

Suffering at the hands of the state: Conditions of imprisonment and prisoner health in contemporary Greece

European Journal of Criminology
9(1) 3–22

© The Author(s) 2012

Reprints and permission: sagepub.co.uk/journalsPermissions.nav

DOI: 10.1177/1477370811421643

euc.sagepub.com



Leonidas K. Cheliotis

Queen Mary, University of London, UK

Abstract

With imprisonment rates rising in a large number of jurisdictions worldwide, ever more research attention has been paid to conditions of imprisonment and prisoner health. With a view to contributing to the emerging body of literature, this article offers a systematic summary of key findings from Greece. Prison establishments in this country are vastly overcrowded and material conditions of detainment are deplorable. Healthcare provision in prison is minimal and the prevalence of serious transmittable diseases and mental disorders amongst prisoner populations is high, as are the rates of deliberate self-harm, suicide and death more generally. Prisoner use of prescribed and illicit drugs is alarmingly common, especially as regards injection drugs, and drug overdose appears to account for the majority of deaths in custody.

Keywords

drug use, Greece, prison conditions, prisoner health, prisoner death and suicide

Introduction

Recent decades have witnessed a dramatic rise in the use of imprisonment in a large number of jurisdictions worldwide (Van Dijk, 2008: 259–60). As well as trying to gauge the precise scale and explain the underlying causes of this trend, scholarship has duly paid increasing attention to the experience of imprisonment as such, including the harms it generates for prisoners. Conditions of imprisonment and prisoner health typically occupy centre stage in this regard. The jurisdictional focus of international reviews that

Corresponding author:

Dr Leonidas K. Cheliotis, Lecturer in Criminology and Deputy Director of the Centre for Criminal Justice, Department of Law, Queen Mary, University of London, Mile End Road, London E1 4NT, UK.

Email: l.cheliotis@qmul.ac.uk

integrate pertinent literature, however, is largely restricted to the Anglophone world (see, for example, Fazel and Baillargeon, 2010). This is not to say that jurisdictions elsewhere do not or should not concern themselves with the conditions of imprisonment and prisoner health, nor necessarily that relevant information is wholly unavailable or inaccessible outside their national borders.

With a view to helping rectify this gap in the international review literature, the present article turns attention to the case of Greece, offering a systematic summary of key findings from a range of sources in both Greek and English: from scholarly studies (published as well as unpublished), to media reports (investigative or otherwise), to official documentation produced by interested organizations (domestic and foreign), to prisoner autobiographies. To the extent that space allows, indications are also provided of how prison conditions and prisoner health in Greece compare internationally. The overarching aim of such comparisons is to emphasize the need and illustrate the potential for urgent remedial intervention, rather than to suggest that Greece is destined to be an outlier vis-à-vis its Western counterparts.

Against the background of an immense growth in the use of imprisonment in Greece over the past three decades or so, it is shown that prison establishments are greatly overcrowded and material conditions of detention are deplorable.¹ Healthcare provision is minimal and the prevalence of serious transmittable diseases and mental disorders amongst prisoner populations is high, as are the rates of deliberate self-harm, suicide and death more generally. Indeed, the officially recorded incidence of prisoner deaths has risen at a faster pace than imprisonment itself. Prisoner use of prescribed and illicit drugs is common, especially as regards injection drugs, and drug overdose appears to account for the majority of prisoner deaths. These findings add to growing concerns expressed by international observers, and will hopefully provoke the Greek state authorities to actively promote change, whether through substantively reforming the existing prison system or, as seems imperative, implementing policies of decarceration.

The use of imprisonment in Greece: 1980–2006

To put the ensuing discussion in context, this first section outlines some basic findings from the author's re-analysis of data compiled and published by the National Statistical Service of Greece (NSSG) on the rates of imprisonment in the country during the period 1980–2006 (Cheliotis, 2011).²

The caseload of convicted prisoners in Greece has risen at a faster pace than the caseload of pre-trial detainees. This has been the consequence of a dramatic rise in the length of stay in prison under conviction, itself stemming from the increasing length of custodial sentences and the parallel shrinking of rates of discharge. Overall, the upward trend in the use of imprisonment can be traced to the 1980s.

Although the 1980s saw a modest decline of 6 percent in the annual caseload of convicted and remand prisoners (from 11,455, or 119 per 100,000 population, in 1980 to 10,763, or 107 per 100,000 population, in 1989), the average length of stay in prison under conviction saw a 47 percent rise (from 3.8 months to 5.6 months). Over this time, there was a large increase in the annual caseload of prisoners sentenced to longer custodial terms, and a 35.3 percent decrease in the annual caseload of convicted prisoners being

discharged for any reason. Between 1990 and 2006, the annual caseload of convicted and remand prisoners rose by 52.6 percent (from 11,835, or 116 per 100,000 population, to 18,070, or 162 per 100,000 population); this was accompanied by a meteoric increase of 1337 percent in the average length of stay in prison under conviction (from 5.1 months to 73.3 months).³ During this period, there was a huge expansion in the annual caseload of prisoners sentenced to longer terms – indeed, by 2006, the annual caseload of prisoners sentenced to a year or more was rapidly approaching parity with the historically peak levels recorded from the interwar years (on which see, further, Cheliotis and Xenakis, 2010) –, while the annual caseload of convicted prisoners discharged for any reason fell in proportion to the annual caseload of convicted prisoners, from 52.9 percent to 44.6 percent.

Ever since 1990, the majority of convicted prisoners in Greece have served a sentence for a drug-related offence.⁴ In 2006, for instance, the principal offence of conviction in 32.3 percent of the caseload of convicted prisoners fell into the broad category of drug-related offences (for example, illicit drug use and drug trafficking), up from a mere 7.6 percent in 1980 and 14.2 percent in 1990. Drug trafficking, an offence category that in Greece includes possession of relatively small quantities of drugs, has grown to become the most common drug-related conviction offence. In 2006, it accounted for 94.2 percent of the caseload of convicted drug offenders, and for 30.5 percent of the total caseload of convicted prisoners. In the same year, 44.9 percent of convicted drug traffickers were themselves drug users. Property offences have accounted for most of the remainder in the caseload of convicted prisoners (they comprised 25 percent in 2006). Special mention needs to be made of illegal entry into, departure from, or stay in the country, which has become a common offence category amongst convicted prisoners (and non-Greeks in particular). Between 1993, when relevant NSSG data first became available, and 2006, this category of conviction offence rose from 6.9 percent to 13.9 percent of the total caseload of convictions.

With insignificant variation over time, convicted prisoners in Greece are overwhelmingly male and adult (for example, 93.4 percent and 99.2 percent, respectively, of the prisoner caseload in 2006). As regards the nationality of convicted prisoners, however, the temporal variation is striking. Between 1996 and 2006, for example, the annual caseload of non-Greek prisoners rose by 140.5 percent, from 2253 (or 404 per 100,000 non-Greeks) to 5420 (or 559 per 100,000 non-Greeks).⁵ Correspondingly, the proportion of non-Greeks amongst the total caseload of convicts increased from 25.3 percent to 41.1 percent. This is four times higher than the estimated proportion of non-Greeks in the general population of Greece, which is to be explained mainly by reference to the sentencing behaviour of judges, rather than to the level and nature of non-Greeks' criminal involvement (see, further, Cheliotis and Xenakis, 2011; Karydis, 2011).⁶ In 2006, and reflecting a long-standing upward trend, the majority (52.4 percent) of non-Greek convicted prisoners were of Albanian origin. During the same period (1996–2006), the annual caseload of Greek convicts increased by 16.8 percent, from 6632 (or 65 per 100,000 Greeks) to 7750 (or 76 per 100,000 Greeks), but dropped in relation to the annual total of cases of convicted prisoners, from 74.6 percent to 58.8 percent (Cheliotis and Xenakis, 2011).

The prison estate

The Greek prison estate currently comprises 34 establishments, of which there are three main types. First are the 'general' prisons, subdivided into 'type A' (for remand prisoners, debtors and short-term convicts) and 'type B' (for long-term convicts and lifers), although there is a significant degree of overlap between these subdivisions because of overcrowding. Second are the 'special' prisons, spanning agricultural units, young offender institutions and the central storage and supply centre (which holds prisoners working at the bakery of the male prison of Korydallos). And third are the 'therapeutic' prisons, subdivided into general hospitals, psychiatric clinics and drug rehabilitation units. There are 24 general prisons (15 of type A and 9 of type B), 7 special prisons (3 agricultural units, 3 young offender institutions, and the central storage and supply centre) and 3 therapeutic prisons (a general hospital, a psychiatric clinic and a drug rehabilitation unit). Women are held in two all-female prisons, one of type A and the other of type B,⁷ and a few are held in male prisons separately from the general male population. Albeit the largest by a narrow margin, the male prison of Korydallos (located in the prefecture of Piraeus, outside Athens) is by far the most populated establishment in the country, holding around one-fifth to one-sixth of the total prison population at any given time (see also below).

The operation of prisons in Greece is coordinated centrally by the Ministry of Justice and a number of its bodies, including, amongst others, the General Directorate of Correctional Policy, the Central Committee of Prisoner Transfers and the Scientific Board of Prisons. In theory, the role of the Board is to provide the Minister with independent suggestions and opinions on any aspect of prison policy. In practice, however, it is principally manned by high-ranking ministerial officials, prison governors and public prosecutors, and less by academics or other 'specialist scientists'. As a result of this, the Board is said to lack independence from the Ministry, and its recommendations are in any case seldom taken into account (Lambropoulou, 2008; Karydis and Fytrakis, 2011; see also Panousis, 2008). In light of spectacular security failures (the most well-known of which are two helicopter escapes by the same two prisoners, from the same prison, and within the space of three years), a Secretariat of Prison Security has also been formed and given increasing prominence in recent years.

As far as the inspection of Greek prisons is concerned, every establishment is served by a prosecutor, whose formal role is to ensure that rules and regulations are fully observed, and to monitor the fair treatment and welfare of prisoners. Nevertheless, prosecutorial input tends to be preoccupied with security concerns at the expense of prisoners' rights (Karydis and Fytrakis, 2011: xxii). A unit of external inspectors was established in 2002, flatteringly called 'untouchables' and 'Rambos' by pro-government media of the day. But the unit has operated with only limited capacity, not least owing to gross understaffing (with only four individuals in place, one of whom is a retired member of the judiciary). It has also been argued that the unit in question is characterized by opacity, for 'it fails to publicise the slightest information about any possible inspection work [it undertakes]' (Karydis and Fytrakis, 2011: xxii).

There are additional ways in which the internal operations of prisons are shrouded in a veil of secrecy. To give only a few examples, access to prisons has been limited for the

Greek Ombudsman (the main alternative inspectorate body), associations of lawyers, medical non-governmental organizations, academic researchers and MPs; prisoners' correspondence with the outside world is often censored; and publicly available ministerial statistics are partial and tend to be unreliable, downplaying the actual use of imprisonment and associated problems (see, further, Cheliotis, 2011). Although inspections by the Ombudsman may have become somewhat easier since 2009, when pertinent legislation was passed, the strict obligation to give prison establishments advance warning cannot but have undermined the very purpose of conducting inspection visits (Karydis and Fytrakis, 2011: xxvi). It thus seems ironic that the Ministry of Justice was renamed in the same year the Ministry of Justice, Transparency and Human Rights.

Material conditions of imprisonment

The surge in prisoner numbers has contributed decisively to the severe overcrowding in the Greek prison system. Indeed, international comparative research has repeatedly ranked Greek prisons as the most overcrowded in Europe (see, for instance, Aebi and Delgrande, 2010; Blaauw et al., 2000; Salize et al., 2007; Zurhold et al., 2005). Despite the addition of new prisons and the construction of extra accommodation at existing sites in recent years, overcrowding has persisted. During the period 1994–2009, the total certified accommodation rose by 133.8 percent, from 3892 to 9103, compared with a 70.4 percent increase in the total prisoner population (from 6884 to 11,736, as measured in annual one-day snapshot censuses by the Ministry of Justice). The ratio of prisoners to certified accommodation was thus brought down from 1.76 to 1.28, but the problem still exists, so much so that even prison staff unions have formally complained to the Ministry of Justice (see, for example, *Proto Thema*, 27 April 2011; *Eleftherotypia*, 14 September 2011).⁸ Nowhere is the problem of overcrowding more evident than in the male prison of Korydallos. With its certified accommodation standing at 800 prisoners, Korydallos held 2018 prisoners on 1 January 2009 – a ratio of 2.52 (see also Aloskofis, 2005).⁹

Partly as a consequence of overcrowding and partly owing to a continuing lack of state provision, conditions of imprisonment are deplorable. A number of academic studies (for example, by Dimopoulos, 1998; Gerouki, 2002) support prisoner and ex-prisoner allegations (for example, by Nikoloutsopoulos, 2008; Roussos, 1991; Samaras, 1999) and reports by the media, national pressure groups and international watchdog organizations (see, further, Karydis and Fytrakis, 2011: 171–265; CPT, 2008, 2010; United Nations, 2010; US Department of State, 2011) that Greek prisons are plagued by insufficient floor space, limited sanitation, lack of ventilation and hot water, unsuitable room temperature and poor hygiene. As regards female prisoners in particular, an international study carried out in the mid-2000s showed that a mere 8.7 percent of women prisoners in Greece occupied a single cell, and 36.2 percent shared a dormitory with around 30–50 others (Dünkel, 2007; see also Atsalaki, 2005). Provision of basic material necessities such as mattresses, bed linen, toilet paper, soap and toothpaste is problematic, and charities or even prisoners themselves are increasingly relied upon to fill the gaps (see, for instance, *Ethnos*, 28 February 2011).¹⁰

On various occasions, the European Court of Human Rights has imposed penalties on the Greek state for inhumane and degrading treatment of detainees (see Galanou, 2011).

The latest such case was in February 2011 and involved compensation to a male prisoner who had been detained with 30 others in a dilapidated dormitory of 50 square metres (*Nisiotis v. Greece*, no. 34704/08).

Health services

Medical provision in Greek prisons has long been minimal. In 2010, according to data supplied by the Greek government itself, the absolute numbers of various categories of 'active' healthcare staff in the prison system of the country fell well below the corresponding numbers of 'permanent positions' provided for by Cabinet Act (which are themselves arguably too meagre to accommodate the needs of prisoners). In particular, there were 71 instead of 182 healthcare staff in place: 11 instead of 51 medical specialists, 4 instead of 19 dentists, 2 instead of 5 pharmacists, and 54 instead of 107 nurses (Government of Greece, 2010: 67). This differs sharply from the situation in other countries of Southern Europe such as Italy and Spain, where operating healthcare staff amount to 967 and 541, respectively (Aebi and Delgrande, 2010). In the general population of Greece, by contrast, there is an oversupply of medical specialists, dentists and pharmacists (indeed, an oversupply that is impressive by European standards; Davaki and Mossialos, 2006: 297).

Staffing levels in Greek prisons are often so low that healthcare centres are in effect run by prison officers and even prisoners themselves, including having responsibility for the distribution of medication. Visits by outside specialists such as cardiologists, dentists and dermatologists are infrequent and far too brief to meet the needs of prisoners (see, further, CPT, 2008, 2010; Dandoulaki, 2008; Karydis and Fytrakis, 2011). An ambitious attempt was made in the late 1990s to operate a telemedicine programme in the male prison of Korydallos, but it quickly foundered on prison bureaucracy and the inflexibility of the national health system (Anogeianaki et al., 2004; Anogianakis et al., 2003).

Newly arrived prisoners are not required to undergo physical examination by a medical doctor (although they are typically subjected to degrading strip searches by prison officers), personal medical records are not kept systematically, and respect for medical confidentiality is not observed (CPT, 2008; Sakelliadis et al., 2008). It is no wonder that the scope and quality of medical provision are evaluated very poorly by prisoners (see, for example, Dandoulaki, 2008; Dünkel, 2007; Gerouki, 2002) and have earned Greece international scorn and judicial penalties (see, further, Galanou, 2011). Most notably, in 2010, the European Court of Human Rights ordered the Greek state to pay damages for insufficient medical provision to Savvas Xiros, a half-blind and nearly deaf amputee since his arrest in 2002 for involvement in the Revolutionary Organization November 17 (*Xiros v. Greece*, no. 1033/07).¹¹

With respect to mental health services, the ratio of mental health staff to prisoners in Greece has been found to be one of the lowest in Europe (Blaauw et al., 2000: 655). Indeed, Salize et al. (2007: 23) report that there were only five psychiatrists working in the entire Greek prison system in 2006, and only one of them on a full-time basis. In its response to the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CPT) in November 2010, the Greek government stated that there were three 'active' psychiatrists in the prison system of the country

(which is far below the 37 ‘permanent positions’ provided for by Cabinet Act) (Government of Greece, 2010: 66–7). Mental health screening is not required at any point in the process of incarceration, suicide prevention programmes are not available, and there is no provision of post-release mental health services (see, further, Blaauw et al., 2000; Dressing and Salize, 2009; Salize et al., 2007). As a consequence, mental health problems are poorly recognized and dealt with (Alevizopoulos et al., 2007; Fotiadou et al., 2006; see also below).

In much the same vein, there is a lack of methadone maintenance treatment for drug-addicted prisoners, therapeutic communities and so-called ‘harm reduction’ measures such as drug-free wings are available in only a small number of prisons, and systematic pre- and post-release support for drug-addicted prisoners (for example, in terms of accommodation and employment) is absent (EMCDDA, 2010a; Zurhold et al., 2005). All of these are conditions that increase the risk of death by overdose upon release (EMCDDA, 2010a).

Transmittable diseases and mental disorder

There are no official data in Greece on the prevalence of serious transmittable diseases in prisons. Scholarly research, however, reveals that hepatitis is highly prevalent amongst prisoner populations in the country. For example, in a study by Chatziarsenis et al. (1999) based on blood samples of 45 male and female prisoners in the prison of Neapoli in Crete in the late 1990s, 20 percent were found to be positive for hepatitis B, 15.5 percent for hepatitis C and 13.3 percent for hepatitis B surface antigen (a rate that was considerably higher than that observed in the general population of Crete) (see also Dandoulaki, 2008). Similarly, in a self-report survey of 74 female prisoners in the early 2000s, hepatitis was reported by 15.9 percent of the sample (while 6.3 percent reported genital diseases, 4.5 percent reported HIV/AIDS and 3 percent reported tuberculosis) (Dünkel, 2007). There is also evidence to suggest that the prevalence of hepatitis in Greek prisons is significantly higher amongst drug users. In a study by Malliori et al. (1998) based on blood samples of 533 male and female drug users imprisoned for drug-related offences in the mid-1990s, 57.6 percent were found to be positive for hepatitis B and 58.2 percent for hepatitis C. Also, 6.5 percent were found to be positive for hepatitis B surface antigen and 2.3 percent for hepatitis D. As concerns specifically hepatitis B and C, rates rose amongst injecting drug users to 80.6 percent and 62.7 percent, respectively.

As with serious transmittable diseases, no official data are available in Greece on the prevalence of mental disorder in prisons. A number of scholarly studies, however, demonstrate that large proportions of prisoners suffer from a mental disorder, for example major depression and anxiety disorder (see, amongst others, Alevizopoulos et al., 2007; Dandoulaki, 2008; Dünkel, 2007; Fotiadou et al., 2006; Maniadaki and Kakouros, 2008; Salize et al., 2007). Indeed, the prevalence of mental disorder in Greek prisons appears to be amongst the highest in Europe (Alevizopoulos et al., 2007: 52; see also Dünkel, 2007). Moreover, in line with international trends, there is evidence to suggest that the diagnosed occurrence of mental disorders in Greece is significantly greater amongst prisoners than in the general population (Fotiadou et al., 2006; Livaditis et al., 2000).

Many prisoners suffering from a mental disorder have received psychiatric treatment at some point prior to their incarceration, and a considerable number are in contact with a psychologist or psychiatrist while in prison, although the regularity, duration and precise nature of this contact remain unclear (see, further, Dandoulaki, 2008; Dünkel, 2007; Fotiadou et al., 2006; Lekka et al., 2003). In a small-scale study by Dandoulaki (2008) in the prison of Nea Alikarnassos in Crete, the vast majority of prisoners surveyed thought that their incarceration had contributed to the development of psychological problems regardless of whether they first exhibited such problems before or during their incarceration (see also Gerouki, 2002). Also, a study conducted in the 1990s with 55 adolescent males held in two establishments showed that psychological morbidity is less likely to manifest itself amongst minority groups such as immigrants and gypsies (Livaditis et al., 2000), but the small sample size precludes generalization. Particularly as concerns inmate mothers, separation from their children has predictably been found to bear a strong correlation with increased levels of depression (Mousouli, 2002; see also Atsalaki, 2005; Demeli, 2010).

Self-harm, suicide and death

Research has shown that the rates of deliberate self-harm are especially high amongst prisoners in Greece. In the most recently published study on the topic, a self-report survey of 164 male prisoners in the prison of Halkida, 34.8 percent of the sample reported having deliberately engaged in self-injurious behaviour (without suicidal intent) while in prison, from hitting one's own head and wrist-cutting to skin piercing and self-burning (Sakelliadis et al., 2010). Such high rates are not surprising in the Greek context, given that self-harm correlates strongly with overcrowded conditions (Spinellis and Themeli, 1997) and mental disorder (Lekka et al., 2006), but also with drug use (Sakelliadis et al., 2010), which is discussed separately in the next section.

The officially recorded incidence of prisoner deaths, meanwhile, has risen at a faster pace than imprisonment itself. Between 1980 and 2005, the annual total of prisoner deaths increased by 350 percent, from 12 to 54, whereas the annual prisoner caseload rose by 56 percent, from 11,455 to 17,869. The overall total of prisoner deaths during the same period was 730, an average of 28 deaths per year or roughly 1 prisoner death every fortnight.¹² In more recent years, prisoners have made repeated allegations of a rising death toll, with the Ministry of Justice counter-claiming a 'stable annual average' (*Eleftherotypia*, 16 November 2007). But the very data provided by ministerial authorities clearly confirm prisoners' allegations: a total of 268 prisoner deaths were recorded from 2001 to November 2007, an average of 38 prisoner deaths per year or roughly 1 prisoner death every 10 days (see also Aebi and Delgrande, 2010).¹³ Indeed, within the space of only 7 years, the number of deaths had already reached half the number accrued over the previous 21 years (*in.gr*, 15 November 2007).

The prevalence of death in Greek prisons is lower than the rate observed in the general population of the country. In 2006, for instance, there were 54 officially recorded prisoner deaths (*in.gr*, 15 November 2007), amounting roughly to 3 incidences per 1000 prisoners, whereas the mortality rate in the general population was 9.46 per 1000 individuals (NSSG, n.d.). But here it should be added that the prevalence of death in the

general population of Greece has remained impressively stable over time, even though it includes highly vulnerable categories not found in prisons, for example infants and the 'super-elderly' (> 70) (NSSG, n.d.). According to a recent report by the Council of Europe, the prevalence of death in Greek prisons falls just below the international annual average. This is a spurious conclusion, however, given that Greece, unlike most of its international counterparts, excluded prisoner deaths during hospitalization or temporary release from the data it provided to the Council's authorities (Aebi and Delgrande, 2010: 93–4).

Cause of prisoner death is an issue long beset with vagueness and uncertainty. Although the Ministry of Justice appears to classify suicides as such, it openly groups a variety of other causes (for example, heart attack, cancer and drug overdose) under a single category named 'miscellaneous'. Moreover, the Ministry systematically fails to provide information about a significant number of cases, instead classifying them under the ambiguous category 'found dead', even when the cases in question are subsequently cleared, whether as suicides or otherwise (Spinellis and Themeli, 1997: 154; see also Aebi and Delgrande, 2010: 94; CPT, 2010: 70). For instance, no cause of death was recorded for 52 (or 11 percent) of the 457 deaths that occurred between 1977 and 1996 (Spinellis and Themeli, 1997), nor, indeed, for two-thirds of all the deaths that occurred between 1996 and 2000 (*Eleftherotypia*, 29 April 2006). According to prisoner allegations and media reports, drug overdose is by far the most common cause of death in prison (see, for example, *Eleftherotypia*, 16 November 2007; *To Vima*, 29 March 2009), whereas the number of deaths caused by overdose in the general population of Greece has been declining in recent years (EMCDDA, 2010b).¹⁴

It is obvious that poor recording practices also make it impossible to precisely determine the rate of prisoner suicides. Based on data reported by Themeli (2006a), of the 562 prisoner deaths that were recorded officially during the period 1980–2000, 102 (18 percent of the total, or an annual average of 5 cases) were classified as suicides.¹⁵ The majority occurred in the 1990s, when the suicide rate was considerably higher amongst prisoners than in the general population (the former exceeding the latter at least 25-fold in most years). Indeed, the discrepancy in Greece between the rates of suicide amongst prisoners and in the general population was one of the highest at the time internationally (Paton and Jenkins, 2005; see also Duthé et al., 2009). More recent reports by the Council of Europe (Aebi and Delgrande, 2010) and the national media (see, for example, *Eleftherotypia*, 4 December 2008) show that absolute numbers have remained just as high,¹⁶ despite curious claims by the Ministry of Justice that the annual average caseload of prisoner suicides has fallen to 2 (*Eleftherotypia*, 16 November 2007). According to the latest report by the Council of Europe, the rate of prisoner suicides in Greece is substantially lower than the international average, but again, unlike most of its international counterparts, Greece failed to provide data on prisoner suicides during hospitalization or temporary release (Aebi and Delgrande, 2010: 93–4). Crucially, earlier evidence suggests that the overwhelming majority of prisoner suicides in Greece are recorded in the psychiatric clinic of the prison complex of Korydallos (*Eleftherotypia*, 29 April 2006; Spinellis and Themeli, 1997).

Research is inconclusive as to whether the risk of suicide is higher among convicted or remand prisoners (compare, for example, Themeli, 2006a, and Fotiadou et al., 2006;

see also *Eleftherotypia*, 29 April 2006). Unsurprisingly, suicide rates have been shown to be considerably higher in overcrowded facilities and to drop dramatically in semi-open, agricultural prisons (Spinellis and Themeli, 1997). Finally, in a study carried out by Lekka et al. (2006) in a male prison, suicidal ideation was found not only to be prevalent, but also to correlate strongly with self-destructive behaviour (see also Dandoulaki 2008; Kestermann, 2005).

Licit and illicit drug use

Although Greek authorities do not systematically record the rates of psychopharmacological drug prescription in prisons, scholarly research reveals that the prescribed use of anxiolytic, antidepressant, antipsychotic and hypnotic drugs is very common, apparently reflecting the high rates of mental disorder amongst prisoner populations. Indeed, drugs are frequently prescribed in combination with one another, even though this practice is said to enhance the likelihood of hepatitis (Lekka et al., 2003). The use of prescribed medication often begins prior to incarceration, and its duration tends to increase with the years spent behind bars (Dandoulaki, 2008). In his book on medication in Greek prisons, Xiros lists a wide range of side-effects caused by the use of prescribed drugs, from severe stomach pain and headache to swelling of the face or throat and drowsiness. He goes on to speak of 'biochemical repression', arguing that the authorities make generous provision of drugs (often also in secret) to torture and manipulate prisoners (Xiros, 2009; see also below).¹⁷

Despite variations in reported rates, research leaves no doubt that the use of illicit drugs such as cannabis and heroin is very high in Greek prisons (see, amongst others, Fotiadou et al., 2006; Livaditis et al., 2000; Mavris, 2003; Sakelliadis et al., 2010; for a brief review, see EMCDDA, 2010b), though it often begins prior to incarceration (Dandoulaki, 2008; Mavris, 2003; Zurhold et al., 2005). The prevalence of illicit drug use in Greek prisons seems to be one of the highest in Europe (EMCDDA, 2010b), and is certainly significantly higher than the rate observed in the general population of the country (EMCDDA, 2010a).

The prevalence of injecting drug use is particularly high. In the 1990s, for example, 20 percent of 861 prisoners surveyed in 10 establishments and 35 percent of 544 prisoners surveyed in 2 establishments reported having injected drugs at some point during their incarceration (see, respectively, Koulierakis et al., 1999; Malliori et al., 1998). The prevalence of injecting drug use in Greek prisons appears to exceed the corresponding rates around Europe (on which see EMCDDA, 2010b), and is certainly significantly higher than the rate observed in the general population of Greece (Koulierakis et al., 1999; see also EMCDDA, 2010a). In the overwhelming majority of cases – 9 out of 10, for instance, in a study by Koulierakis (2006) with 242 men in the prison of Korydallos –, injecting drug use begins prior to incarceration, although the context of onset does not always imply persistence. Many injecting drug users in prison share syringes and needles, practices that put them at high risk of contracting HIV/AIDS and hepatitis. Indeed, in the absence of established precautionary provisions such as needle exchange schemes, the majority are driven to start sharing needles and syringes while in prison (Koulierakis, 2006; see also Koulierakis et al., 1999, 2000, 2003; Malliori et al., 1998).

Although the high rates of illicit drug abuse seem congruent with the overrepresentation of drug offenders within the prisoner population, the level at which illicit substances are smuggled into and around prison facilities across the country requires explanation. It would be misleading to speak merely of gaps in the pertinent laws and institutional regulations, or of unsuccessful efforts by prison staff against ingenious methods of smuggling (see, for example, Spinellis, 2003: 1253). A number of alternatives have been proposed. For instance, it may be that prison officers selectively ‘turn a blind eye’ to the flow of smuggled drugs in order to keep prisoners in line (another, passive form of what Xiros terms ‘biochemical repression’). Additionally, it may well be in return for bribes that prison officers allow or even actively promote drug smuggling. Corruption is far from a rare occurrence in the Greek prison service; media investigations into prisoners’ complaints have brought to light cases of prison officers who smuggled not just drugs, but also mobile phones and even prostitutes into the prison, and accepted bribes in exchange for facilitating temporary release irrespective of eligibility (see, for example, *Apogevmatini*, 26 June 2010; *Eleftherotypia*, 10 April 2009, 17 July 2009; *To Vima*, 20 December 2010; also US Department of State, 2011).¹⁸

Whatever the viewpoint taken, prison officers are deemed accountable for the smuggling of drugs into and around prisons, and, indeed, for drug-related prisoner deaths. In an unprecedented decision reached in 2009, the Administrative Court of First Instance in Nafplio ruled that the Greek state provide compensation of €300,000 to the family of a prisoner who died from drug overdose in custody. The reasoning of the court was that prison officers had been negligent in preventing the smuggling of drugs into the establishment, thus contravening their duty to protect the life of prisoners (*To Vima*, 29 March 2009).¹⁹

Concluding remarks

The overall picture emerging from inside the opaque world of Greek prisons is one of degrading and inhumane treatment that aggravates pre-existing disadvantages and exacerbates social marginalization. Against this background, prison unrest and even riots have become commonplace occurrences in recent years (see Cheliotis, 2010). Indeed, desperation in the face of official indifference has driven protesting prisoners ever more frequently to inflict further pain upon their own bodies. For 18 consecutive days in November 2008, for example, some 6000 prisoners (half of the prison population at the time) either abstained from prison food or, as became increasingly the case, went on complete hunger strike. During the protest, two prisoner deaths and one attempted suicide were reported, and tens of other prisoners sewed their lips together (see, further, Cheliotis, 2009).

With international watchdogs and national pressure groups joining prisoners in the chorus of condemnation, the Greek state has made various generous promises to promote decarceration and raise the standard of living conditions for those kept behind bars (*Eleftherotypia*, 29 November 2010). To date, however, promises have proved to be empty words. There remain harsh legal and practical restrictions upon the use of decarcerative schemes such as conditional release (see Cheliotis, 2010, 2011) and prison conditions have become anything but better, leading the CPT to issue an

'exceptional' public statement in March 2011 that the Greek authorities have shown a 'persistent lack of action to improve the situation' (CPT, 2011).

This, indeed, was only the sixth public statement issued by the CPT in its 22-year history (previous statements concerned solely Turkey and the Russian Federation). As explained by Antonio Cassese, former president of the CPT, public statements are the last weapon left to the inspectors when national authorities consistently fail to make the changes requested. 'This is the only form of sanction the Committee can apply', Cassese goes on to argue, 'but the knowledge that it will use it – with all the negative consequences this may have on the state at an international level – has a considerable deterrent effect' (Cassese, 1996: 42). The Greek state long remained impervious to the threat, however, rather treating the regular reports of the CPT with denial, from simply 'ignoring findings of risks of ill-treatment' (Evans and Morgan, 1998: 207) to dismissing criticisms as 'unfounded and offending [sic]' (Government of Greece, 2010: 63). It remains to be seen whether the final event of public chastisement will be more effective as a deterrent.²⁰

It is true that a prison-building programme is currently under way in Greece – 'according to plan' and 'despite the great financial difficulties the country is facing', as the Ministry of Justice announced emphatically in June 2010 (Ministry of Justice, 14 June 2010). Prison building appears so unfettered by the domestic financial crisis that the Greek state has even been considering funding the construction of a new prison in neighbouring Albania (*To Vima*, 16 March 2011).²¹ But the earlier rhetoric that expanding the prison estate would constitute an important first move towards realizing welfare commitments to prisoners – whether by creating additional space in new prisons or by freeing existing space through repatriating Albanian prisoners currently held in Greece – has gradually given way to economic reasoning. Prison building on national soil has been promoted as a harbinger of employment opportunities for local communities, and making arrangements to 'export' prisoners to Albania has been debated as a cost-effective measure (*To Vima*, 16 March 2011). It comes as no surprise that prison building has failed to guarantee better conditions of imprisonment, although it has not created jobs for locals either. Newly built establishments, for instance, have reportedly faced an array of serious problems such as the dysfunctional plumbing and electrical systems at the female prison in Thiva,²² whilst the latest prison, of Nigrita, is staffed entirely by officers seconded from elsewhere in the country owing, ironically, to restrictions in public-sector hiring (see, for example, Government of Greece, 2010: 67).

To continue ignoring the plight of prisoners is a prospect that not only is obviously inhumane, but also has negative financial implications for the Greek state since judicial fines have begun amassing. At the same time, reforming the existing prison system has grown increasingly unfeasible because of the worsening financial crisis. Restrictions in public-sector hiring, for example, are bound to preclude the employment of new health-care prison staff any time soon (Government of Greece, 2010), hence the recent announcement of cosmetic initiatives such as pilot programmes staffed by volunteer postgraduate medical students (see, further, *Eleftherotypia*, 29 November 2010). Equally, there are no certainties that conditions of imprisonment would improve were the state to go down the route of prison privatization (see, for instance, Liebling et al., forthcoming), something rumoured to be under consideration by ministerial authorities

(and currently being resisted by the Federation of Correctional Personnel Unions).²³ The braver option of decarceration might, therefore, seem the most logical. As King (2011: 603) puts the point: 'If not now, when?'²⁴ An alternative reading, however, would be that present conditions are not at all conducive to promoting decarceration, given that the Greek state has long sought to manage the reverberations of unjust socio-economic policies by way of penal repression, and has successfully maintained the support of mainstream public opinion in so doing (see, further, Cheliotis and Xenakis, 2010, 2011).

Notes

Thanks are due to Julian Roberts, Sappho Xenakis, Nicky Padfield, Mike Ross, Richard Ashcroft, Mary Yarwood and Amy Ludlow for their helpful comments on an earlier version of this article.

1. This is without taking into account immigration detention centres, which are analysed separately elsewhere (Cheliotis and Xenakis, forthcoming; see also CPT, 2011; MSF, 2010). Regarding legal provisions as such, Greece lagged behind international standards in the aftermath of the 1967–74 dictatorship (Patouris, 1979). Several legislative reforms of a more 'liberal' outlook have taken place since, but their actual implementation has been piecemeal at best (see, further, Cheliotis, 2010, 2011).
2. NSSG data for more recent years were not available at the time of this writing.
3. Ministerial snapshot censuses of the prison population are available up to 2010. Between 1980 and 2010, the total of convicted and remand prisoners grew by 256.1 percent, from 3191 to 11,364. But, as explained elsewhere (Cheliotis, 2011: 558–9), snapshot censuses obscure the number of offenders held in custody over the course of a year, the number of offenders sent to prison by the courts over that year and the length of their stay in prison.
4. This is despite the fact that the prevalence of drug use in the country has long been one of the lowest in Europe (see, further, EMCDDA, 2010a).
5. NSSG data on cases and prison admissions of non-Greek convicts were first made available in 1996.
6. An updated analysis of this theme will be available in Cheliotis and Xenakis (forthcoming).
7. The former is the female prison of Korydallos. At the time of writing, it was due to cease operating and be demolished in late 2011.
8. In the same spirit of concern for the state of prisons in Greece, especially amidst the country's financial crisis, the European Federation of Public Service Unions (EPSU) chose Athens as the site of its May 2011 conference on 'Trade unions working for better prison services in Europe'. The conference was organized jointly with the Greek Federation of Correctional Personnel Unions (see, further, OSYE, 3 May 2011).
9. If, as Koulouris (2009: 125) suggests, the total certified accommodation is 'subject to an array of manipulations on the part of those who define it' (in the sense, for example, that additional accommodation does not necessarily imply additional space), then the problem of prison overcrowding in Greece may be even graver.
10. In a small-scale survey conducted in 2009 with a total of 123 male adult and juvenile prisoners from five establishments, the overall state of physical conditions (for example, ventilation, sanitation, heating) and of medical provision were both rated negatively, with only one establishment (the psychiatric clinic of Korydallos) faring somewhat positively, and one (the male prison of Korydallos) receiving by far the worst scores (*Ethnos*, 19 October 2009). For a similar survey, see Dünkel (2007).

11. In October 2006, the Misdemeanour Court of Piraeus rejected Xiros' application for temporary suspension of his custodial sentence on grounds of ill health. Given the risk that he would otherwise completely lose his eyesight and that his hearing would deteriorate further, Xiros had requested that he be allowed to receive specialist medical treatment in either Thessaloniki or Crete for a period of five months (*in.gr*, 10 October 2006). Interestingly, according to official cables by the US embassy in Athens from 2006 onwards (as publicised in 2011 by the whistle-blowing website WikiLeaks), US officials have been concerned with what they have perceived as the ease with which judicial authorities in Greece have granted early release to political prisoners on health grounds. Nevertheless, as they themselves have also acknowledged, Xiros '[was] denied conditional release [sic] on health grounds despite his suffering from serious health problems' (*Ta Nea*, 20 June 2011). More recently, in June 2011, Xiros had a very similar application for temporary suspension of his custodial sentence rejected by the same court (*Athens News*, 7 June 2011).
12. Data for the period 1980–2000 are drawn from Themeli (2006a), and for the period 2000–2005 from statements by ministerial officials reported on *in.gr* (15 November 2007). Unfortunately, it is not known whether the figures include female, juvenile and ethnic minority prisoners.
13. Estimates published in an authoritative centrist newspaper in 2009 put the annual death toll at a minimum of 200 prisoners, at least half of whom died as a result of drug overdose (*To Vima*, 29 March 2009).
14. It should be noted, however, that media reporting on prisoner deaths tends to focus on cases where the deceased had achieved fame (as with prisoner activist Katerina Goulioni, found dead on board a boat during a disciplinary prison transfer in March 2009; see, further, *Eleftherotypia*, 14 April 2009), where the context involves disorder and violence (as with large-scale prison riots, even if death is not violent itself; see, for example, Nikolaidis, 2006) and where the nature of death evokes horror (as with the four prisoners who were burnt alive in their cell in the male prison of Korydallos in April 2006; see, further, *Eleftherotypia*, 3 May 2008).
15. At least as concerns suicides, Themeli (2006b: 191) clarifies that the data refer only to adult male prisoners. The only women's prison in the country at the time and young offender institutions were not studied owing to 'the difficulty of finding official written evidence, and the high degree of unreliability of what evidence there was' (Themeli, 2006b: 191).
16. It is unclear whether women, juveniles and ethnic minorities are included in the data.
17. Meanwhile, the prevalence of tobacco smoking amongst prisoners in Greece is striking, far in excess of the general population of the country (which itself ranks first in terms of prevalence of tobacco smoking in Europe). Although this is not necessarily the outcome of placement behind bars, smoking does appear to increase substantially during incarceration (see, further, Papadodima et al., 2010). There is also some evidence to suggest that the majority of prisoners in Greece do not engage in physical exercise, even though they recognize its potential benefits (see, further, Konstantinakos et al., 2010).
18. Although (or, perhaps, because) ineffective, degrading strip searches and checks of bodily orifices upon reception or return from temporary release may also be said to primarily serve a punitive function (see, further, CPT, 2010). Equally punitive appears to be the lack of intervention to reduce drug abuse and associated problems.
19. For similar cases more recently, see *Ethnos* (1 June 2011) and *Proto Thema* (8 August 2011).
20. The first signs are not encouraging. As recently as May 2011, commenting on the reports of the CPT on Greek prisons, Marinos Skandamis, Special Secretary of the Ministry of Justice, Transparency and Human Rights, strangely claimed that prison overcrowding rates were 'much higher' in 26 other countries around Europe, whilst Spyros Karakitsos, Secretary General of the Greek Federation of Correctional Personnel Unions, accused the CPT of 'propaganda' against Greece (EPSU and OSYE, 2011: 14, 10).

21. The Greek state also recently paid €1.38 million towards the renovation and conversion into a museum of the Nebojsa Tower in Belgrade, which is where Rigas Velestinlis or Ferraios, hero of the struggle for Greek independence, was imprisoned and put to death by Ottoman Turkish authorities in 1798 (*Athens News*, 28 April 2011).
22. A pro-prisoner activist group has also drawn attention to reductions over recent months in the provision of food and the use of heating in Greek prisons, as well as the increased resort to cheaper drug substitutes for prisoners, as developments reflective of cost-cutting measures (*Protovoulia gia ta Dikaiomata ton Kratoumenon*, 13 September 2011). In addition to financial imperatives, legitimization for such measures stems from the principle of ‘less eligibility’ for prisoners in relation to the population at large, especially given the fact that non-Greeks are overrepresented within the prison population of the country, but also in light of the current context of deep spending cuts to medical care for ordinary citizens and declining levels of public health (see, further, Kentikelenis et al., 2011).
23. Meanwhile, for over 20 years now, according to media revelations that have been subsequently discussed in the Greek parliament and have caused interventions by national prosecutorial authorities, private companies have been hired by the German state to operate ‘closed reformatory institutions’ for its own juvenile offenders or children ‘at risk’ (aged between 13 and 18) in isolated locales in the county of Evros in northern Greece. Conditions of detainment in those facilities are reportedly ‘medieval’, and the Greek state has allegedly never authorized their existence (see, further, *Eleftherotypia*, 31 July 2011).
24. Whilst this article was at the proofing stage, a law was drafted with the proclaimed aspiration of ‘decriminalising’ drug use and thereby helping lessen the use of imprisonment in Greece. Unfortunately, however, the lawmakers resisted taking the step of specifying what level of drug possession should be deemed illegal, instead leaving the matter entirely to the discretion of judges. Moreover, the presentation of this draft law has coincided with retrogressive measures to significantly reduce state funding to the country’s core drug rehabilitation agencies (see, for example, *Eleftherotypia*, 8 September 2011). In any case, there is no guarantee that any reduction in the number of drug offenders in Greek prisons would actually bring about a reduction in the use of imprisonment as such.

References

- Aebi MF and Delgrande N (2010) *Council of Europe Annual Penal Statistics, SPACE I: Survey 2008*. Strasbourg: Council of Europe.
- Alevizopoulos G, Skondras M and Papadourakis A (2007) Greece. In: Salize H-J, Dressing H and Kief C (eds) *Mentally Disordered Persons in European Prison Systems – Needs, Programmes and Outcome (EUPRIS), Final Report*. Mannheim: Central Institute of Mental Health, 161–166.
- Aloskofis W (2005) *Social and Penal Situation of Prisoners in the Judicial Prison of Korydallos: Differences between Natives and Foreigners*. Report submitted to the Ministry of Justice [in Greek].
- Anogeianaki A, Anogianakis G, Ilonidis G and Milliaras S (2004) The Korydallos, Greece, prisons telemedicine experience: Why technology alone is not a sufficient condition. In: Westwood JD, Randy S, Haluck MD, Hoffman HM, Mogel GT, Phillips R and Robb RA (eds) *Medicine Meets Virtual Reality 12: Building a Better You: The Next Tools for Medical Education, Diagnosis, and Care*. Amsterdam: IOS Press, 16–18.
- Anogianakis G, Ilonidis G, Milliaras S, Anogeianaki A and Vlachakis-Milliaras E (2003) Developing prison telemedicine systems: The Greek experience. *Journal of Telemedicine and Telecare* 9(2): 4–7.
- Apogevmatini* (26 June 2010) Sex, drugs and . . . ‘certificates of forgiveness’ in Greek prisons [in Greek].

- Athens News* (28 April 2011) Papoulias to Open Nebojsa Tower.
- Athens News* (7 June 2011) Court denies terrorist's release for treatment.
- Atsalaki A (2005) The restructuring of identity under conditions of imprisonment and social exclusion: A study of women in a prison, a hostel for abused women, and a female immigrant detention centre. Unpublished postdoctoral dissertation, Panteion University, Athens [in Greek].
- Blaauw E, Roesch E and Kerkhof A (2000) Mental disorders in European prison systems: Arrangements for mentally disordered prisoners in the prison systems of 13 European countries. *International Journal of Law and Psychiatry* 23(5–6): 649–663.
- Cassese A (1996) *Inhuman States: Imprisonment, Detention and Torture in Europe Today*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Chatziarsenis M, Miyakis S, Faresjo T, Trelle E, Vlachonikolis J and Lionis C (1999) Is there room for general practice in penitentiary institutions? Screening and vaccinating high-risk groups against hepatitis. *Family Practice* 16(4): 366–368.
- Cheliotis LK (2009) The 2008 hunger strikes in Greek prisons and their aftermath. *Lo squaderno* 14: 29–34.
- Cheliotis LK (2010) Greece. In: Padfield N, van Zyl Smit D and Dünkel F (eds) *Release from Prison: European Policy and Practice*. Cullompton: Willan Publishing, 213–236.
- Cheliotis LK (2011) Prisons and parole. In: Cheliotis LK and Xenakis S (eds) *Crime and Punishment in Contemporary Greece: International Comparative Perspectives*. Oxford: Peter Lang AG, 557–591.
- Cheliotis LK and Xenakis S (2010) What's neoliberalism got to do with it? Towards a political economy of punishment in Greece. *Criminology & Criminal Justice* 10(4): 353–373.
- Cheliotis LK and Xenakis S (2011) Crime, fear of crime and punitiveness. In: Cheliotis LK and Xenakis S (eds) *Crime and Punishment in Contemporary Greece: International Comparative Perspectives*. Oxford: Peter Lang AG, 1–43.
- Cheliotis LK and Xenakis S (forthcoming) Matter out of place: Immigration detention in Greece. *European Journal of Criminology* 9(6).
- CPT [European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment] (2008) *Report to the Government of Greece on the Visit to Greece Carried Out by the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment of Punishment (CPT) from 20 to 27 February 2007*. Strasbourg: Council of Europe, 8 February.
- CPT (2010) *Report to the Government of Greece on the Visit to Greece Carried Out by the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment of Punishment (CPT) from 17 to 29 September 2009*. Strasbourg: Council of Europe, 17 November.
- CPT (2011) *Public Statement Concerning Greece*. Strasbourg: Council of Europe, 15 March.
- Dandoulaki M (2008) The psychology of prisoners: The case of the prison of Nea Alikarnassos. Unpublished BA dissertation, Technological Educational Institution of Crete, Iraklio [in Greek].
- Davaki K and Mossialos E (2006) Financing and delivering health care. In: Petmesidou M and Mossialos E (eds) *Social Policy Developments in Greece*. Aldershot: Ashgate, 286–318.
- Demeli P-T (2010) Mothers under confinement: Maternal reflections in a Greek prison for women. *Journal of Mediterranean Studies* 18(2): 341–360.
- Dimopoulos C (1998) *The Crisis of the Prison Institution and Non-Custodial Sanctions*. Athens-Komotini: Ant. N. Sakkoulas Publishers [in Greek].
- Dressing H and Salize H-J (2009) Pathways to psychiatric care in European prison systems. *Behavioral Sciences & the Law* 27(5): 801–810.
- Dünkel F (2007) The forgotten minority: Women in prison in Europe – Conditions of prison life, treatment and rehabilitation needs and programmes ('good practices'). Paper presented at

- the 14th Conference of Directors of Prison Administration (CDAP), Vienna, Austria, 19–21 November.
- Duthé G, Hazard A, Kensey A and Pan Ké Shon J-L (2009) Suicide in prison: A comparison between France and its European neighbours. *Population & Societies* 462(December): 2–4.
- Eleftherotypia* (29 April 2006) ‘Every death is a death at the hands of the state’ [in Greek].
- Eleftherotypia* (16 November 2007) 377 Deaths in the prison cell [in Greek].
- Eleftherotypia* (3 May 2008) The modern hellholes [in Greek].
- Eleftherotypia* (4 December 2008) I was in prison [in Greek].
- Eleftherotypia* (10 April 2009) Dendias: ‘The project of releases failed’ [in Greek].
- Eleftherotypia* (14 April 2009) Official inquiry into the death of Katerina Goulioni [in Greek].
- Eleftherotypia* (17 July 2009) Exposing findings for Kyriakakis and the chief warden [in Greek].
- Eleftherotypia* (29 November 2010) Measures for the health of prisoners under the fear of rioting [in Greek].
- Eleftherotypia* (31 July 2011) Reformatory institutions out of control [in Greek].
- Eleftherotypia* (8 September 2011) Decriminalisation through Themis [in Greek].
- Eleftherotypia* (14 September 2011) Strike activities by prison officers in Chania [in Greek].
- EMCDDA [European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction] (2010a) *2010 Annual Report on the State of the Drugs Problem in Europe*. Lisbon: EMCDDA. URL (accessed 25 August 2011): <http://www.emcdda.europa.eu/publications/annual-report/2010>.
- EMCDDA (2010b) *Statistical Bulletin 2010*. URL (accessed 25 August 2011): <http://www.emcdda.europa.eu/stats10>.
- Ethnos* (19 October 2009) They condemn conditions of life in prison [in Greek].
- Ethnos* (28 February 2011) Aid to destitute prisoners [in Greek].
- Ethnos* (1 June 2011) For a prisoner’s death: Sentence of fine on . . . a prison [in Greek].
- European Federation of Public Service Unions (EPSU) and Federation of Correctional Personnel Unions in Greece (OSYE) (2011) *Minutes of the European Prison Service Conference ‘Trade Unions Working for Better Prison Services in Europe’, 11–13 May 2011, Athens, Greece*.
- Evans MD and Morgan R (1998) *Preventing Torture: A Study of the European Convention for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment of Punishment*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Fazel S and Baillargeon J (2010) The health of prisoners. *Lancet* 377: 956–965.
- Fotiadou M, Livaditis M, Manou I, Kaniotou E and Xenitidis K (2006) Prevalence of mental disorders and deliberate self-harm in Greek male prisoners. *International Journal of Law and Psychiatry* 29(1): 68–73.
- Galanou MA (2011) The quality of detainment conditions in Greek prisons: Pertinent legislative precedents of Strasbourg relating to the interpretation of ECHR. *Poiniki Dikaiosyni* 2: 221–235 [in Greek].
- Gerouki A (2002) *Ethno-cultural Conflicts in Prison: The Case of the Judicial Prison of Thessaloniki (Diavata)*. Athens: Ant. N. Sakkoulas Publishers [in Greek].
- Government of Greece (2010) *Response of the Government of Greece to the Report of the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CPT) on its Visit to Greece from 17 to 29 September 2009*. Strasbourg: Council of Europe (17 November).
- in.gr* (10 October 2006) Savvas Xiros’ application for five-month release on health grounds was rejected [in Greek].
- in.gr* (15 November 2007) Death rates in Greek prisons are falling, according to the Ministry of Justice [in Greek].
- Karydis V (2011) Immigration and crime. In: Cheliotis LK and Xenakis S (eds) *Crime and Punishment in Contemporary Greece: International Comparative Perspectives*. Oxford: Peter Lang AG, 87–109.

- Karydis V and Fytrakis E (2011) *Penal Detention and Rights: The Ombudsman's Perspective*. Athens: Nomiki Vivliothiki [in Greek].
- Kentikelenis A, Karanikolos M, Papanicolas I, Basu S, McKee M and Stuckler D (2011) Health Effects of Financial Crisis: Omens of a Greek Tragedy. *Lancet*. Early online publication: [http://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736\(11\)61556-0/fulltext](http://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736(11)61556-0/fulltext) (accessed 18 October 2011).
- Kestermann C (2005) Training curriculum for women's prisons: Health issues. In: Dünkel F, Kestermann C and Zolondek J (eds) *International Study on Women's Imprisonment: Current Situation, Demand Analysis and 'Best Practice'*. Greifswald: Department of Criminology, University of Greifswald, 19–39.
- King RD (2011) Commentary: Prisons and parole in Greece: A familiar story. In: Cheliotis LK and Xenakis S (eds) *Crime and Punishment in Contemporary Greece: International Comparative Perspectives*. Oxford: Peter Lang AG, 593–605.
- Konstantinakis P, Skordilis M, Tripolitsioti A and Papadopoulos A (2010) Validity and reliability evidence of attitudes towards physical activity of Greek prisoners. *Biology of Exercise* 6(2): 39–48.
- Koulierakis G (2006) Drug use and related precautions prior to imprisonment, inside prison and intentions after release among Greek inmates. *Addiction Research and Theory* 14(3): 217–233.
- Koulierakis G, Agrafiotis D, Gnardellis C and Power KG (1999) Injecting drug use amongst inmates in Greek prisons. *Addiction Research and Theory* 7(3): 193–212.
- Koulierakis G, Gnardellis C, Agrafiotis D and Power KG (2000) HIV risk behaviour correlates among injecting drug users in Greek prisons. *Addiction* 95(8): 1207–1233.
- Koulierakis G, Power KG, Gnardellis C and Agrafiotis D (2003) HIV/AIDS-related knowledge of inmates in Greek prisons. *Addiction Research and Theory* 11(2): 103–118.
- Koulouris N (2009) *Surveillance and Penal Justice: Alternative Sanctions and the Spread of the Prison*. Athens: Nomiki Vivliothiki [in Greek].
- Lambropoulou E (2008) Correctional policy in Greece: Law in action. In: Tak P and Jendly M (eds) *Prison Policy and Prisoners' Rights*. Nijmegen: Wolf Legal Publishers, 391–406.
- Lekka NP, Argyriou AA and Beratis S (2006) Suicidal ideation in prisoners: Risk factors and relevance to suicidal behaviour: A prospective case-control study. *European Archives of Psychiatry and Clinical Neuroscience* 256: 87–92.
- Lekka NP, Paschalis C, Papadourakis A and Beratis S (2003) Characteristics of inmates receiving prescribed benzodiazepines in a high-security Greek prison. *Comprehensive Psychiatry* 44(5): 409–414.
- Liebling A, Crewe B and Hulley S (forthcoming) Values and practices in public and private sector prisons: A summary of key findings from an evaluation. *Prison Service Journal*.
- Livaditis M, Fotiadou M, Kouloubardou F, Samakouri M, Tripsianis G and Gizari F (2000) Greek adolescents in custody: Psychological morbidity, family characteristics and minority groups. *Journal of Forensic Psychiatry* 11(3): 597–607.
- Malliori M, Sypsa V, Psychogiou M, Touloumi G, Skoutelis A, Tassopoulos N, Hatzakis A and Stefanis C (1998) A survey of blood-borne viruses and associated risk behaviours in Greek prisons. *Addiction* 93(2): 243–251.
- Maniadaki K and Kakouris E (2008) Social and mental health profiles of young male offenders in detention in Greece. *Criminal Behaviour and Mental Health* 18(4): 207–215.
- Mavris M (2003) *The Panopticon of Time: Management of Time in Conditions of Long-term Deprivation of Liberty*. Athens: Typothito [in Greek].
- Ministry of Justice (2010) New prisons programme. Press Release, 14 June [in Greek].
- Mousouli M (2002) The psychological impact of imprisonment on inmate mothers in Greece: An exploratory study. Unpublished Masters dissertation, University of Kent, Canterbury.

- MSF [Médecins Sans Frontières] (2010) *Migrants in Detention: Lives on Hold – Greece June 2010*. Athens: MSF.
- NSSG [National Statistical Service of Greece] (n.d.) Deaths: Absolute numbers and rates (years 1932–2009) [in Greek]. URL (accessed 25 August 2011): http://www.statistics.gr/portal/page/portal/ESYE/PAGE-themes?p_param=A1605&r_param=SPO09&y_param=2009_00&mytabs=0.
- Nikolaidis A (2006) Mass media and prison: The case of revolt in the prison of Korydallos in November 1995. In: Koukoutsaki A (ed.) *Images of Prison*. Athens: Patakis Publications, 261–303 [in Greek].
- Nikoloutsopoulos C (2008) *The Two Days That Shook My World: Prison Notes*. Athens: Stratis [in Greek].
- OSYE [Greek Federation of Correctional Personnel Unions] (2011) Press release, 3 May [in Greek]. URL (accessed 25 August 2011): http://www.osye.org.gr/arxeiadb/deltiotypoy_osye_epsu_pdf_3e1eb1835ef5d88748be686e464c4bd1.pdf.
- Panousis G (2008) Central Scientific Board of Prisons: A first account (1996–2002). In: Vidali S and Zagoura P (eds) *Counselling and Prison*. Athens-Komotini: Ant. N. Sakkoulas Publishers, 121–140 [in Greek].
- Papadodima SA, Sakelliadis EI, Sergeantanis TN, Giotakos O, Sergeantanis IN and Spiliopoulou CA (2010) Smoking in prison: A hierarchical approach at the crossroad of personality and childhood events. *European Journal of Public Health* 20(4): 470–474.
- Paton J and Jenkins R (2005) Suicide and suicide attempts in prisons. In: Hawton K (ed.) *Prevention and Treatment of Suicidal Behaviour: From Science to Practice*. New York: Oxford University Press, 307–334.
- Patouris N (1979) Prisoners' rights in Greece: A comparative analysis of the Greek Code of Corrections and the Council of Europe standards. *Journal of the Hellenic Diaspora* 6(3): 17–63.
- Proto Thema* (27 April 2011) Complaints by staff: They pack them like sardines in the prison of Nafplio [in Greek].
- Proto Thema* (8 August 2011) Compensation for the death of female prisoner from drug use [in Greek].
- Protovoulia gia ta Dikaiomata ton Kratoumenon* (2011) Little food, minimal heating, inadequate medication. Press Release, 13 September [in Greek]. URL (accessed 15 September 2011): <http://www.keli.gr/2011/09/blog-post.html>.
- Roussos C (1991) *With a View to Being Corrected: From the Naval Prison to Release, 1976–1990*. Athens: Ekdoseis tou Eikostou Protou [in Greek].
- Sakelliadis EI, Papadodima S, Leon G and Spiliopoulou C (2008) Medical practice in Greek prisons: Ethical and legal aspects. *Archives of Hellenic Medicine* 25(5): 566–576 [in Greek].
- Sakelliadis EI, Papadodima SA, Sergeantanis TN, Giotakos O and Spiliopoulou CA (2010) Self-injurious behaviour among Greek prisoners: Prevalence and risk factors. *European Psychiatry* 25(3): 151–158.
- Salize H-J, Dressing H and Kief C (eds) (2007) *Mentally Disordered Persons in European Prison Systems – Needs, Programmes and Outcome (EUPRIS), Final Report*. Mannheim: Central Institute of Mental Health.
- Samaras K (1999) *Wanted*. Athens: Oxy [in Greek].
- Spinellis CD (2003) Detention facilities in the Greece of 2002. In: Manganas A (ed.) *Essays in Honour of Alice Yotopoulos-Marangopoulos: Human Rights, Crime, Criminal Policy*. Athens/Brussels: Nomiki Vivliothiki/Bruylant, 1243–1271 [in Greek].
- Spinellis CD and Themeli O (1997) Suicide in Greek prisons: 1977 to 1996. *Crisis* 18(4): 152–156.
- Ta Nea* (20 June 2011) American worries about releases of terrorists [in Greek].

- Themeli O (2006a) Suicide in the Greek penal system and the problem of various limitations in relevant studies. *Crisis* 27(3): 135–139.
- Themeli O (2006b) Gender issues and considerations for preventing self-harm in women's prisons. In: Dear GE (ed.) *Preventing Suicide and Other Self-Harm in Prison*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 187–194.
- To Vima (29 March 2009) The state to pay for a prisoner's death [in Greek].
- To Vima (20 December 2010) To the Prosecutor 68 individuals for corruption [in Greek].
- To Vima (16 March 2011) Albania: Construction of a prison with Greek money [in Greek].
- United Nations (2010) Press statement: UN Special Rapporteur on Torture presents preliminary findings on his mission to Greece, 20 October. URL (accessed 25 August 2011): http://www2.ohchr.org/english/issues/torture/rapporteur/docs/PressStatement20102010_en.doc.
- US Department of State (2011) *2010 Human Rights Report: Greece*. URL (accessed 25 August 2011): <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/160191.pdf>.
- Van Dijk V (2008) *The World of Crime: Breaking the Silence on Problems of Security, Justice, and Development Across the World*. Los Angeles: Sage Publications.
- Xiros S (2009) *Ex Ypogyiou: Mass Supply of Substances in Greek Prisons, Biochemical Repression in Special Courts and Solitary Confinement, and the Latent Conditions of Detainment*. Athens: Alicia Romero [in Greek].
- Zurhold H, Haasen C and Stöver H (2005) *Female Drug Users in European Prisons: A European Study of Prison Policies, Prison Drug Services and the Women's Perspectives*. Oldenburg: BIS-Verlag.