



# Greece



## Country Overview:

*Location:* Southern Europe, bordering the Aegean Sea, and the Mediterranean Sea, between Albania and Turkey

*Size:* 131,957 sq km

*Population:* 10,772,967 (July 2013 est.)

*Capital:* Athens

*Export-commodities:* food and beverages, manufactured goods, petroleum products, chemicals, textiles

*Import-commodities:* machinery, transport, equipment, fuels, chemicals

*Currency:* Euros (EUR)

*Ethnic groups:* population: Greek 93%, other (foreign citizens) 7% (2001 census)

*Religion:* Greek Orthodox 98%, Muslim 1.3%, other 0.7%

*Government type:* parliamentary republic

*Chief of State:* President Karolos PAPOULIAS (since 12 March 2005)

*Head of Government:* Prime Minister Antonis SAMARAS (as of 20 June 2012)

*Language:* Greek 99% (Official), other 1% (includes English and French)



## Hellenic Republic/Elliniki Dhimokratia

### Meetings and Negotiations

- Arriving on time for a meeting is **important**, even though your Greek counterpart may not.

- Building and establishing the personal relationship tends to be the focus of **initial meetings**.

- During initial meetings, men shake hands firmly, smile and maintain **direct eye contact**.

- A **light** hand shake is the norm if women are meeting for the first time. A kiss on each cheek is common if two women know each other.

- At a first meeting, a warm handshake between a man and a woman will suffice and is sometimes combined with slight touches on the arm and/or elbow.

- Greeks can become **animated** when negotiating, be sure to not mistake this for aggression.

- Greeks prefer face-to-face meetings rather than doing business by telephone or in writing, which are seen as too impersonal.

- Greeks are skilled negotiators. They quite enjoy bargaining.

- Imposing a deadline on reaching a decision may end the negotiations.

### Business Attire

- Most Greeks **value** being well dressed and nicely groomed.

- For Men— dark and medium colored suits with shirts and ties

- For Women— stylish yet classic business suits, dresses and blouses

### Behavior

- Greeks generally prefer standing close to one another while talking. A little less than an arm's length is normal. There is a fair amount of touching while conversing.

- It can be considered **rude** to back up or away from someone while they are speaking.

- Putting your thumb in between your middle and index finger while making a fist and the "OK" sign are considered **obscene** gestures.

- To **hand-signal** the number 5, be sure to face your palm inward toward yourself. Facing it outward is considered **rude**.

### Gift Giving

- Gifts are not generally exchanged at initial business meetings. Gifts should be of a small value, are usually wrapped, and tend to be opened when received.

### Appropriate Gifts:

- Sweets/pastries or flowers, small gifts with company logo.

### Gifts to Avoid:

- Knives and scissors.

## Business Tips continued

### Conversation

- Greeks tend to speak quite loudly with a lot of emotion.

- Greeks have **strong** opinions on almost any topic, which they are happy to share, discuss, debate and argue.

- Greeks use expansive arm and hand gestures when speaking. Physical contact is common –

even among two friends who may be of the same gender. They will maintain **strong** eye contact when speaking.

- Passing along a compliment, or showing interest in **learning** more about the impact of Greece in the world will help to build good will.

- Under no circumstances should

you publicly question someone's statements.

### Topics to Discuss:

- Jobs, family, art, contributions that the Greeks have made to the rest of the world

### Topics to Avoid:

- Politics, Cyprus, Turkey, personal relationships