

Greece Legal Framework Analysis: Key Highlights

This one-pager aims to provide a brief overview of the most notable features of Greece's national cooperative legal framework, based on the work of national legal experts and ICA member input.

In Greece, the national constitution refers to agricultural and urban/civil cooperatives. Ordinary law in Greece governs cooperatives through special laws which divide cooperatives into three main categories (agricultural cooperatives, forest-worker cooperatives and urban cooperatives). Some provisions of the special cooperative laws reflect cooperative principles, such as the principle of democratic member control. However, a reference to all seven cooperative principles is only made in the preamble to the law on agricultural cooperatives.

Main regulations: This table displays a selection of cooperative regulations identified by experts and ICA members. For the full analysis including all relevant regulations, see the full report [here](#).

Regulation	Brief Description
Law 4384/2016	'Αγροτικοί Συνεταιρισμοί, μορφές συλλογικής οργάνωσης του αγροτικού χώρου και άλλες διατάξεις' or 'Agricultural Cooperatives, forms of collective organisation of the agricultural sector and other provisions'
Law 4423/2016	'Δασικές Συνεταιριστικές Οργανώσεις και άλλες διατάξεις' or 'Forest Cooperative Organisations and other provisions'
Law 1667/1986	'Αστικοί συνεταιρισμοί και άλλες διατάξεις' or 'Urban Cooperatives and other provisions', which covers building cooperatives, cooperative banks, maritime insurance cooperatives and limited liability social cooperatives.

Cooperative Friendliness: Greek cooperative legislation focuses on the heterogeneity between different cooperative types, in effect disregarding their shared cooperative identity. Thus, Greece lacks a general cooperative law and comprehensive public policy plan for cooperative development. Greek cooperative legislation is also known for its volatility compared with legislation governing other business models, with the effect that interested parties may be dissuaded from choosing the cooperative model.

Key recommendations for improvement: A major priority is the harmonisation of existing laws on cooperatives, so as to ensure compliance with the cooperative identity and equal treatment for all cooperatives. As a second recommendation, a general cooperative law could be enacted, including the ICA definition of a cooperative, which can limit unjustified divergences in how different types of cooperatives are treated under Greek law.

Conclusions: Greek cooperative legislation is fragmented and unstable in its current form. The cooperative movement in Greece would therefore benefit from both revision of special cooperative laws and the introduction of a general cooperative law.