parliament (Speaker)**
- **seven (7) Vice-Presidents (Deputy Speakers)**
- **three (3) Deans (Quaestors)**
- **six (6) Secretaries**

Its main characteristic is its **cross-party** composition.

Thus, the first, second and third Vice–Presidents, two Deans and four Secretaries are from the ruling party, the fourth Vice-President, one Dean and one Secretary are from the first in power opposition party; the fifth Vice-President and one Secretary belong to the second in power opposition party, the sixth Vice-President comes from the third in power opposition party and the seventh Vice-President comes from the fourth in power opposition party.

The Presidium members must be M.Ps and their capacity as members is incompatible with that of a Minister, Deputy Minister or Undersecretary. If a member of the Presidium accepts the post of a Minister, Deputy Minister, or Undersecretary he/she ex officio steps down from the Parliament Presidium.

The President of the Parliament and the seven Vice-Presidents are elected at the beginning of each term and for the entire duration of that term. The term in office of the Deans and of the Secretaries is limited to the duration of the Parliament's regular session for which they were elected.





Dimitrios G. Sioufas

PRESIDENT

VICE-PRESIDENTS



Georgios Sourlas
I' Vice President



Elsa Papadimitriou
II' Vice President



Anastasios Nerantzis
III' Vice President



Philippos Petsalnikos
IV' Vice President



Vera Nikolaidou
V' Vice President



Yiannis Dragasakis
VI' Vice President



Vaitsis Apostolatos
VII' Vice President



Nikos Stefanou

SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE PARLIAMENT



Dimitris Papagiannis

SPECIAL SECRETARY OF THE PARLIAMENT

President of the Parliament (Speaker)

The election of the President of the Parliament is one of the top moments of the Parliament.

The President is elected by the absolute majority of the total number of the M.P.s, i.e. 151 votes. If this majority is not attained, the vote is repeated and the President is elected by relative majority.

The President directs the Parliament's work and represents the Parliament before international parliamentary organizations as well as in bilateral inter-parliamentary meetings. The President is the Head of all Parliament services and coordinates their activities.

The Secretary General of the Parliament and the Special Secretary are the President's closest associates and assist him in supervising the parliamentary services.

As from the entry into force of the Greek Constitution of 1975, the following personalities have been elected and served as Presidents of the Hellenic Parliament:

- **Konstantinos Papakonstantinou**
from 21-11-1974 until 11-12-1977
- **Dimitrios Papaspyrou**
from 12-12-1977 until 16-11-1981
- **Ioannis Alevras**
from 17-11-1981 until 17-06-1985 and
from 18-06-1985 until 03-07-1989
- **Athanassios Tsaldaris**
from 04-07-1989 until 20-11-1989, from 21-11-1989 until 21-04-1990
and from 22-04-1990 until 21-10-1993
- **Apostolos Kaklamanis**
from 22-10-1993 until 07-10-1996, from 08-10-1996 until 20-04-2000
and from 21-04-2000 until 18-03-2004
- **Anna Benaki-Psarouda**
from 19-03-2004 until 26-09-2007
- **Dimitrios G. Sioufas**
since 27-09-2007 - ...

Vice Presidents (Deputy Speakers), Deans (Quaestors) and Secretaries

The **Vice-Presidents** may substitute the President in directing Parliamentary work. They may also represent the President and the Parliament at national and international level.

Deans assist the President in organizational and functional issues of the House and may also exercise other tasks assigned to them by the President.

PRESIDENTS OF THE PARLIAMENT SINCE 1974



Konstantinos Papakonstantinou
(1974-1977)



Dimitrios Papaspyrou
(1977-1981)



Ioannis Alevras
(1981-1989)



Athanassios Tsaldaris
(1989-1993)



Apostolos Kaklamanis
(1993-2004)



Anna Benaki-Psarouda
(2004-2007)



Dimitrios G. Sioufas
(2007-)

The **Secretaries** assist the President in the Parliament's sessions and assume any additional responsibilities conferred to them by the President.


Conference of Presidents

The Conference of Presidents is a cross-party collective institution of the House, which was first introduced by the Standing Orders of 1987 and is now provided by the Constitution following the Amendment of 2001. Its role is to organise the parliamentary work in the best possible way, through close cooperation between the Presidium and all parliamentary groups.

The Conference is composed by the President and the Vice-Presidents of the Parliament, former Presidents of the Parliament (if elected in office), the Presidents of the Standing Committees, the President of the Special Standing Committee on Institutions and Transparency, the Presidents of the Parliamentary Groups and a representative of the independent M.P.s (provided that there are at least five of them).

The Conference of Presidents convenes regularly once a week and examines the daily agenda of parliamentary work, it decides on the arrangement of legislative work, it decides on the conduct of organized debate and, generally, exercises every other responsibility conferred to it by the Constitution or the Standing Orders.

Following the constitutional revision of 2001, the Conference of Presidents has assumed the responsibility to decide — unanimously or by a majority of 4/5 of its members — on the appointment of the members of the five Independent Authorities which are provided by the Constitution, whilst it is also responsible for the exercise of parliamentary supervision over their work.



These constitutionally provided Independent Authorities are the following:

- **Ombudsman**
- **Highest Board of Personnel Selection**
- **National Council for Radio and Television**
- **Authority for the Information and Communication Security and Privacy**
- **Personal Data Protection Authority**

Parliamentary Groups

A Parliamentary Group is formed by at least ten (10) M.P.s who belong to the same political party. Each M.P. shall belong only to one parliamentary group. A Parliamentary Group may also be formed by five (5) M.P.s, provided their party had ballots in at least two thirds (2/3) of the country's electoral constituencies and gathered at least three percent (3%) of the total number of valid ballots in Greece.

The President of the Parliamentary Group is the party leader, provided that he is elected. He may appoint up to two parliamentary delegates. The President of the first in power Parliamentary Group who participates in the Government and the President of the first in power Opposition Party, may each appoint up to three parliamentary delegates.

The President of the highest majority Parliamentary Group not participating in the Government is called the leader of the Opposition Party.

Today, on the basis of the national election results on September 16th 2007, 5 parliamentary groups are represented at the Parliament: N.D., P.A.S.O.K., K.K.E., S.Y.R.I.Z.A. and L.A.O.S.

The parliamentary delegates are appointed by the Presidents of Parliamentary Groups and stand as their substitutes at the parliamentary sessions and debates.

The following M.P.s are nominated as parliamentary delegates:

from **N.D.:**

- Panos Panagiotopoulos
- Yiannis Giannellis – Theodosiades
- Nikos Dendias
- Kostas Markopoulos

from **P.A.S.O.K.:**

- Evangelos Venizelos
- Theodoros Pangalos
- Christos Papoutsis

from **K.K.E.:**

- Spyros Halvatzis
- Achilleas Kadartzis

from **SY.RIZ.A.:**

- Fotis Kouvelis
- Panagiotis Lafazanis

from **LA.O.S.:**

- Asterios Rodoulis

Parliamentary Groups' Secretaries General

A key role in the function of parliamentary groups is played by their Secretary General, who is either elected by the Parliamentary Group or is nominated by the President of the Parliamentary Group.

Secretary General of N.D. Parliamentary Group:

- Ioannis Tragakis, M.P.

Secretary General of PA.SO.K. Parliamentary Group:

- Dimitris Reppas, M.P.

Secretary General of K.K.E. Parliamentary Group:

- Antonis Skyllakos, M.P.

Secretary General of SY.RIZ.A. Parliamentary Group:

- Dimitris Hatzisocrates, SY.RIZ.A. executive.

Secretary General of LA.O.S. Parliamentary Group:

- Mavroudis (Makis) Borides, M.P.

At the Parliament's Building each Parliamentary Group is provided with appropriate offices. The Presidents of Parliamentary Groups have separate, private offices.

PRESIDENTS OF PARLIAMENTARY GROUPS



Costas Karamanlis
N.D. PRESIDENT



George Papandreou
PA.SO.K. PRESIDENT



Aleka Papariga
K.K.E. SECRETARY GENERAL



Alekos Alavanos
SY.RIZ.A. PRESIDENT



Georgios Karatzaferis
LA.O.S. PRESIDENT

PARLIAMENTARY DELEGATES

New Democracy Party



Panos
Panagiotopoulos



Yiannis Giannellis-
Theodosiadis



Nikos Dendias



Kostas Markopoulos

Panhellenic Socialist Movement



Evangelos Venizelos



Theodoros Pangalos



Christos Papoutsis

Communist Party of Greece



Spyros Halvatzis



Achilleas Kadartzis

Radical Left Coalition



Fotis Kouvelis



Panagiotis Lafazanis

People's Orthodox Rally



Asterios Rodoulis

GENERAL SECRETARIES OF PARLIAMENTARY GROUPS



Ioannis Tragakis
N.D.



Dimitris Reppas
PA.SO.K.



Antonis Skyllakos
K.K.E.



Dimitris
Hatzisocrates
SY.RI.Z.A.



Mavroudis (Makis)
Borides
LA.O.S.







Parliamentary Committees

The Constitution and the Standing Orders of the House provide the setting up of parliamentary committees which are formed by M.P.s according to the parliamentary power of the parliamentary groups and the independents. These committees which may assume legislative work, parliamentary control or other specific parliamentary responsibilities, are the following:

Standing Committees

They are set up upon **decision of the President of the Parliament** at the beginning of every Regular Session.

According to the Standing Orders of the House, the Standing Committees are the following:

- Standing Committee on Cultural and Educational Affairs (responsible for the Ministry of Education & Religious Affairs, and for the Ministry of Culture).
- Standing Committee on Defence and Foreign Affairs (Ministries of Foreign Affairs, of National Defence and of Macedonia – Thrace).
- Standing Committee on Economic Affairs (Ministries of Economy & Finance, of Environment, Spatial Planning and Public Works).
- Standing Committee on Social Affairs (Ministries of Health & Social Solidarity, of Employment & Social Protection and of Transports & Communications).
- Standing Committee on Public Administration, Public Order and Justice (Ministries of Home Affairs, of Justice as well as General Secretariats on Information and Communication).
- Standing Committee on Production and Trade (Ministries of Rural Development & Foodstuffs, of Development, of Merchant Marine, Aegean & Insular Policy and of Tourism Development).

Their mandate is either to examine and elaborate or to debate and vote Bills and law proposals submitted to the Parliament. Following the Constitutional revision in 2001 and the Standing Orders amendment, they are also entrusted with the exercise of parliamentary control.

The Standing Committees ...

- elect their Bureau.
- examine and elaborate, debate and vote Bills and law proposals submitting thereupon their reports to the Parliament's Plenum or to the Recess Section of the Parliament.
- may express opinion on the nominees to be appointed in certain posts, if this is foreseen by the Standing Orders or by law.

- Following a proposal by their President or by one third (1/3) of their members and the assent of the Speaker of the Parliament, the Standing Committees may hold meetings and debate on issues pertaining to their competence.
- They may invite to public hearing civil servants, local government organizations' representatives, trade union associations, other social entities or experts, able to provide clarifications on specific and technical issues; they may also invite any other person deemed useful for the debate of critical Bills or law proposals.
- they are always convened at a meeting, if requested so by the Government.
- They exercise parliamentary control.
- Following the recent Standing Orders' amendment in June 2008, Ministers are bound to inform the Standing Committee on their own initiative as regards issues of their competence, at least twice in each Session.

Standing Committee on European Affairs

The special Standing Committee on European Affairs has an important role to play. Its mission is to continuously monitor EU institutional issues, any items of cooperation between the Parliament and other national Parliaments of the European Union, issues of the European Parliament and of the Conference of the European Affairs Committees, as well as any issue of European Policy and any act of regulatory nature by the EU institutions.

Special Committees

They are established by the Speaker, following a proposal by the Government. Their mandate is to elaborate and thoroughly examine particular Bills or law proposals. Their term endures for as long as it is required to reach a final resolution on the elaboration of the Bill or law proposals for which they were set up.

Special Permanent Committees

They are established at the beginning of each regular Session of the Parliament in order to decide, propose or deliver an opinion on any issue within their field of competence. All drafted reports are submitted to the Parliament and dispatched and communicated to the competent, in each case, Minister and to other bodies or entities.



The Special Permanent Committees are the following:

- Special Permanent Committee on Greeks Abroad
- Special Permanent Committee on Institutions and Transparency
- Special Permanent Committee on Research and Technology
- Special Permanent Committee on Equality, Youth and Human Rights
- Special Permanent Committee on Parliamentary Code of Ethics
- Special Permanent Committee on Committee of Regions
- Special Permanent Committee on the Protection of the Environment
- Special Permanent Committee on Road Safety

Subcommittees

The setting up of subcommittees was provided by the amended Standing Orders in June 2008. M.P.s from all Parliamentary Groups participate in these subcommittees. Their mission is to deal with important social issues that concern the people and to submit respective proposals to the Parliament, the Government and other responsible bodies or agencies.

- Standing Committee on Social Affairs: Subcommittee on Drugs.
- Special Permanent Committee on Environmental Protection: Subcommittee on Water Resources.
- Special Permanent Committee on Equality Youth and Human Rights: Subcommittee on people with disabilities.
- Special Permanent Committee on Regions: Subcommittee on insular and mountainous areas.

Other Committees

The Committee of Public Enterprises, Banks, Public Utility Organizations and Social Security Agencies

Its responsibility is to deliver an opinion on the suitability of persons proposed by the Government for nomination, renewal of nomination or tenure in higher administrative posts of Public Enterprises, Banks, and Public Utility Organizations and Social Security Agencies. Following the last amendment of the Standing Orders, the Committee may invite in public hearing the Presidents or the Chief Executive Officers (CEO) of companies, in which the Greek State holds at least 10% of their share capital, including the shareholding of Public Entities; the Committee may also invite in public hearing the Presidents of organizations and Private Entities whose administration is appointed by the State.

Investigation Committees

They are established upon resolution by the Plenum to investigate any specific issue of public interest or concern, following a proposal by at least 60 M.P.s. Investigation committees enjoy the authority and competences of the investigating authorities and those of a Magistrate's Court Public Prosecutor, carrying out, on their judgement, every necessary research to fulfill their mandate.

After their work has been completed, they submit their findings to the Plenum and thereupon a discussion is held without a ballot.

Committees on issues of national or general interest

These Committees are set up by Parliament resolution, following a proposal by the Government or the Presidents of Parliamentary Groups and dwell on the study of national or general interest issues. The Committees draw up a report in which they include their proposals as well as any eventual minority opinion. The report which is non-binding (merely consultative) is then submitted to the Parliament and the Government and is discussed at the Parliament's Plenum without a ballot.

Committees or delegations on international relations

They are established by the President of the Parliament in cases provided by international treaties or whenever deemed necessary for the promotion of international cooperation between the Hellenic Parliament and the other countries' parliaments and international organizations.

Committees on Parliament's Internal Affairs

They are instituted at the beginning of every Regular Session and are responsible for standing internal matters of the Parliament's function. These committees are:

- Committee on the Standing Orders of the Parliament, which is constituted at the onset of each parliamentary term
- Committee on Parliament's Finances
- Committee on the Parliament's Library

Scientific Council and Scientific Service of the Parliament

To assist the Parliament's legislative work, the Constitution provides the setting up of a scientific service. Thus, according to the specific provisions of the Standing Orders, the Parliament is supported by the **Scientific Council and its Scientific Service**.



The **Scientific Council** is comprised of ten members, nine of which are University professors whilst the tenth is a high ranking public officer. The Scientific Council meets under the chairmanship of its president in Plenary Sessions or in Sections.

The president of the Scientific Council is in charge of the scientific supervision of the Scientific Service. President of the Parliament's Scientific Council is **Professor Kostas Mavrias**, who is Professor in Constitutional Law at the Law Faculty of the Athens University.

The main duties of the Scientific Council are:

- recommendation for the appointment of Directors to the Directorates of the Scientific Service
- supervision of the publications by the Scientific Service
- planning and organization of seminars at the Service's Directorates
- recommendation for cooperation with similar services of other Parliaments and international organizations

The President of the Scientific Council is mainly responsible for:

- distributing the Bills and law proposals to the appropriate Directorate of the Scientific Service for scientific elaboration
- approving the reports on Bills and law proposals, as well as other reports or studies submitted to the Scientific Council
- coordinating the cooperation and supervision of the work and studies undertaken by the Scientific Service
- evaluating the work by the research fellows of the Scientific Service
- carrying out seminars for the dissemination of scientific information to M.P.s

The **Scientific Service** consists of four directorates:

- First Directorate of Studies
- Second Directorate of Studies
- Directorate of Informatics and New Technologies
- Directorate of the Parliament's Library

Parliamentary Committees

a. Standing Committees

- Standing Committee on Cultural and Educational Affairs
- Standing Committee on Defence and Foreign Affairs
- Standing Committee on Economic Affairs
- Standing Committee on Social Affairs
- Standing Committee on Public Administration, Public Order and Justice
- Standing Committee on Production and Trade

b. Special Standing Committee on European Affairs

c. Special Permanent Committees

- Special Permanent Committee on Greeks Abroad
- Special Permanent Committee on Institutions and Transparency
- Special Permanent Committee on Research and Technology
- Special Permanent Committee on Equality, Youth and Human Rights
- Special Permanent Committee on Parliamentary Code of Ethics
- Special Permanent Committee on Regions
- Special Permanent Committee on Environmental Protection
- Special Permanent Committee on Road Safety

d. Subcommittees

- Subcommittee on Drugs.
- Subcommittee on Water Resources.
- Subcommittee on people with disabilities.
- Subcommittee on insular and mountainous areas

e. Other committees



Parliamentary Diplomacy

Parliamentary diplomacy indicates an ensemble of activities to enhance international (bilateral and multilateral) relations of the Parliament which aim at the promotion of Greece and its national affairs worldwide. In recent years, parliamentary diplomacy has evolved into a dynamic and significant channel for the advancement of transnational and interparliamentary relations. Development and intensification of parliamentary diplomacy are of high priority to the Hellenic Parliament.

The objectives of parliamentary diplomacy are the following:

- to strengthen relations with other national Parliaments and as a result to tighten bonds between peoples.
- to develop cooperation between Parliaments in the framework of International Organizations.
- to promote Greece and the Greek culture abroad and more particularly with regard to other national parliaments.
- to render other Parliaments and International Parliamentary Organizations familiar with the Greek stance on international issues and, more specifically, with Greek national issues.

Through parliamentary diplomacy, the Hellenic Parliament is building 'bridges' to bring nations closer for the exchange of views and positions, the forging of relations of friendship and cooperation and the promotion of Greece abroad.

The Parliament participates in international organizations

M.P.s actively participate in the following Parliamentary Assemblies:

• Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE)

47 Parliaments of European countries participate in this Assembly whose main tasks are the promotion of cooperation for the establishment of democratic institutions, the rule of law and human rights.

• Western European Union Assembly

It is composed by representatives from the national Parliaments of the Western European Union members states and is the first European interparliamentary assembly on matters of defence and security.

• NATO Parliamentary Assembly

It comprises the representatives from the national Parliaments of the North Atlantic Alliance member states.

The Assembly's mission is to promote interparliamentary dialogue at the level of safety and security and to empower the North Atlantic Alliance objectives.



Official hosting of Dwight Eisenhower in Athens, December 1959



Speech by Charles de Gaulle at the Hellenic Parliament, May 1963



George Bush at the podium of the Hellenic Parliament, July 1991



Nikolas Sarkozy at the Hellenic Parliament, June 2008



- **Parliamentary Assembly of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE)**

It promotes interparliamentary dialogue among the parliaments of the 56 member states of OSCE. It aims at the development and strengthening of mechanisms for the prevention and resolution of conflicts, the strengthening and consolidation of democratic institutions and the promotion of the OSCE objectives in general.

- **Parliamentary Assembly of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (PABSEC)**

In PABSEC participate representatives from the 12 national parliaments of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organization member states. The Assembly's main objectives are to enhance the economic, commercial, political and cultural cooperation among member states and promote cooperation between other international and regional organizations. The Hellenic Parliament held the assembly's presidency during the first semester of 2008. The 31st General Assembly Plenary Session took place in Athens on June 9-II, 2008.

- **Interparliamentary Assembly on Orthodoxy**

It is the interparliamentary organization set up on the Hellenic Parliament's initiative. Members are M.P.s of orthodox denomination from national parliaments in Europe, Australia, Asia, Africa, USA and Canada. The seat of the Assembly's international secretariat is in Athens.

- **Interparliamentary Union (IPU)**

IPU is the world organization of Parliaments of sovereign states. 154 sovereign national parliaments are members and 8 others are associate members. The Union's mission is to promote parliamentary dialogue and peace, defend human rights, strengthen and consolidate representative institutions and support the United Nations efforts.

- **Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Assembly (EMPA)**

The Assembly constitutes the parliamentary branch of the Barcelona Process. Its members come from the 27 parliaments of the EU member states, the European Parliament and the other 10 parliaments of the Mediterranean countries. According to the Barcelona Declaration, the Assembly's objective is to strengthen the ties between the two sides of the Mediterranean so as to create and establish an area of peace, stability and prosperity in the region. The Hellenic Parliament held the Assembly's presidency from March 2007 until March 2008. The 4th Plenary Session of EMPA was held in Athens on March 27-28, 2008.

- **Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean (PAM)**

Members to this Assembly are the parliaments of South-East European countries, of the Mediterranean coastal states and Portugal. The Assembly envisages to develop cooperation among its members by advancing political dialogue and examining issues that would boost confidence between them so as to ensure regional safety and stability.

The Hellenic Parliament's relations with the European Union and the European Parliament.

The Hellenic Parliament steadily promotes strengthening of its relations with the national parliaments of EU Member States and the European Parliament. In this context, it actively participates in the joint meetings of EU national parliaments and the European Parliament by exchanging views on important European issues and advancing the positions of the European Parliament.



The Parliament meets the Greeks of the Diaspora

The establishment of a permanent communication network with the seven million Greeks living abroad in 140 countries constitutes one of the Hellenic Parliament's priorities. The Special Permanent Committee on Greeks Abroad, with a cross-party representation, is particularly active towards reinforcing the relations between the Hellenic Parliament and the Organizations of Greeks of Diaspora, in cooperation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the World Council of Hellenes Abroad (SAE) and the World Hellenic Inter-Parliamentary Association (WHIA).



Hellenic Parliament's Groups of Friendship

The 72 Friendship Groups of Parliament cover the bilateral parliamentary relations with the Parliaments of Europe, America, Asia, Africa and Oceania. The meetings of these Groups aim at reinforcing the cooperation with parliaments of other countries, at putting forward the position of Greece on important international issues, at promoting domestic affairs and at enhancing international cooperation.





Parliament and Culture

The Parliament Library

The establishment of the Hellenic Parliament Library coincides with the entry into force of the first Greek Constitution.

It is founded in 1844 by the first Parliament which convened following the entry into force of the 1844 Constitution. The Library's first elected director is the erudite and jurist from Zante, Georgios Tertsetis (1800-1877), who managed to turn the Library into a unique cultural centre of his times.

However, the Library's development and organization is attributed mainly to Timoleon Philemon (1833-1898), M.P. of Attica, jurist and editor of 'Aion' (i.e. "Century") newspaper, who in 1875 was elected Curator of the Parliament. During his tenure (1875-1887) he managed to increase the volumes of publications from 5.000 to 100.000, multiplying significantly the donations from home and abroad.

Timoleon Philemon is succeeded by Nikolaos Politis, who established the Munich Public Library classification system proceeding to all necessary adaptations.

For several years, the Library was hosted in various buildings before its final placement in 1934 at the Old Palace building, at Syntagma Square.

Nowadays, the Library constitutes a very popular destination for citizens attracting an increasing number of visitors. Based on a recent survey, the Parliament Library is one of the most recognized libraries throughout the country.

Due to its large number of collections, new activities and the rising need for more modern technical infrastructure, the Parliament Library is housed in more than one building: the Parliament Building (Central Library), the 'Benakios Library' (2, Anthimou Gazi street) temporarily relocated in the "Old Tobacco Factory", and the "Old Tobacco Factory" (218, Lenormant street).

The Parliament Library remains to date a general library, open to the public, which is however, primarily focused on supporting M.P.s in their parliamentary work.



Georgios Tertsetis
(1800 - 1877)



Timoleon Philemon
(1833 - 1898)



The "Old Tobacco Factory"



The Library collections include:

- More than 650.000 volumes of books
- Special collections of rare and valuable books and brochures
- Collection of maps (approximately 4.500), engravings & drawings, photos
- Collection of manuscripts (600)
- Collection of archives: parliamentary, historical and political files, BBC auditory archive, etc.
- Full sequence of the *Government Gazette*, the *Parliament's Debates Journal* and the *Minutes of Proceedings* for both Parliament and the Senate
- Collection of Greek and foreign newspapers and periodicals of the 19th, 20th and 21st century
- Collection of microfilms (about 20.000)
- Collection of historical items
- Collection of Works of Art

The Parliament Library publishes the National Regeneration Archives, a series which has completed 23 volumes and constitutes a valuable source of study of the Greek Revolution. The Library's electronic catalog is accessible on the web at <http://catalog.parliament.gr>.

The Parliament exhibitions

The Parliament systematically seeks to broaden its communication with the citizens and to strengthen their relationship with the institution of Parliamentarism. For this purpose, the Library has been organizing exhibitions since 1994, anniversary events of special tribute as well as child painting contests supported by leaflets, brochures, triptychs, catalogues, albums, chronicles and rich audiovisual material. A large number of students and citizens visit the exhibitions from all over Greece and abroad.

Collection of Works of Art

In November 1996, by decision of the then President, Apostolos Kaklamanis, the Parliament's Committee on Art and Culture is instituted, chaired by the University professor Panagiotis Tet-sis. Following the Committee's recommendations, the Parliament participates in auctions in Greece and abroad, purchasing mainly works of Greek artists. Approximately 1.000 pieces of art make up today the constantly enriching Parliament collection of Works of Art, decorating the Building premises and illustrating the artistic tendencies of the two last centuries. At times, many of these works are taken on tour and are exhibited throughout Greece.

The Hellenic Parliament Foundation for Parliamentarism and Democracy

It was founded in 1999 by a unanimous Plenary Session resolution.

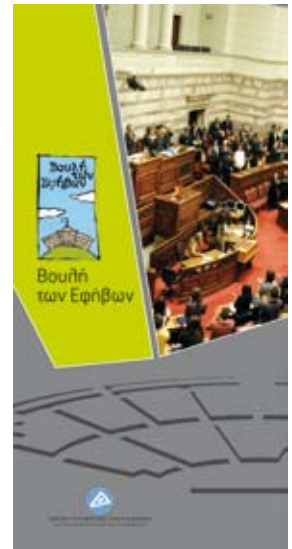
By taking on various actions and carrying out events, such as exhibitions, educational programs and publications, the Foundation envisages to study and promote the parliamentary institutions and democracy and keep afresh the historical memory of the nation and mainly of the young generation. Since its establishment, the Foundation has been steadily offering cultural goods of high value, worthy of the Parliament's prestige.

The Parliament Foundation work consists of the following...

- organization of educational programs to enhance young people's contact with the country's democratic institutions: the Foundation holds the lead in programs such as 'the Parliament of Youth', programs to show the Parliament premises to secondary and higher education students from all over the country, Parliament exhibitions and hospitality programs for high school students from border regions.
- organization of exhibitions in Greece and abroad. On the occasion of celebrating historical events and of highlighting topical issues to honor modern Greek history personalities, the Foundation is organizing exhibitions with educational dimension.
- publication of printed material relating to the Hellenic Parliament institution and parliamentarism. Most of the Parliament's publications in the last years were conceded to the Foundation which makes use of them in the context of its mission (free distribution, sale, republication). Out of the publications made over to the Foundation are included exhibitions catalogues, engravings and drawings, posters and audiovisual material.
- elaboration of scientific conferences. The Parliament Foundation organizes conferences and congresses on domestic and European issues, such as the evolution, function and prospects of institutions and politics.



THE HELLENIC PARLIAMENT FOUNDATION
FOR PARLIAMENTARISM AND DEMOCRACY





The Foundation's Administrative Board

The Foundation is administered by the Administrative Board which is responsible for determining the general guidelines of the Foundation's operation and work.

The Administrative Board is comprised of the President of the Parliament, who is also the Foundation's President, and the former Presidents, the presidents of parliamentary groups, the former presidents of parliamentary groups (provided that they have served as Prime Ministers), the Secretary General of the Parliament and three members qualified for the Foundation's purposes. One of these three members is appointed as Secretary General of the Foundation. Since 2005, the Secretary General of the Foundation is Evangelos Chryssos, Professor Emeritus at the University of Athens.

The current synthesis of the Administrative Board is the following:

President: Dimitrios Sioufas,
President of the Hellenic Parliament

Vice-president: Anna Benaki-Psarouda, former President of the Hellenic Parliament – Apostolos Kaklamanis, former President of the Hellenic Parliament.

Members: Costas Karamanlis, Prime Minister, President of N.D. Parliamentary Group – Georgios Papandreou, President of PA.SO.K. Parliamentary Group – Aleka Papariga, Secretary General of K.K.E. – Alexandros Alavanos, President of SY.RIZ.A. Parliamentary Group – Georgios Karatzaferis, President of LA.O.S. Parliamentary Group – Konstantinos Mitsotakis, former President of N.D. Parliamentary Group, former Prime Minister – Costas Simitis, former President of PA.SO.K. Parliamentary Group, former Prime Minister – Nikos Stefanou, Secretary General of the Hellenic Parliament – Georgios Kassimatis, Professor Emeritus at the University of Athens – Konstantinos Svolopoulos, Professor Emeritus at the University of Athens – Evangelos Chryssos, Secretary General at the Parliament Foundation, Professor Emeritus at the University of Athens.

A five-member Executive Committee operates under the presidency of the Foundation's Secretary General, with the responsibility to execute the Administrative Board resolutions, to fix the specific objectives and priorities of the Foundation and to take any relevant decisions on the basis of the guidelines fixed by the Administrative Board.



Parliament and Communication

Directorate of Communication

The Directorate of Communication is responsible for promoting the parliamentary work to citizens.

In this context, it also carries the responsibility to organize, monitor and develop the Parliament's public relations domestically and abroad, mainly as regards other national parliaments and parliamentary assemblies.

Moreover, it is also responsible for organizing and hosting official visits of the President and for briefing the Greek and international public opinion on parliamentary issues. The Directorate of Communication supports the work of the Directorates of International and European Relations in organizing missions abroad, conferences and congresses, visits of foreign delegations, bilateral or multilateral meetings in Greece and in whatever could assist and put forth the Parliament's parliamentary work.

Parliamentary Information Publications

The Parliament disposes of a printing unit to print directly the Plenary Session and the Committees' meetings Minutes, the Explanatory Reports, the text of the Bills and the Scientific Service reports.

Citizens may be provided with the aforementioned material on the Parliament's work from the Library Services, at 218, Lenormant street or by searching the Parliament's webpage (www.parliament.gr).

Parliament - Television

The Hellenic Parliament has its own television station. The purpose is to offer each Greek citizen reliable and complete information on all events in the Parliament, which is the place where the heart of Democracy beats and where crucial decisions for the future of this country are being reached.

Along these lines, all Plenary Session meetings are broadcasted live as well as the Parliament's Recess Section meetings (Summer Sections).

The meetings of the Standing Committees and the biggest part of the work of Parliamentary Groups are also broadcasted. The Parliament's television station offers broad information on the democratic institutions and our country's parliamentary history.



People watching the Parliament's channel may get brief but substantial information on the work carried out at the Parliament through the parliamentary news broadcasted daily. News broadcast also covers the latest on the European Parliament work, placing emphasis on Greek MEPs activity.

The station's parliamentary program is not limited to parliamentary information but also includes a broad cultural program such as documentaries on various subjects, selected films, theatre, opera, dance and classical music.

It should be noted, that the Parliament's channel is a television station with ground emission on analog signal at a free frequency. In other words, every citizen-holder of a simple television set has direct access to it without the requirement of additional installation or of having to pay any subscription.

Systematic efforts are made for expanded coverage in the entire Greek territory.

The station's signal is equally emitted on satellite (by the satellites HellaSat and Hotbird 3), thus being accessible not only to the entire country but also to the Greeks of the diaspora in many other areas of the world.

The launching of the Parliament radio station is also on the way and will soon be into operation.

The journalist, Mr Nikos Simos is the coordinator of the Parliament's television station.

The Parliament's webpage

The Parliament's webpage was created to provide reliable and complete information on issues pertaining to the Parliament's works and activities.

It was designed for the first time in 1998 and was fully revised in 2001 to meet the needs of an increasing number of visitors. Since then, efforts continue for its upgrading by uploading new data and by trying to render it more friendly to users. Nowadays, the Parliament's webpage is under reconstruction so as to become modern, easy to use and attractive to public interaction, taking special care for disabled users.

The webpage's rich context has been structured in ten (10) thematic units (options / links) to help all interested to search for the desired information. These options are presented herein making a very brief reference to the information included:

1. Organization of the Parliamentary Services: It outlines general information on the Parliament's organization with short reference and explanation of parliamentary work, provides the 'organogram' of the Parliamentary Services and their responsibilities, information on parliamentary diplomacy etc.

2. Synthesis: This includes information on the actual synthesis of the Parliament, of Parliamentary Groups, the Presidium, the M.P.s' curricula vitae etc.

3. Works: This option presents the weekly agenda of parliamentary meetings on legislative work and parliamentary control; it also presents the Parliamentary Committees meetings, the meetings' minutes since 1996 to date and the Bills since 2000 to date.

4. Political regime: Here are outlined a brief history of the Constitution and the electoral system, an account of the election procedure with reference to the relevant articles of the Constitution (electoral system, constituencies, right to vote and stand for office, eligibility etc).

5. Building: Information is provided on the history of the Parliament's Building, the rich Parliament Library, information on access to the Parliament etc.

6. Culture: This link includes information on any exhibition and event carried out at the Parliament, the educational programs, such as the 'Parliament of Youth' etc.



www.parliament.gr



7. Information: Information on the parliamentary activity of the Plenary Session or the Recess Session (usually during the summer) is presented on a daily basis in this link, as well as press releases, the President's speeches etc.

8. Search: Users shall have the possibility to search precise information by using key-words.

9. Links: Users have direct links to political parties, Ministries, foreign Parliaments WebPages etc.

10. Communication: The possibility to contact electronically the Secretariat of the President is also provided.

In addition to the above ten (10) thematic units, the Parliament's webpage offers the following possibilities by activating banners:

- (a) watching of the television program broadcasted by the Parliament channel,
- (b) information on Constitutional revisions,
- (c) access to other WebPages such as the Hellenic Parliament's Foundation, the European Programs Implementation Service etc.



Parliament buildings

The Parliament Building

The historical building of the Old Palace is housing today the Hellenic Parliament. It holds a prominent position in the centre of Athens, overlooking Syntagma Square and serving as a classical landmark, recognized by all. It is the largest in size neoclassical building in the capital, the image of which is inextricably connected with modern and contemporary political history (details on the building's history are provided in pages 83-87).

With the lapse of time, several intervention and renovations have taken place to adapt the premise to the Parliament's operational needs.

The Parliament Building is housing...

- the offices of the President of the Parliament, of the Vice Presidents, of Committees Presidents, of Deans and the Services of the Directorate of Parliamentary Work as well as the Parliament Library
- the Prime Minister's Office
- the Cabinet Room
- the General Secretariat of the Government
- the Parliamentary Groups quarters of N.D., PA.SO.K., K.K.E., SY.RIZ.A. and LA.O.S.
- the former Prime Ministers offices
- the former Presidents offices
- the offices of the Secretary General, the Special Secretary and the General Director for Parliamentary Work
- the offices for the Press
- the Medical Unit
- the M.P.'s Lounge
- other services for the daily use of M.P.s and employees (e.g. Kindergarten, a branch of the National Bank of Greece, Olympic Airways office, Postal Office, Telecommunication Services department, Parliament security services, restaurant, cafeteria and garage).



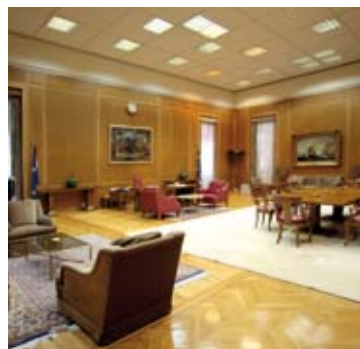
The Parliament Building



The President of the Parliament's office



The Reception Hall of the President of the Parliament



The Prime Minister's Office

Other Parliament facilities

Nowadays, the Parliament's facilities and premises are not limited to the Parliament Building but include other buildings housing various services.

Benakios Library (2, Anthimou Gazi street)

It is a Parliament Library branch, a donation by Emm. Benakis to house the collection of books and archives of Yiannis Psycharis. It also includes the personal libraries of politicians, such as Ant. Zygomalas, I. Metaxas, Al. Kafadaris, P. Tsaldaris. To restore and renovate the historical building of Benakios Library the architectural design, the static and electrical-engineering studies are under way. For that reason, the Library is temporarily housed in the “Old Tobacco Factory” building.



The Old Tobacco Factory building (218, Lenormant street)

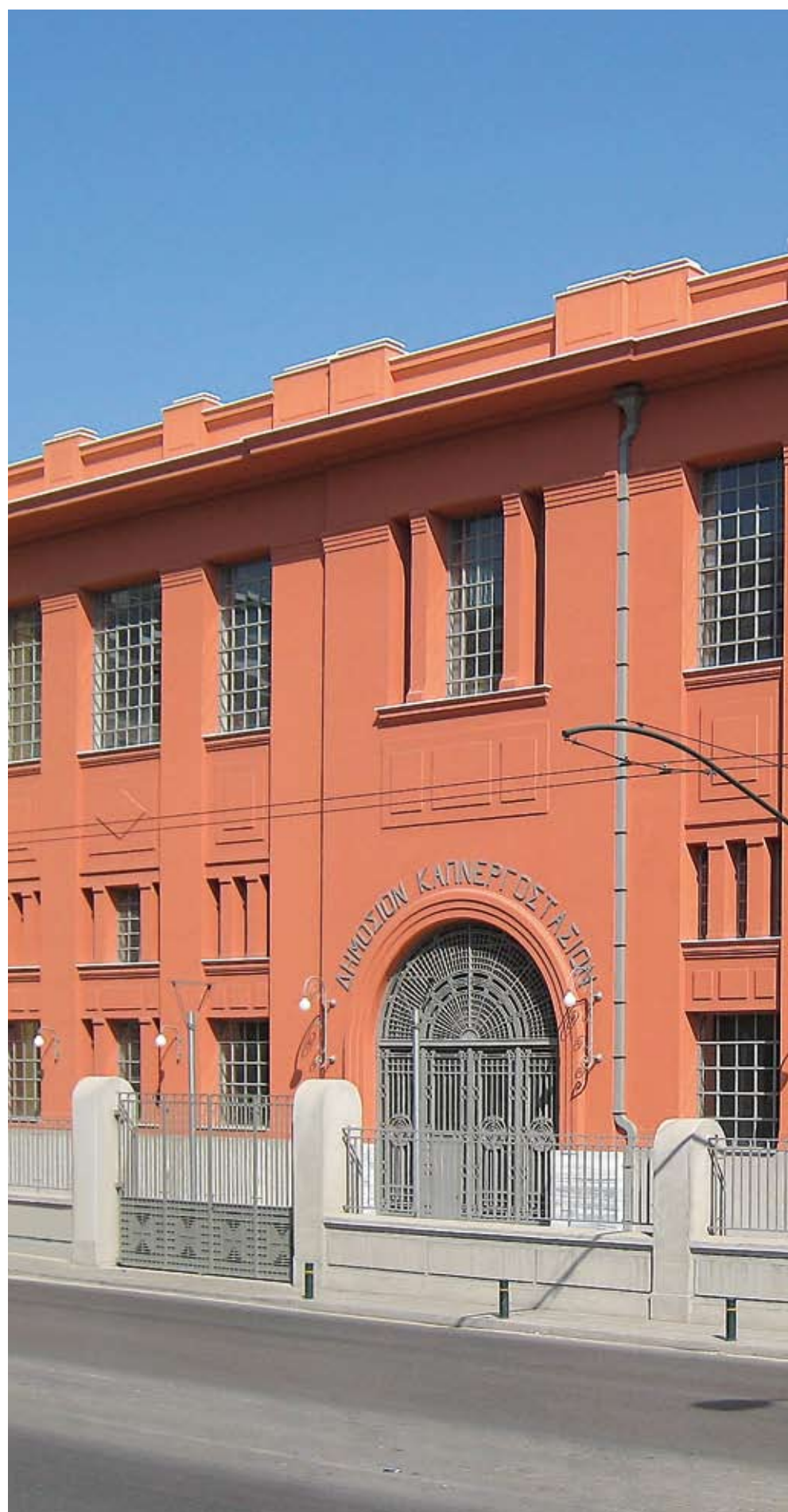
The building, that came under the Parliament's full possession in 2000, of a total surface of 18.700m², is a listed building. It houses the printing-unit and some of the library's services.

This historical and industrial building is destined to house the Parliament's "City Library". The objective is to turn this area into a cultural centre for Western Attica and a pole of attraction for pupils, students and the scientific community.

Based on the plan, the building in Lenormant shall constitute –inter alia– a model energy efficient building, contributing thus to the attainment of the national objective for energy saving.

For that purpose, the Parliament closely cooperates with the National Technical University of Athens.





Amygdaleza, Acharnes Municipality

Since 1982, a surface of 80.000m² have been ceded to the Hellenic Parliament, at Amygdaleza of the Municipality of Acharnes to erect a Printing Office and a modern Parliament book stack. The building to be erected will be of total surface 11.000m². The architectural plans have already been elaborated. The overall aim is to transfer the printing office and construct modern storage areas. The Parliament, respecting the Municipality of Acharnes and the local community, will concede, according to the commitments undertaken, 500 m² of sheltered area to the Municipality for the construction of a museum.



The building at 23, Philellenon street

The international tender to award a surveyor with the assignment to carry out a design for the restoration and planning of the listed building at 23, Philellenon street, Athens was completed in May 2008. The design for the refurbishment of the building is expected to be ready by the beginning of 2009 and the project construction be auctioned.

The building at Philellenon street, of total surface 1.400 m², shall be used for the relocation of some of the Parliament's services and for the creation of a meeting-place of former M.P.s and Parliament retired employees.



The building at 49-49a, Voulis street

It is the traditional building at 49-49a, Voulis street, Athens for which a preliminary study has been submitted to the Ministry of Culture for its development and expansion.

The existing building is of a total surface 525 m² and based on the suggested optimization study it will rise to 970 m².

Other buildings...

The building at I, Mitropoleos street houses the offices of the parliamentarians from the Regions, while on the Ground floor there is an Exhibition Hall of the Hellenic Parliament Foundation for Parliamentarism and Democracy.

The Parliament building at 4, Voulis street also houses M.P.s offices from the Regions.

Arvaniti Mansion (II, Vas. Sofias street), the building in Ia, Sekeri street, Athens and 22-24, Amalias street, Athens house the Scientific Council and administrative services.





ΜΙΑΚΛΙΝΗΚΕΝΗΦΕ
ΡΕΤΑΙΕΣΤΡΑΜΕΝΗ
ΤΑΝΔΦΑΝΩΝ

ΑΝΔΡΑΝΕΠΙΣΤΑΝΩΝ
ΡΑΣΑΓΗΤΑΦΟΕ

ΙΝΔΟΣ
ΡΥΤΕΑ-ΚΑΛΑΜΑΣ
ΤΡΕΜΠΕΣΙΝΑ
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ΡΟΥΜΠΕΣΙ-ΚΑΛΠΑΚΙ

ΚΛΕΙΣΟΥΡΑ-ΠΡΕΙ
ΦΕΤΡΟΒΙΤΙΑ-ΡΟΓΡ
ΡΟΥΠΕΑ-ΠΕΡΙΟΡ
ΕΛ-ΑΛΑΜΕΙΝ-Ρ
ΡΟΥΒΙΚΩΝ-ΔΙΔΕΚ
ΡΟΣ

Chronicle of the constitutional and political history

The Period of Revolution

Local regimes

With the onset of the struggle for liberation in 1821 in Greece, the first local regimes emerged: the Senate Organization of Western Greece, the Legal Order of Eastern Greece and the Peloponnesus Senate Organization. These regimes, voted by local Assemblies of notables from the regions, aimed at a temporary administrative and military organization, envisaging at a latter stage the establishment of the 'Parliament of the Nation', which would exercise the legislative power and the various established 'Administrations', namely the Peloponnesus and Western Greece Senates and the Supreme Court (Areios Pagos) of Eastern Greece would depend on. It should be stressed that the emergence of these local regimes was particularly considerable, as they were based, though on a rudimentary basis, on the principles of political self-determination and individual freedom for which the Greek nation had been fighting for; on the other hand, such regimes illustrate the tendency for being ruled by elected dignitaries.

The Constitutions of the Revolution

The pinnacle of Modern Greece political history at the level of constitutional reform, while the struggle for liberation was still under way, was the voting of the first Greek Constitution after the First National Assembly of Epidaurus, in January 1822, by means of which Greece appeared as a unified and constitutional state. The Constitution, (Temporary Constitution of Greece), enshrined the representative principle as well as the principle for the separation of powers. Hence, the "Administration" consisted of the "Parliamentary" and the "Executive" branches, both collective bodies serving yearly terms, which counterbalanced one another in the legislative process; the "Judiciary" was independent of the two other powers composed by eleven members.

In March 1823, the 'Parliamentary' branch decided to revise the Constitution of Epidaurus at the Assembly held in Astros. The new Constitution, constituting a simple revision of the existing one, was renamed into "the Epidaurus Law" mainly reformed the rights of the executive power in drafting the laws, improved provisions with regard to protection of human rights and amended the electoral law rendering it more democratic.

The most important of the Revolution Constitutions was the one voted by the Third National Assembly in Troizena in May 1827, having already decided to confer the legislative power to one and only, therefore elected Ioannis Kapodistrias as "Governor of Greece" for a seven-year term and voted the "Politi-



Greek Salpinx, 1821
First newspaper printed in Greece



The National Assembly in Epidaurus.
Mural of Eleftherios Venizelos Hall



Epidaurus Provisional Constitution, 1822



Ioannis Kapodistrias.
(1776-1831)



*The establishment of
"Panhellenion" by Kapodistrias.*
Wall painting of
Eleftherios Venizelos Hall.



King Otto
(1815-1867)

cal Constitution of Greece', which remained in history as the most liberal and democratic constitution of its era.

The Assembly intended to bestow to the country a final regime, inspired by democratic and liberal ideas and, therefore, it declared for the first time the principle of popular sovereignty: "Sovereignty lies with the people; every power derives from the people and exists for the people". The Constitution established explicitly the separation of powers, assigned the executive power to the Governor and the legislative power to a body of people's representatives, named Boulé (Parliament).

The Governor Ioannis Kapodistrias (1828-1831)

Kapodistrias, invoking the lack of order and the difficulties impeding his governance, recommended to Boulé, which accepted it by vote, to suspend the Constitution entry into force and in the place of Boulé, it founded the 'Panhellenion' a Council that together with the Governor participated in the Government works. In this way, Kapodistrias concentrated in his person the entire power. We should not disregard though his effort to create the foundations of a state from scratch and liberate a big part of the country.

After his assassination and the turbulent period that followed, the self-proclaimed 'Fifth National Assembly' finally voted in 1832, the new 'Constitution' in Nafplio, appointing the brother of the late Ioannis Kapodistrias, Avgoustinos, as Governor. This new 'Constitution' which strongly reminded the American model, never took effect and was characterized as 'hegemonic' as it foresaw a hereditary head of state, the hegemon.

The absolute monarchy (1832-1843)

During Otto's absolute monarchy that followed, the disdain displayed by the monarch to the detriment of the Greek liberal temperament and primarily his ignorance that the country's social fabric did not allow for a totalitarian regime, led to a public revolt which was unleashed on September, 3rd 1843. After the revolution, the National Assembly convened voting, the following year, the next Constitution, being the first one of the independent Greek State since 1830.

The Constitutional Monarchy (1843-1862)

The Constitution of 1844 established the constitutional monarchy under the decisive power of the monarch, who exercised also the legislative power jointly with the elected Boulé and the appointed Senate. It also established the Ministers' accountability vis-à-vis the acts of the monarch who was appointing them and suspending them; it recognized fundamental

human rights and foresaw in the last article 107 that 'abiding by the Constitution herein is for the patriotism of Hellenes'.

The first period of Crowned Democracy (1864-1909)

The ongoing social developments were reinforcing the trend towards a liberal and democratic spirit; as a result, the continuing totalitarian trends of Otto not only were not tolerated but started undermining his own kingship. As a result, in 1862, citizens and the army of Athens rebelled and brought about his dethronement. This revolution marked the collapse of Constitutional Democracy and the transition to the Crowned Democracy. With the Constitution of 1864, deriving from the Second National Assembly in Athens, people's sovereignty principle enshrined in Troizena Constitution in 1827 was reinstated establishing inter alia the principle of direct, universal and secret suffrage, which was carried out simultaneously throughout the entire territory, the system of a single camera Parliament with a four-year tenure, the right of assembly and association, while the Senate was abolished. The Constitution was adopting several of the 1844 Constitution provisions, stipulating, however, an additional possibility for the Parliament to set up 'investigation committees'. The king preserved the right to convene the Parliament in regular and extraordinary sessions and dissolve it on his judgement but the dissolution Decree had to be countersigned by the Cabinet.

In the Crown Speech on August 11, 1875 and thanks to Charilaos Trikoupis political prestige, the 'manifest confidence' principle was informally instituted changing the relation between the Throne and popular representation attributing a whole new different meaning to the powers' organization system, practically legitimating the advent of Parliamentarism in Greece. On the basis of the 'manifest confidence' principle, the King was obliged to appoint the Government in conformity with the will of parliamentary majority, according to the popular sovereignty principle and the spirit of parliamentary regime and, therefore, the Constitution provision that the 'King appoints and removes his Ministers' became void since the Government needed a vote of confidence by the Parliament.

The second period of Crowned Democracy (1911-1924)

The Constitution of 1864 was long lasting and remained in force without great changes until 1911, when strong pressures for political, administrative and social reforms leading to the 'military coup' in Goudi (1909) and the rise of Eleftherios Venizelos to power required its being revised. The key modifications brought about by the 1911 revision were the reinforce-



3rd of September 1843
Coloured lithograph by
Karl Haupt



King George I
(1845-1913)



The Prime Minister
Charilaos Trikoupis
(1878-1873)



The Hellenic Parliament
at the end of 19th century
Oil painting by N. Orlof



ment of individual freedoms (“the public law of the Hellenes” to quote the terminology of the time), the rule of law and the overall modernization of the institutions. The most significant changes compared with the Constitution of 1864 at the level of individual freedoms protection were the strengthening of personal safety protection, equality in tax burdens, of the right of assembly and association and of the inviolability of the domicile. For the first time provision was made for a compulsory and free of charge education and for the permanent employment status of civil servants.

The national split and proclamation of Parliamentary Democracy

The national split, the settlement of refugees after the disaster in Asia Minor in 1922 and the events that followed resulted in the establishment of constitutional democracy. With the decisive contribution by Alexandros Papanastasiou, the Fourth Constitutional Assembly in Athens at its meeting on March 25th, 1924 abolished the royal constitution and proclaimed the country as parliamentary democracy.

The Constitution of 1927

After the short-lived Constitution of 1925 was voted, by Alexandros Papanastasiou committee, Constitutional Democracy was ultimately established with the Constitution of 1927 according to which a supreme head of state would be elected by the Parliament and Senate for a five-year tenure. The President of the Republic was politically unaccountable, he did not possess legislative authority and he could dissolve the Parliament with the approval of the Senate. For the first time, the Greek Constitution included a clause stating that the Cabinet must “enjoy the confidence of the Parliament”, endorsing thus statutorily the ‘manifest confidence’ principle of 1875.

The brief governmental stability under Eleftherios Venizelos government (1928-1932), did not manage to create a solid foundation for parliamentary operation by virtue of its short duration.



Eleftherios Venizelos.
(1864-1936)



Voting for the Declaration
of Democracy, 1924



A woman's voting booklet, 1949



Oath-taking ceremony of the Government of National Unity, July 24th, 1974

The dictatorships of Kondylis (1935) and Metaxas (1936-1941) and the Occupation period (1941-1944)

The dictatorships of Kondylis and Metaxas, the hard times of German occupation and the civil war brought about changes in the socio-political balances at national and international level, inhibiting, hence, the anticipated 'parliamentary maturity' and the evolution of parliamentary institutions; the process was finally recovered at the beginning of 1950.

The third period of Crowned Democracy (1952-1967)

Due to the peculiar socio-political conditions at that time, when the Constitution was drafted in 1952, it was conservative and to a large extent remained attached to the constitutional texts of 1864 and 1911. Its key innovation rests in the explicit establishment of Parliamentarism in the context of a Crown Democracy regime and for the first time the right to vote and run for a candidature as member of parliament for women were endorsed.

The transitional period after the dictatorship and the Constitution of 1975

After the fall of the dictatorship of colonels (1967-1974) and the restoration of democratic legitimacy in July 1974, the National Unity Government under Konstantinos Karamanlis leadership fixed as first goal to consolidate democracy and partly entered into force the Constitution of 1952, except for the clauses regarding the king. The first free parliamentary elections (November 17th, 1974) and the referendum on the form of the political regime (December, 8th 1974), which turned in favour of constitutional democracy conformed with the Constitution of 1975. Notwithstanding the fact that it was finally voted only by the parliamentary majority, gradually the country's political powers accepted it upon its application.

Presidential Parliamentary Democracy (1975-)

The Constitution of 1975 introduced the Presidential Parliamentary Democracy. It included from the beginning a broad list of individual and social rights adapted to the requirements of the times and enacted considerable powers for the President of the Republic allowing him to intervene decisively in the political life. The rule of law was considerably protected, while providing for the country's participation in international organizations and—indirectly—the then E.E.C.

The first Constitutional revision of 1975 (1986)

In March 1986, pursuant to article 110 of the Constitution, eleven articles were revised; it was voted to render the Constitution into the modern vernacular form of the Greek language (demotiki). Following this revision, the responsibilities of the President of the Republic were curtailed significantly. In spite of the political and constitutional tension of the time, the revised Constitution of 1975/1986, which introduced a purely parliamentary system of governance, took effect in a way that ensured for the country parliamentary stability and smooth political life.

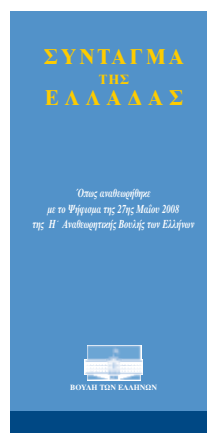
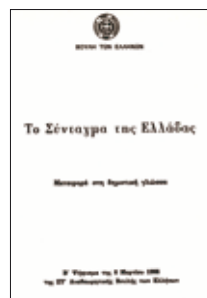
The second Constitutional revision of 1975 (2001)

In the spring of 2001 a novel, more extended revision of the Constitution was voted in a climate of consensus. Despite the amendment of a large number of provisions, the revision became accepted for the vast majority of cases by the four fifths (4/5) of parliamentarians, so the term “consensual revision” reflects the political reality.

The revised Constitution introduced new individual rights (such as the protection of genetic identity or the protection of personal data from electronic processing), new rules of transparency in political life (regarding e.g. the financing of political parties, electoral expenditures, the relations of media owners with the State, etc), it reorganised the operation of the Parliament and reinforced decentralisation.

The third Constitutional revision of 1975 (2008)

The Constitution of 1975 was revised for a third time in 2008 in a limited number of provisions. The revised Constitution enjoys political and historical legitimacy, is modern, adapted to the international developments and provides a full institutional framework for Greece in the 21st century.









History of the Hellenic Parliament's Building

King Otto's Palace is built at the eastern boundaries of the city, on Boubounistra hill, following the designs by a Bavarian architect Friedrich von Gaertner. The foundation stone was placed on January 25th/February 6th, 1836. The building is rectangular, with four exterior wings, each with three floors, a middle wing with two floors and two courtyards, without any superfluous decorative elements. The total surface of the covered premises was 17.000m². The ground floor housed the administrative services, the building operation services and the catholic chapel of the Palace (nowadays the Prime Minister's office); on the first floor were located, the reception areas and the chambers of the King and the Queen and the areas of official gatherings (Dance Halls, Dining Room and Games Room). On the second floor were housed the areas of residence of the princes, of the chamberlain, of the palace personnel and the areas of unofficial gatherings. The total cost stood at 5.450.000 golden drachmas of the time.

Decorative painting works began in the Trophy and Adjutants Rooms of the 1st floor (known today as Eleftherios Venizelos Hall), following the designs by the sculptor Ludvig Michael von Schwanthaler. The most significant events of the Greek Revolution are depicted, since its manifestation until King Otto's arrival, as well as portraiture of heroes of the Liberation struggle.

On November 11/23 King George I and his wife Olga settle in the Palace. Renovations and re-arrangement works begin, the most important one being the modification of the staircase and the creation of an orthodox chapel, dedicated to Saint George on the 2nd floor.

A big fire breaks out on July 24th, on the roof of the second floor of the northern wing. Repair works start immediately after the fire.

On December 24th, a second, bigger fire breaks out. The central wing, where the Dance Halls, Dining Room and Games Room are found, were burnt down along with the respective parts of the western and eastern wing and Saint George chapel. The royal family moves to the summer palace in Tatoi and returns back to the Palace in 1912.

After the assassination of King George I, his successor Constantine is proclaimed king and remains in his hitherto residence at the mansion on Herodus Attikou (today the President of the Republic's residence) which becomes the royal palace. The old palace continued to serve as the residence of Queen Mother Olga.

1836-1843



Friedrich von Gaertner



The new Royal Palace in Athens.
Lithography by
F. Stademann, 1841

1840



Greece.
Mural of Eleftherios
Venizelos Hall.

1867



Rigas Velestinlis.
Mural of Eleftherios
Venizelos Hall

1884

1909

1913



Theodoros Kolokotronis.
Mural of Eleftherios
Venizelos Hall.



Refugees in the Old Palace.
Photo 1923



1917-1923 During the exile of the royal family (1917-1920) the biggest part of the Old Palace was turned into a hospital, except for the royal chambers. After its return, only Queen Mother Olga remains in the Old Palace until 1922. After the disaster in Asia Minor, the building housed care and employment facilities for refugees (hospital, orphanage, laboratories etc).

1924 The building also housed state services, such as the Topography of the Department of Agriculture, City Police, Presidential Guard, the Artillery Inspectorate of the Military Affairs Ministry, the Healthcare Service of the Health Ministry etc. In addition, other organizations and services were housed for the relief of refugees: Christian Youth Coalition, Hellenic Red Cross, International Migration Service, International Association of Women etc. Infant medical services, boarding school for students, a Near East Relief hospital and orphanage and Benaki Workshops are also housed in the building. George I chambers and the chapel in the ground floor are utilized to store the Royal assets which were deposited to the Historical and Ethnological Society in 1935.

1925 At the north-eastern part of the Old Palace courtyard, a small building is built known as 'the Little Palace' serving as a shop to sell the sewing and handicraft products manufactured in the Benaki workshops (since 1999 the Parliament television services are housed in this premise).

1927 The "George I Memorabilia Museum", annex of the National History Museum, was inaugurated and operated in the building until 1930 and from 1936 until 1941.

1928 It was decided to erect the Unknown Soldier Monument at the Old Palace Square following the designs of the architect Emmanouel Lazaridis.

1929 After many discussions at the Parliament, the government of Eleftherios Venizelos decides to house the Parliament and the Senate at the Old Palace building.

1930 Andreas Kriezis drawings are approved and works for the conversion of the building into a 'Parliament and Senate Building' begin and last until 1934. Basic intervention were carried out in the central part of the building ravaged by the fire in 1909. Following the demolition of the ruins, the Rooms of Parliament and Senate are built at this place.

The new spaces are re-arranged so that the building corresponds to its new needs. Two spaces for offices are formed: at the ground floor are housed the Prime Minister's and the President of the Parliament's offices. The second floor is arranged to house the Parliament Library and temporarily the State Council.

At the first meeting of its members the Senate Hall is inaugurated and is abolished on the following year.

On July 1st, the Fifth National Assembly celebrates its works at its new room.

The Third Revision Parliament votes for the temporary housing of the State Council and the Supreme Economic Council at the Parliament Building.

An emergency law by Metaxas dictatorship government allowed more public services to be housed at the Parliament Building. As a result, the Ministry of Security and Greece Air Club are housed in the Trophy and Adjutants Rooms (today Eleftherios Venizelos Hall).

The government appointed by the Germans, the German services and the Italian-Greek Association are housed at the Parliament Building, while keeping the Ministry of Security at the premises.

The Fourth Revision Parliament, after the elections on March 31st, convokes a meeting after the democratic life recovery. In addition to the Parliament services, the building housed the Ministry of Security and National Defence.

Following the military coup and the establishment of dictatorship, the Parliament ceases its operation.

Restoration of Democracy and celebration of the Parliament session. The Constitution is signed at the Trophy Room. Since 1975 works have continued for the building's maintenance and operation.

1934

1935

1936

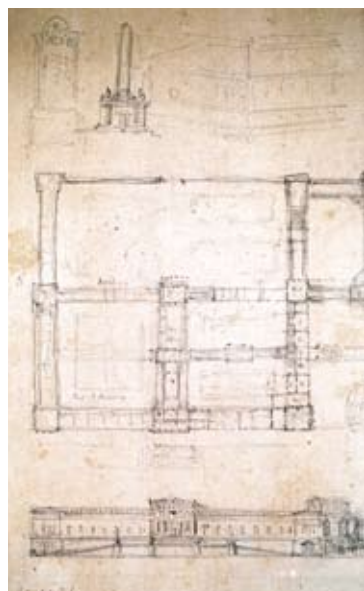
1937

1941

1946

1967

1975



The meridian side of the Parliament.
Drawing by Andreas Kriezis, 1930



First Parliament meeting at the new seat.
July 1st, 1935



Eleftherios Venizelos
by Yiannis Pappas



Charilaos Trikoupis
by Yiannis Pappas



The mother
by Christos Kapralos

- 1987** At the western courtyard of the building, the statue of Eleftherios Venizelos is erected by the sculptor Yiannis Pappas. He is assigned to create the statue of Charilaos Trikoupis.
- 1996** A five-storey underground parking space is constructed.
- 2002** The 'Monument of the battle of Pindos' by Christos Kapralos is placed at the upper part of the eastern and western wall of the Peristylion at the Plenum Hall.
- 2004** The painter-preserved Stavros Baltoyiannis with his specialized team undertake to preserve and restore the murals of the frieze in the Eleftherios Venizelos Hall.
- 2007** The columns, the ceiling and the walls of the Parliament's western entrance are decorated with paintings; the decorative painting is restored at Eleftherios Venizelos Hall first part of the ceiling.
- 2008** M.P.s Lounge is decorated.
In close cooperation with the National Technical University of Athens, a scientific group is set up to study and propose solutions for the building's upgrading of operation and uses.



Part of the *Monument of the battle of Pindos* by Christos Kapralos

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