



## **EDUCATIONAL POLICY-MAKING, ADMINISTRATION AND MANAGEMENT**

The Greek education system remains predominantly a centralised one, in spite of considerable decentralisation that has been realised in recent years. For example, the Ministry of Education (MoE) is the main centre for decision-making and the formulation of educational policies. Moreover, the majority of the educational establishments in Greece (and of Greek schools abroad) are controlled by this Ministry. Therefore, it is appropriate to start the discussion with the responsibilities of the MoE.

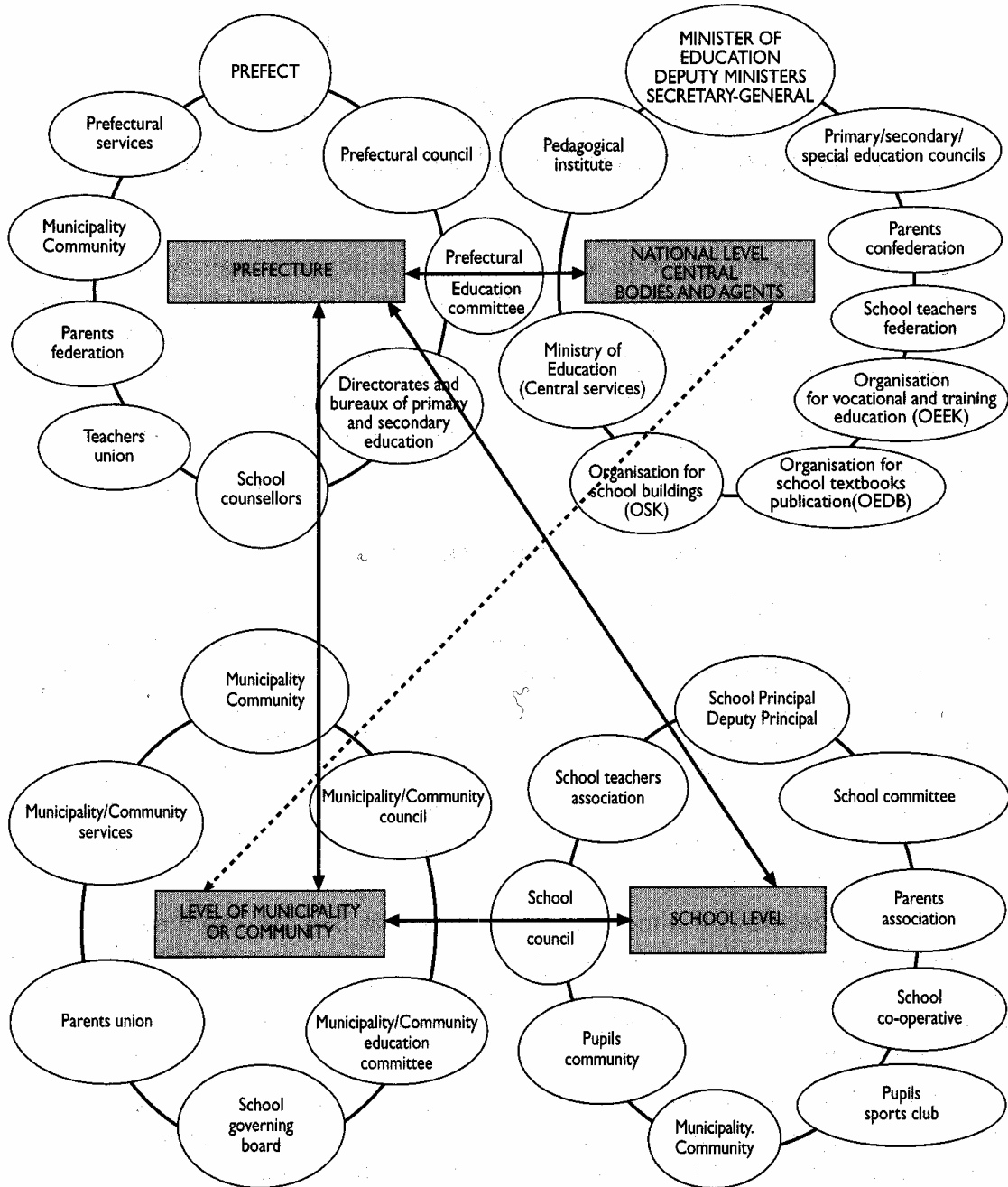
### **THE ROLE OF THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION (MoE)**

Basically, the MoE formulates educational policies according to the political orientation of the country's administration. These policies generate draft-laws that are submitted to Parliament for debate, after which – with occasional amendments – they become laws (decrees). The MoE is then responsible for their implementation and puts them into action through decrees, directives, and circulars addressed to the regional and local educational authorities, to the legal entities of public law or the civil entities that the MoE supervises. The MoE follows up the implementation of these laws and intervenes if necessary, to adjust or correct their implementation.

The MoE decides on almost all the issues that concern teaching, personnel administration, expenditure, school operation, etc. It is also responsible for the drafting and managing the two annual education budgets (current and capital), apart from the Prefecture budgets (comprising also education sections), which are drawn-up by the Prefectures themselves.

The MoE is headed by the Minister of Education, who is assisted by a Deputy Minister, a junior Minister and a Secretary General. There are also five General Directors and two Special Secretaries for certain groups of directorates with similar areas of competence (see Figure 1.5). In January 1995, the MoE headquarters comprised of 34 directorates (with 113 sections) which is a slight increase to the 1987 figure of 30 directorates (and 110 sections). This increase was mainly due to

◆ Figure 1.1. **Authorities and bodies responsible for the administration and planning of primary and secondary education by administrative level**



Source: Ministry of Education.

structural changes within the MoE.<sup>1</sup> Nevertheless, the existence of many small divisions within the MoE (directly related to the staff salary scale in co-ordination with promotion levels) leaves much room for improvement and it is hoped, that the new organisation chart (see Figure 1.4) will prove more efficient and balanced. In some of the versions of the proposed organisation, a Directorate for Educational Planning is included (which comprises divisions responsible for education and labour market, planning of tertiary education, etc.). The operation of such a directorate will contribute considerably to the co-ordination and achievement of educational goals and objectives. It must be noted that such a Planning Operation Unit had been discussed in 1984, when an especially constructive collaboration with the International Institute of Educational Planning began.

The Minister of Education relies on the Central Service of the Ministry for the necessary administrative support in formulating educational policies and for supervising the implementation of these policies. In these tasks, the Minister is also assisted by the bodies and agencies described in the following section.

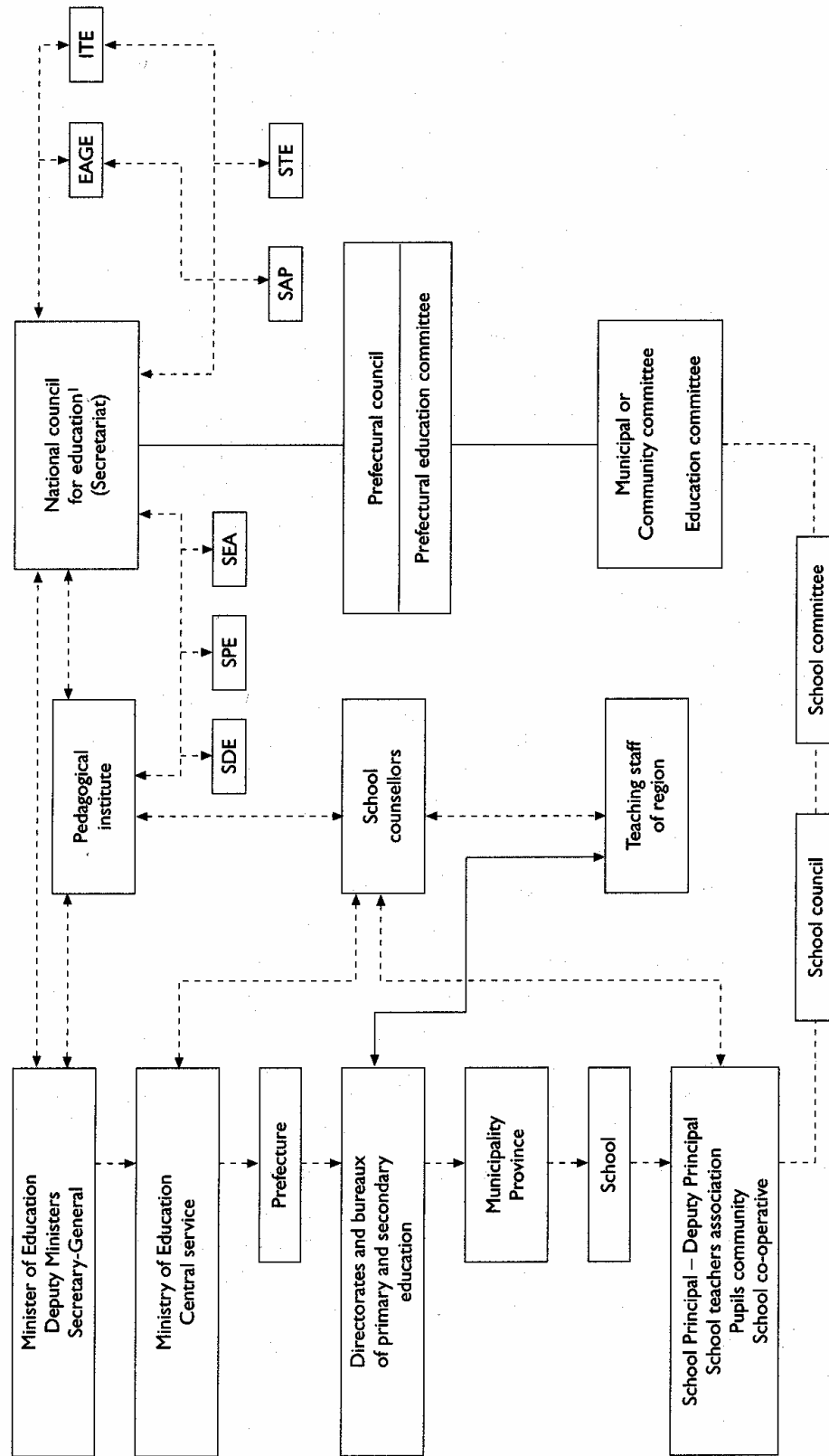
## **BODIES AND AGENCIES**

The following councils function at the national level: the Council for University Education (SAP); the Council for Technological Education (STE) – acting for higher education, non-university, technological institutions (*i.e.* the TEIs); and the Central Council for Secondary Education (KYSDE) and the Central Council for Primary Education (KYSPE) – acting for the respective education levels. Their structural relations are shown in Figure 1.2.

The Minister of Education, Mr. G. Papandreou, has recently introduced a law establishing a National Council for Education (ESYP), which was introduced during the 1981-86 educational reform measures. It consists of a President (proposed by the Minister and endorsed by a parliamentary committee) and representatives from: other Ministries; representatives from various professional groups; all university rectors and TEI Presidents; the Pedagogical Institute; the political parties; the Orthodox Church; the National Federation of Local Government; teaching and research staff in higher education; the Confederation of Parents; the National Students Union; the Federations of Primary and Secondary School Teachers; and the Confederations of Greek Industries. Given the turbulence characteristic of educational developments in Greece, where changes in educational policy are dependent on governmental changes, as well as successions of Ministers of Education within the same party, it is apparent that the operation of such a National Council may contribute considerably towards a national consensus for consistency in educational developments.

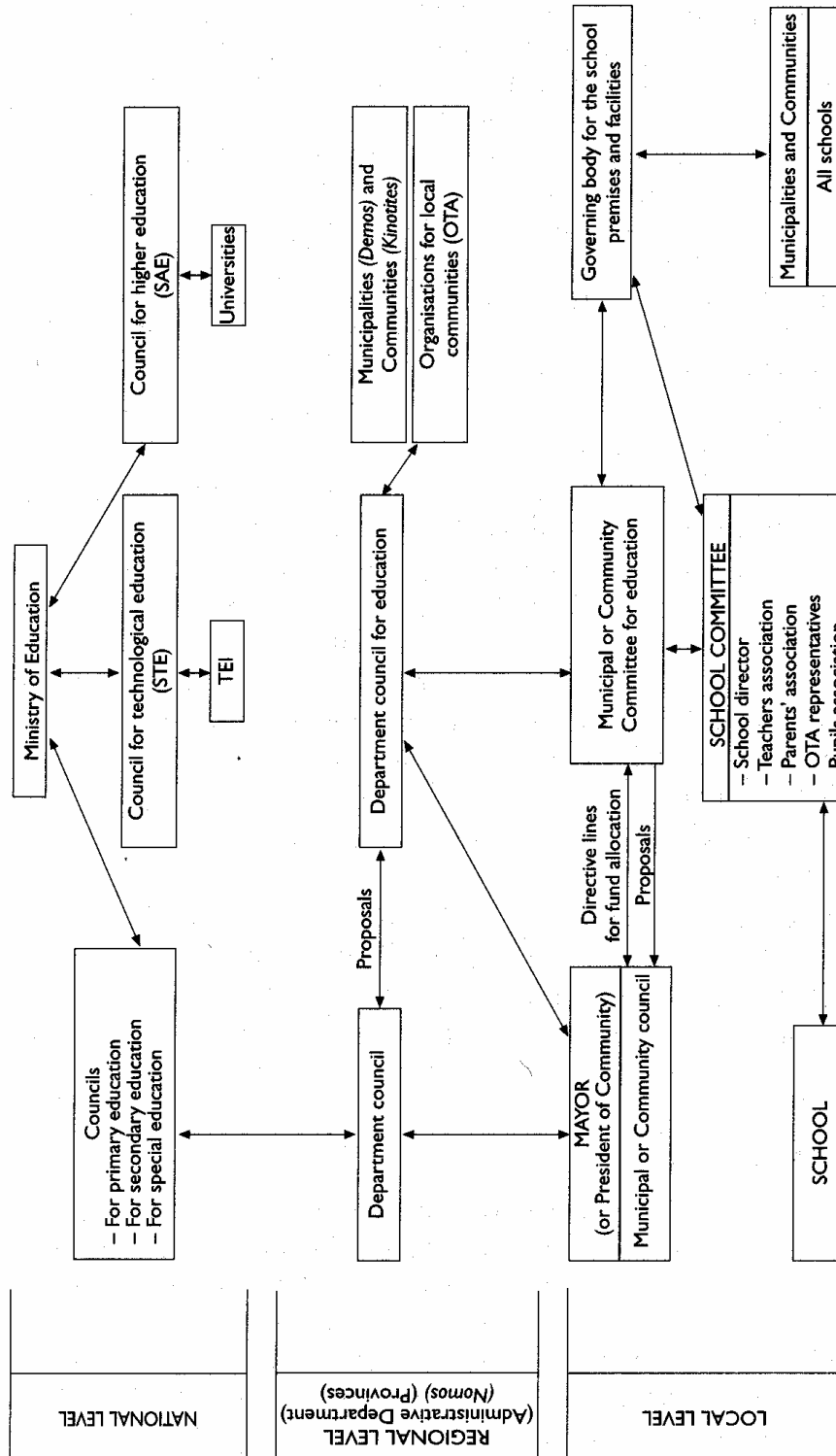
Until very recently, at national level of operation (see Figure 1.2), there were two major institutes that were directly controlled by the MoE, but at the same time,

◆ Figure 1.2. **Diagram of the operational structure of education**



1. Not yet in operation.  
Source: Ministry of Education.

◆ Figure 1.3. Structure of collective bodies involved in the process of the democratic planning of education



Source: Ministry of Education.

they were independent of the Ministry's Central Service (see Figure 1.2). These are, the Pedagogical Institute (PI) and the Institute for Technological Education (ITE). The former is responsible for research on issues related to primary and secondary education, proposals on the orientation, planning and programming of educational policy for primary and secondary education, the study and follow-up of educational technology and its implementation, and the planning and supervision of in-service teacher training. The ITE deals with similar fields concerning the structure and content of higher technological education. Other central agencies include: the State Scholarship Foundation (IKY) which administers scholarships to students, the Centre for the Recognition of Foreign Academic Degrees (DIKATSA), and the Service for the General State Records.

Besides the agencies mentioned above, there are also the following legal entities of public law (see Figure 1.1):

- the Organisation for School Buildings (OSK) concerned with the construction and equipment of school buildings (mainly for the greater Athens region);
- the Organisation for Publication of School Textbooks (OEDB), which is concerned with the publication of textbooks for primary and secondary education;
- the Organisation of Vocational Education and Training (OEEK) which is responsible for the implementation of the objectives of the National System for Vocational Education and Training (ESEEEK) and for the management of public and private IEKs.

Finally, special mention should be made of the Secretariats under the MoE. These include:

- The General Secretariat for Adult Education (responsible for literacy, some courses of vocational training, special programmes, etc.).
- The General Secretariat for Youth (responsible for various youth issues like social participation, leisure, alternative tourism, labour relations, ecology, etc.).

## **DECENTRALISATION**

A major role in the administration of Greek education is played by the Directorates of Education at the Prefecture (*Nomo*) level. There are 54 Directorates of Primary Education and 149 Local Bureaux, as well as 54 Directorates of Secondary Education (general, technical and vocational) along with their respective 65 Local Bureaux. The Senior Education Officials of these authorities are responsible for the administration and operation of the schools under their jurisdiction.

At the same time, the School Counsellors appointed by these authorities are responsible for providing guidance for teaching practises. They assess the

performance of teachers and arrange their further training, as well as encourage educational research. There are approximately 300 Counsellors for elementary education, 20 for pre-school education, 260 for secondary education and eight for special education.

In each Prefecture Council (since the 1981-86 educational reforms) there is a Prefecture Committee for Education, which consists of the Prefect (as Chairman), the School Counsellors, and representatives from the educational authorities of the Prefecture and the local authorities, etc. The Prefecture Committee submits its proposals to the Prefecture Council and the Prefect (*Nomarchis*). These proposals are based on the proposals of the municipal and community councils and are concerned with such issues as: merging of schools, distribution of capital to the Organisation of Local Authorities (OTA), repair and maintenance of school buildings, operation of schools, organisation of libraries, adult education, and in general, issues related to the operation of the Prefecture's public schools.

In every municipality (or community), a Municipal Education Committee (Figure 1.3) has been established (Reform Law 1566/85, paragraph 50) which comprises representatives from the local municipality, the Parents' Union, two Principals from primary and secondary education (respectively), the Teachers' Union, and the production sectors. This committee makes proposals to the local municipal authorities on: the better organisation and operation of primary and secondary schools; the distribution of capital for the school's operational expenditure; and the establishment, closing-down or merging of school units. This Committee is also responsible for the building of schools, the repair and maintenance of school buildings, and the operation the School Committees.

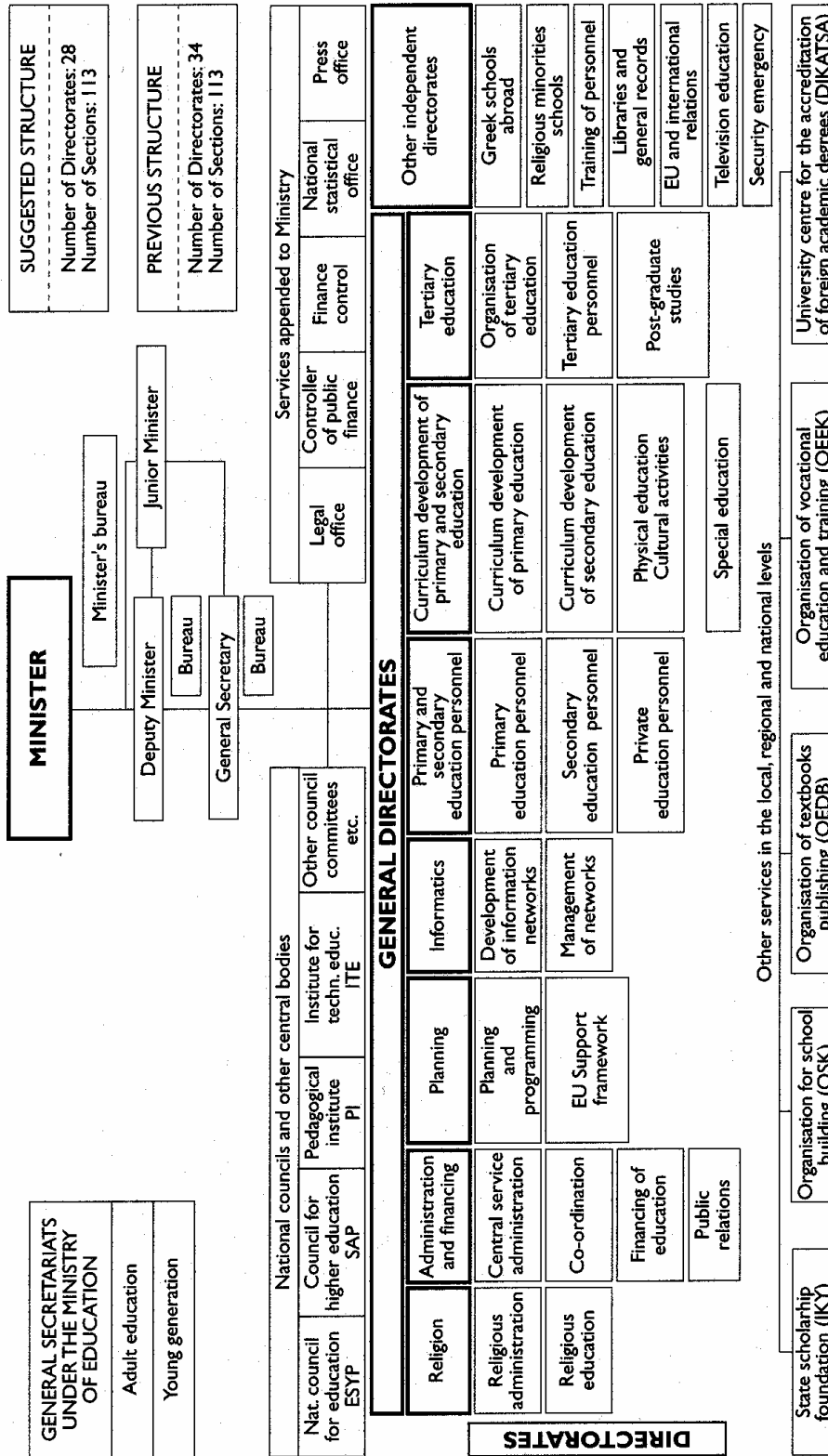
The proposals of this Municipal Education Committee are submitted to the Prefecture Council and are made known to the Prefecture Education Committee.

The same Law 1566/85 also allowed the establishment of a School Council and a School Committee in all public schools.

The School Council operates in every school and consists of: the Teachers' Association; the members of the Parents' Association Governing Board; and the local authorities representative in the School Committee. In the Secondary Education School Councils, representatives from the school community also participate. The Council's responsibility is the satisfactory operation of the school, the setting-up of communication between the teaching-staff and the pupils' families, and care for the health conditions of the school environment. The Council is chaired by the School Principal.

The School Committee, on the other hand, consists of representatives from the municipality, from the Parents' Association, from the Pupils' Communities (in the case of secondary education) and the School Principal. The Committee manages the operational expenditure, forwards other sources of financing to the appropriate

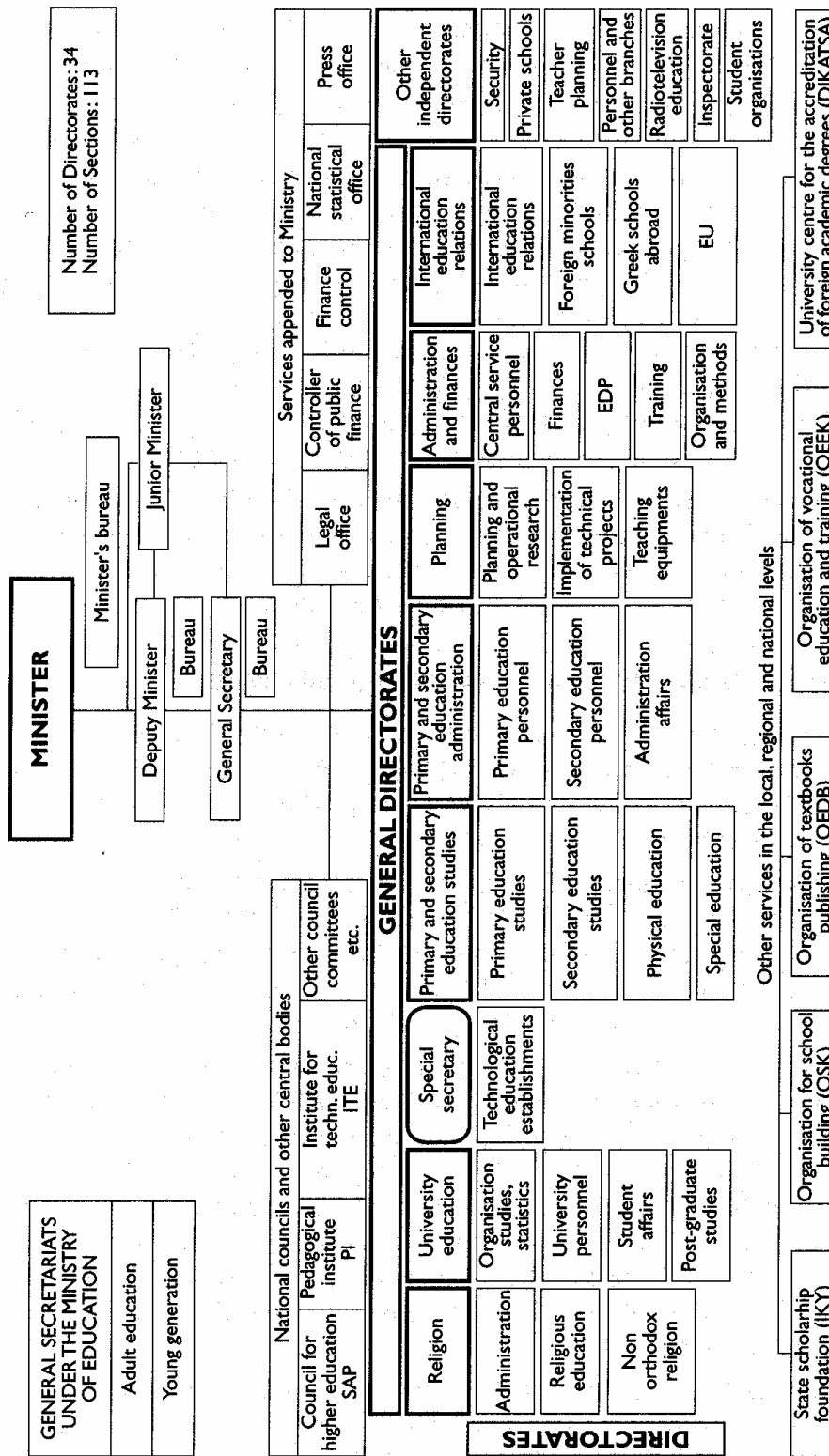
◆ Figure 1.4. Suggested structure for the central service of the Ministry of Education



Source: Ministry of Education.



◆ Figure 1.5. Existing structure of the central service of the Ministry of Education (January 1995)



Source: Ministry of Education.

authorities, commissions the management of the school canteen, and in general, is responsible for the necessary provisions for the school's operation.

A general conclusion concerning the above structure is that there are two lines of administration: one is strictly influenced by the MoE (Ministry – Directorate of Education at Prefecture Level – Local Bureau – School Principal), while the other is more mixed in its involvement (Prefecture/Municipal/School Committee, School Council, etc.). There is a certain division of responsibilities (e.g. the local authorities are more concerned with financial affairs, while educational matters are left to the educational authorities), which occasionally creates some overlapping of activities. Without wanting to oversimplify the situation (although the present level of efficiency of the "decentralised" services is far from the desired one), if one considers the deficiencies in staffing, lack of resources, lack of experience and the insufficient guidance from the MoE, the results, so far, are not negligible.

It is claimed (Soumelis, 1993) however, that such organisational problems are apparent in all EU educational systems in a transition phase from a centralised system to a decentralised one. Nevertheless, better co-ordination in the organisation of such matters as outlined above, is the aim for the future.

### **CENTRAL INFORMATION AND STATISTICS NETWORK**

In Greece, the official responsibility for the collection of statistical data lies with the National Statistical Service (ESYE). Thus, all educational data (excluding specialised surveys) refer to the above agency (which has a specific service located in the Central Service of the MoE).

However, due to lack of resources, this service has gradually fallen behind in the provision of data. The most recent edition, the "Statistics of Education 1984-85", lags ten years behind present realities, even though data is still collected annually! Such data is often available in computer printout sheets and included in international surveys (e.g. the UOC questionnaires).

The above situation was the main reason why the MoE developed its own statistical unit (the Operational Research and Statistics Section) which undertakes the collection of quantitative and qualitative information annually on all levels and categories of education. Nevertheless, due to either insufficient staffing and resources, or lack of proper co-ordination of activities within the MoE, other services have also conducted general or specialised data-collection surveys. This has created an extra work-load in the schools, as well as a host of over-lapping collections of data and waste of resources (human, financial, technical) through the duplication of tasks.

From research (Kafetzopoulos and Boutos, 1989) carried out on the kind of data collected annually from schools and local educational authorities, it was found that, for example, in the First Bureau of the Athens Primary Schools, at least twelve

surveys had reached them from various services (e.g. three to four from the MoE, the Athens Municipality, OSK, the National Statistical Service, etc.) and almost half of them were addressed individually to all schools of the area.

This problematic situation results in the parallel production of similar figures (about enrolments for instance) which must be used only in accordance with their date of collection, the exact variables they refer to, and their particular sources.

There is a general feeling that this unacceptable situation should be radically changed. Some efforts have been made towards a gradual merging of at least similar questions in common questionnaires, but none of them have been implemented due to the lack of co-ordination between services and agencies (not excluding those within the same administrative framework, like the MoE). The IIEP (International Institute for Educational Planning) experts who counselled the MoE on the creation of an integrated comprehensive and modern information base (Lourie, 1985) have recommended that the complete co-ordination of all statistical censuses and surveys on education be delegated to the MoE's Section on Operational Research, and that steps be taken towards the circulation of only one questionnaire for the annual collection of educational data.

Unfortunately, it is obvious that the above situation has deteriorated, rather than improved, with additional surveys from more services, and more students or researchers collecting figures for various reasons.

In conclusion, given on the one hand, the ever-increasing need for the Ministry to use statistical evidence to support policy decision, and on the other, the existing problematic situation in information gathering, it is imperative that steps are taken to create a modern, comprehensive and efficient information base, facilitated by new technologies which will provide both domestic and international users (e.g. EU, OECD, UNESCO) with relevant statistics and indicators. In this respect, discussions have already taken place between the MoE and ESYE for the formation of a Committee for the co-ordination of statistical information and questionnaires.

## **COLLABORATION WITH INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS**

Greece as an industrialised European country, is a member of all major organisations and consequently, the MoE has a long, and fairly successful participation in various programmes.

Starting with UNESCO, the MoE, through the Directorate for International Educational Relations, participates in the bi-annual conferences, as well as in the regular meetings.

The Ministry also participates (or appoints delegates) in various other programmes, e.g. CODIESE, Associated Schools, SEMET, Adult Education, CERES, etc. The MoE moreover, has established ties with the International Institute for Educa-

tional Planning (which operates under the auspices of UNESCO). Within the framework of this co-operation, the Ministry has conducted staff training and has participated in seminars (both in Paris and in Athens). Other activities have included: a meeting in 1985, in Athens, regarding the establishment of a modern Information and Statistics Network, and a visit of 60 international education officers to Greece (between April 1 to 10, 1987) who examined such aspects as education and employment, relations between the MoE and the regions in the planning of education, emergency planning and adult education (IIEP, 1987).

Regarding the OECD, the MoE participates in the Education Committee and in the Centre for Educational Research and Innovation (CERI), as well as in other programmes such as: INES (International Indicators of Education Systems), PEB (Programme on Educational Building), Standards for education, VOTEC (Vocational and Technical Education and Training). Within the Decentralised Programme for Educational Building a very successful seminar in Northern Greece (Chalkidiki 12-16 October, 1987) was organised on the management of school-time. Another seminar, on higher education infrastructure, took place in Crete in the autumn 1995.

Greece has also been a member of the Council of Europe since 1949. The MoE has permanent representatives in the Council for Cultural Co-operation and in the Education Committee. It also participates in some other sub-programmes, such as education and culture, education of minorities, anti-racial discrimination campaigns, patterns of orthodoxy, etc. The Council of Europe provides grants for studies in the Institute for the Aemos Peninsula Studies, etc. Moreover, the Ministry has received (for OSK) a loan of 31 billion drachmas for construction and repair of school buildings.

Last but not least, since Greece's regular membership in the European Union (1981), the MoE and its various sectors have been involved in a host of activities and programmes. The limits of this report do not allow us to describe all of these activities in detail, but it should suffice to mention that the MoE has representatives in all EU programmes and committees such as: the Education Committee, ERASMUS, TEMPUS, COMMETT, Lingua, EURYDICE, distance learning, environmental education, illiteracy, equal opportunities, etc., with successful and active participation.

It is also worth mentioning the inclusion of Greece in the Second Community Support Framework (Human Resources) and the involvement of the MoE along with the Ministry for Employment in the "Education and Initial Vocational Training" Programme aimed at financing the updating and introduction of innovations in Greek education and its administration (such as the further development of the Integrated Lyceum, the development of school and university libraries, education links with the labour market, the modernisation of the MoE Services, etc.).