The Ministry of Labour, Social Security and Social Solidarity is the authority responsible for the design and pursuit of welfare policy for people with disabilities, including all policies regarding deinstitutionalization and independent living enforcement. The 12 Centers (Public law) of Social Welfare based in twelve different regions, located in regions in order to cover the needs at urban and rural areas equally and also.

The development of supported living houses (SYD) is part of welfare and social care policy in a particular group of people with disabilities, mainly with mental disabilities which aims to develop an alternative accommodation in the community for people avoiding institutionalization and social exclusion due to the lack or weakness of their family. Also, it helps to increase participation in everyday activities in the community, as much as possible improving the autonomy and social integration. Simultaneously owned and operated private legal entities that provide care services to people with disabilities by implementing the cooperation between the public and private sectors to ensure provision of quality social care services.

The policies about community living, are designed and implemented in order to fight social exclusion for vulnerable social groups and improving their integration in society. The interventions and measures decided, have to do with accessibility to the built environment, infrastructure and information, with improvements to the employment status for disabled people, the social security system, the participation in cultural - leisure life etc. ensuring as well the community based living for disabled people.

It is important that projects and actions carried out either through the Regional Operational Program or through the National Strategic Reference Framework include the concept of disability related actions to improve living standards for people with disabilities, their accessibility and their social inclusion. People with disabilities is a heterogeneous group of people depending on the type and severity of their disability and this is taken into account in the design, approval and implementation of development programs funded through the NSRF in areas such as employment, transport ,communications, health, education, etc. Priority of the program is to minimize barriers and to increase accessibility structures and services for vulnerable groups which are achieved through horizontal integration of the criterion of accessibility as a criterion for eligibility in all operational programs and the dissemination of the disability dimension in its strategic objectives - axes.

In the new programming period 2014-2020, particularly stressed the development of projects in the areas of health, welfare, and social services with the activation of local stakeholders, targeting the most vulnerable social groups including people with disabilities. As very important step, counted the interventions for the development of a sustainable social economy and social entrepreneurship to increase employment opportunities for people coming from vulnerable groups at local, regional and national level. Main objectives and challenges are issues such as the law framework, financing access, awareness rising to the community and the networking. A number of actions regarding the above aims will be carried out mainly by the NGOs and their role is counted as crucial on the implementation of this programming funding period.

Ministerial authorities are in close contact with the National Confederation of Disabled People, as the most representative disability organization, which participates in decision-making and representing people with disabilities in the dialogue with the Greek State. It exercises systematic control of legislation and regulations and submits proposals to the Greek State on issues such as: education, vocational training, employment, information society, universal access.

It is a priority for all authorities, ministries and unions of people with disabilities to raise awareness of issues related to disability and to participate in dialogue to implement related programmes and actions more effectively. Actions and programs of public information and awareness of disability incurred both by central government bodies and bodies of local self-government with great success. The objective of all operations performed is to promote equal opportunities and social cohesion, combating discrimination, encouragement for jobs, facilitating the access and activation and awareness.

Seminars, lectures and conferences are organized on a regular basis, covering subjects that are related to disability. They are not only relevant for people with disabilities but for the society as a whole. Advertising campaigns are also promoted by the government authorities or by non-governmental organisations, aiming at the sensitization of society in the subject of disability, showing ways of improving the lives of people with disabilities.

Greece has a legislative framework to support the implementation of accessibility in building infrastructure which should ensure the horizontal and vertical access by people with disabilities in all new buildings and spaces. As was said before, the legislative framework for accessibility is defined by the General Building Regulations and a series of decisions and circulars produced by different ministries: Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Public affairs, Ministry of Development, Ministry of Transport and Communications and Ministry of Mercantile Marine. There is a clear legislative framework that promotes accessibility and which: provides procedures for regular monitoring and certifying proper implementation of measures and adopts standards and practices based on the newest trends followed on the international community.

In Greece, the efforts are aimed at the adoption of a design that meets the needs of all citizens, without discrimination on the diffusion of the criterion of accessibility in all policies and actions at all levels. The accessibility of infrastructure, services and goods has now become an internationally fundamental right for persons with disabilities, which states are obliged to protect. The needs of all society members are quite important and should form the basis of any design and build.

National Confederation of Disabled People (ESAMEA) issued a guide book presenting accessible entertainment activities in Greece, an attempt for the first time in accessible infrastructure (hotels, museums, restaurants / cafes, theaters, cinemas, shopping centers, major sporting facilities and other services), mainly in the capitals of prefectures, and other cities of particular interest.

The Ministry of Labour, Social Security & Social Solidarity, has a unique electronic database which constitutes the National Register of disability benefit recipients. Also, there are figures and numbers regarding disabled people. Thereby, it is possible to locate weaknesses and omissions concerning the obligations mentioned in the UNCRPD. Consequently, adequate policies can be developed in order to effectively implement the Convention.

In relation to question 3 of the questionnaire, and in particular whether the special needs of people with disabilities are taken into account in the services provided, in accordance with a number of provisions of the applicable legislation (law 344/1976), the register offices within municipalities are responsible for the implementation of registration certificates, which bear full witness to what is documented (birth, marriage, death, e t c) for both Greek and foreign nationals.

The enacting of the registration certificates for Greek nationals aims at certifying the occurrence of vital facts in lives of the interested parties, as well as holding the full image of their new civil status stated in the register offices within municipalities ; therefore the entry and registration of all vital facts is compulsory.

Article 11 of the applicable legislation (law 344/1976) in relation to vital facts to be declared by people with disabilities, blind and deaf-mute persons, provides as follows:

If the person declaring the vital fact is a person with disabilities or a blind person who can not sign the applicable registration act, reference shall be made at the end of the document of the reason of his/her incapacity to sign.

If the person declaring the vital fact is a deaf person, who, however, can read, the document shall be applied upon declaration made by the person; any questions addressed to him/her shall be made in writing.

If the person declaring the vital event is a deaf person who can not read or a mute or deaf-mute person, the declaration shall be made obligatorily by the persons each time responsible for each category of the vital fact.

Concerning a marriage concluded between people of the categories referred to in the previous sub- paragraph, the persons responsible to declare civil and religious marriages are the mayors and the local religious actors, respectively.

The Greek state in order to enable people with disabilities to exercise their right to vote shall take the necessary measures to enable the participation of those voters in the electoral process.

According to the electoral legislation and particularly under the provisions of paragraph 3 of Article 83 of Presidential Decree 26/2012 "Codification in a single text of the legislation on the election of deputies" (A'57) it is defined that each voter with a physical weakness has the right to address the representative of the judicial authority or to a member of the Election Committee, who are obliged to assist in the vote.

The Elections Department of the Ministry of Internal Affairs issued a relevant newsletter which gives instructions to facilitate the exercise of voting by citizens with disabilities.

The newsletter emphasizes that if the representative of the judicial authority finds that it is impossible for the voters with physical disabilities, to have access in the voting room, has to ensure along with a selected member of the Election Committee, that an envelope with a stamp and initials is delivered to the voter as well as full series of ballots in order for him to withdraw in a suitable and accessible area of the same building complex (e.g. ground floor) to vote.

Then the voter delivers the sealed envelope with the vote to the representative of the judiciary, and the representative of the judiciary throws the envelope in the ballot box, in the polling station in which the voter who voted is registered.

The specific procedure for exercising the right to vote may be included in the effort to adopt **best practices and initiatives** taken by the state to protect people with disabilities.

In relation to **laws and policies** regarding persons with disabilities:

***Transportation of pupils with special educational needs***

Within the context of the current legal framework, special care is provided for the transportation of pupils with disabilities, as the legal framework comprises four main points which are different from those provided for pupils in other schools.

In particular:

1. According to par 3, article 1 of the Joint Ministerial Decision 24001/2013 (OG 1449 B / 14-6-2013) as applicable, the transportation of pupils attending schools for pupils with special educational needs (SEN) does not fall under the restrictions of the minimum home to school distance.
2. According to the same paragraph, the transportation of pupils attending schools for pupils with special educational needs (SEN) takes place by suitable means of transportation provided by the municipal authorities, or through public procurements which lead to private hire transports, thus excluding public means of transport.
3. According to the first paragraph in the annex of the Joint Ministerial Decision, when using vehicles adapted for disabled pupils for their transportation to schools for pupils with special educational needs (SEN), the maximum costs may be increased up to 50% in relation to the costs for conventional vehicles, in case of hiring private means of transportation through public procurements.
4. Finally, grants are available for pupils attending schools for pupils with special educational needs (SEN) when such transportation services are not provided. Grants are allocated without the restriction of receiving a maximum of 1.500 euro per school year, (article 3, par 1.II of the above mentioned Joint Ministerial Decision), which is applicable to other pupils.

***Accessibility demands to public work contracts and supply contracts of entities supervised by the Ministry of Interior and of local government entities***

According to the Directive 2004/18/ EC (article 23 “technical specifications”) and article 53, par.1 of the Presidential Decree 60/2007 (OG 64A/16-3-2007), when possible, the technical specifications should be defined so that accessibility of persons with special needs or a planning available to all users can be assured. Persons with special needs must have accessibility to all the public works executed (roads, pavements, public buildings, etc) as well as to all goods and services provided by the wider public sector.