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Press Release

Bodossaki Foundation and IOBE present the findings of the first study assessing the contribution of Civil Society to the Greek economy

The study was conducted as part of the Active citizens fund programme

Multi-level contribution and significant scope for growth. This is the shortest possible description of the findings of the study on the contribution of Civil Society to the Greek economy, carried out by the Foundation for Economic & Industrial Research (IOBE) for Bodossaki Foundation, in the framework of the Active citizens fund programme. This is the first scientific research conducted in Greece to measure and highlight the economic dimension of the contribution of Civil Society organisations at national and local level. It was conducted through large-scale primary research and the application of appropriate economic models and sheds light on the multifaceted contribution of Civil Society in the country, as well as the significant potential for progress in the field.

According to the findings of the study, [available here](#), **the activities of Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) support, directly or indirectly, the production of 1.6% of the country's GDP and the employment of 1.9% of workers in Greece.** In absolute terms, the contribution to the GDP of CSOs for 2021 is estimated at €3 billion, supporting 88,400 jobs. These figures do not include **the economic value of volunteering**, which amounted to **€357 million in 2021**, corresponding to about 0.2% of the country's GDP.

In addition, the activities of the organisations lead to a **boost in Public revenue** due to the stimulation of economic activity in the country, with **annual amounts consistently above €1 billion**, corresponding to 1.9 - 2.1% of annual State revenue in the three-year period 2019-2021. In the hypothetical case where the services offered by Civil Society Organisations in Greece would have to be provided by the State, their costs for 2021 are estimated at €2.1 to €3.2 billion.

The scale of CSOs' activity depends to a large extent on the acceptance and support they receive from the country's citizens. About 45.5% of the respondents said that they had financially supported an organisation over the previous 12 months (May 2021 - May 2022), with 69.4% having done so on an ad hoc basis and only 22% in a regular way. Furthermore, Greece scored low in the rankings based on citizens' contributions and their trust in charities. In particular, it ranks second to last, 125th, based on the CAF World Giving Index for the decade 2009-2019 and 34th out of 50 countries in the World Value Survey based on the percentage of citizens who have donated to a Civil Society Organization or a political campaign. Similarly,



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Greece ranks 37th out of 54 countries based on the percentage of people who said they trusted charities.

The study shows that there is considerable scope for further development of the activities of Civil Society Organisations, given the relatively limited geographical scope of the organisations' activities and the change that would be brought about in the field by strengthening the public trust in the organisations. It is essential that the organisations themselves, which operate in sensitive sectors and manage significant resources, have reliable governance bodies, implement external audit procedures, and operate with maximum transparency. Finally, it is necessary to lift the obstacles that hinder the operation of CSOs, mainly by improving the supervisory framework and the cooperation with the state in general, in order to enhance the economic contribution and the significant social impact of their activities in Greece.

The findings of the study were presented during today's event, which took place at the Athens Conservatory and was introduced by the President of the Board of the Bodossaki Foundation, Ms Athina Dessypri and the Ambassador of Norway, Mrs Lajla Brandt Jakhelln. The results of the study were presented by Mr. Nikos Vettas, Director General of IOBE, Professor of Economics at the Athens University of Economics and Business and Mr. Svetoslav Danchev, Head of the IOBE study team. In addition, good practices of European countries and examples of a dynamic Civil Society were presented by Alexandrina Najmowicz, Secretary General of the European Civic Forum and Aage Borchgrevink, Senior Adviser at the Norwegian Helsinki Committee. The event was attended by representatives of Civil Society organisations and scientific institutions.

For Bodossaki Foundation, the empowerment of Civil Society is a strategic pillar of action. The Foundation aims at developing a strong and independent Civil Society and at creating the appropriate institutional framework for its operation.

The €13.5 million Active citizens fund programme, under which the research was carried out, is funded by Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway and is part of the European Economic Area (EEA) funding mechanism for the period 2014 - 2021, known as EEA Grants. The project aims at strengthening and enhancing the sustainability of Civil Society and at highlighting its role in promoting democratic processes, enhancing citizen participation in public life, and defending human rights. The Active citizens fund grant for Greece is managed jointly by Bodossaki Foundation and SolidarityNow.

About Bodossaki Foundation

Bodossaki Foundation is a public benefit organisation established in 1972 with the aim of continuing the contribution of its founder Prodromos - Bodossakis Athanasiadis to Greek society. Its vision is a society of equal opportunities, with possibilities and prospects for all.

To promote its vision, the Foundation funds, plans and implements, in full alignment with the principles of transparency, accountability and integrity, actions and programmes related to its four strategic action

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pillars: promoting education; improving healthcare; protecting the environment; and empowering Civil Society. Since its creation, the Foundation has made available more than €450 million in promoting its objectives.

At the same time, Bodossaki Foundation is also acting today as a catalyst for fostering a broader culture of contribution in the Greek society, managing resources on behalf of third parties - Legators, international organisations, corporations, and other major donors - wishing to fund programmes of a strong social impact that address critical needs in education, healthcare, environmental protection, and the empowerment of Civil Society.

About the Foundation for Economics & Finance Industrial Research (IOBE)

IOBE is a private, non-profit, public benefit, research organisation. It was founded in 1975 to promote scientific research on the problems of the Greek economy and to generate proposals necessary for policy formulation. It specialises in the scientific investigation and analysis of economic, industrial, and business issues, which relate to the development of the Greek and European economy and undertakes the preparation of reports and studies of general interest to the private and public sectors relevant to its statutory purposes.