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Parts of the World, European Union



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Current Issues in Greece Greece is a country with a very rich history of tradition, from the gods of ancient Greece, to the beautiful landscape in the Mediterranean, all the way to the development of Democracy. The Greek political system is similar to the United States but also different in many ways. The government type is a parliamentary representative democratic republic. The prime minister is the head of the government and the multi-party system. The party system is similar to the United States, there is a two party system. The two parties are the New Democracy and the Panhellenic social movement. The New Democracy is closely related to the American Republicans. The Panhellenic social movement is closer to the American Democrats. The Greek Government system also has an executive branch, legislative branch, and a judicial branch, but the judicial branch is much more separate. [1] The executive branch has a president which elects the cabinet with recommendations from the prime minister. The president has the power to declare war, to grant pardon, and to conclude agreements of peace. The prime minister is elected by the people and he or she is usually the leader of the party controlling the absolute majority of Parliament members. The prime minister safeguards the unity of the government and directs its activities. He or she is the most powerful person of the Greek political system. The legislative branch is very similar to the United States legislative, they make the laws, and there are 300 members. Everyone 18 or older can vote. There voting system is proportional so similar to the United States the winner of the popular vote may not win the elections. This gets rid of third parties because they essentially could never win a state which

means they cannot win the election. The judicial branch is divided into civil and administrative cases. Civil cases usually involve serious cases. Administrative cases are usually between a citizen and its state. [2] The old fashioned government that is still set in stone in Greece has led to tough economic times and many social issues amongst Greek society. Politics is important when it comes to the economy. Greece is absolutely having political problems and there political system is arguably the number one reason for the downfall of the economy. In an article written by Thanos Diminas about the politics of Greece, he says this about the economy " It's a crisis of political credibility, a crisis of political effectiveness, a crisis of breached confidence between people and politicians. Basically, it's a crisis endangering the stability of Greece's democracy. " [3] He then goes on to talk about many of the problems with the political system. He talks about how the government is being extremely stubborn. He argues that the political system is too old fashioned and there is no room for change. As countries like the United States start to innovate and move there economy in a positive direction Greece will already have lost. Another challenge that Diminas talks about is the idea that government is very biased. Consequently now many young and capable individuals are avoiding getting involved in the political system. Diminas then relates the Greek political system to a private club and that only elite people or people who have family involved in politics can get involved. " It is not a coincidence that for the last three decades, Greece has been governed by leaders who come from two or three political families. " Both of these reasons that Diminas mentions are very important if you cannot get the people that are qualified to feel

comfortable getting involved in politics you will not have the right people in charge to lead your country. As the old fashioned government continues to stay, the education system set in stone will not change. Education is the biggest part of developing a country and getting out of a debt crisis. Greece's bad education system has led to many economic problems. Greek higher educational reforms have started and are anticipated to help more and more students attend college. Right now Greek students have to take a test called the PanHellenic exam. This decides what college an individual can get into the score is out of 20, colleges do not look at your high school grades, extracurricular activities, a personal statement, or any form of essay. [4] This puts a lot of pressure on someone looking to pursue a college career. With all this being said many families will not have their kids take the risk of going to school. When they turn fifteen their parents will pull them out and have them work on the farms. The Greek educational system is highly centralized and it is run by the state. This makes it overwhelming for other universities or colleges to form because of how centralized the education system is. The only thing the state does not run is private universities. In the Greek constitution it says education is free so therefore the private educational systems are not recognized by the state. The Greek educational system also does not recognize bachelor degrees outside of Greece. This makes it hard for students who study abroad to come back to Greece with a great education and get a job. The educational system is very important to a countries standard of living. GDP may tell someone how well a country is doing economically but if a country does not have a strong educational system it is already failing. A country needs to set in stone a great

educational system so that can lead to brighter people influencing society and those people then direct the country in a path to success. In a country like Greece that is highly in debt they need to start fresh and begin to make several changes in their educational system and make it more popular amongst society. The bad education in Greece is clearly a direct result of tough economic times. The Greek economy has been falling for the last decade and in 2009 it completely crashed. From 2010-2011 the GDP fell from 4.9 percent to 7.1 percent.[5] GDP stands for gross domestic product which is one way to judge how well a country is doing economically. The unemployment rate of Greece has also risen. From 2008-2012 the unemployment rate rose from 7.1 percent to 24.4 percent. [6] When a person is unemployed they cannot create output for that economy which then creates an enormous cost for the economy and individual people. In result of the tough economic times in Greece this led to the bailout in 2009. The European Union is an economic and political organization of European countries. The EU bailed Greece out with a 163.4 billion dollar bailout to make sure the value of the euro did not fall. The money that was put into helping the Greek economy did not go to the public sector at all. It went to this group called the Troika. [7]The Troika is a term for the three organizations which have the most power over Greece's financial future that is set in stone within the European Union. The three groups are the European Commission (EC), the International Monetary Fund (IMF), and the European Central Bank (ECB). Each of these three parts of the organization is there to help Greece with the Bailout plan. The only way to help the economy is through two methods long term and short term. A book called " The Greek

Economy and the Crisis" by Panagiotas Petrakis said it perfectly " the main source of long run economic growth is exogenous, technological progress whereas the short term economic growth depends on a stocks capital, population growth, and the allocations of output among alternative uses". [8] This is just another way at looking how to better the economy for Greece. Greece needs to take short term strides and long term strides which eventually will lead to less social unrest. There have been two major social issues that have risen recently, both directly relate back to the economy doing poorly. The two most important issues are the suicide rate has risen and women are still searching for equality. George Barcouris is a man that wanted to kill himself as unemployment ratings went up. There was no hope for him to get a job; he started searching on the internet for an easy way to kill himself. Events like these are horrible for a society in that much debt, the hope in Greece is falling every day. " Last month the Greek Minister for Health, Andreas Loverdos, reported that suicides may have increased by as much as 40% in the first few months of 2011. " [9] Greece also used to have the lowest suicide rate in the European Union. For a country with a reputation of having very little suicides it's unfortunate to see how big of an impact the economy has had individuals in Greece. Another important social issue in Greece right now is women's rights. Women in Greece under the constitution are said to be equal to men but statistics have proven this is not the case. Women are said to have a lower status than men. In article on Tulane University website they said, " It has been reported that men earn higher wages than do women, where women have higher average years of schooling than men, and the average years of actual labor market

experience were equal between women and men. " [10] Female labor participation in Greece is also 49. 2 percent, in 2002 which is actually only about half of the European Union's average, which was 60. 8 percent. It is very evident that women are degraded and are not treated fairly. Women are just as smart if not smarter than men and should be given the equality that is stated in the constitution. If they did women could get more say, the government could here different opinions and ultimately more people would be educated to help get the country out of this terrible economic state.

Overall Greece is in a very difficult economic state. They have a government type to get out of this recession and many allies to help them they just need to handle some social and political issues. The old fashioned government that is set in stone is seriously leading to tough educational reforms, which is then leading to bad economic times, which is creating many social issues in Greece. When the government decides to innovate, they can fix their educational system, and influence more people out of this crisis. With more people getting jobs the social issues of suicide and women's rights will start to change and more and more people can live better off. Work Cited Page A Personal Crisis ." Pulitzer Center . (2012). <http://pulitzercenter.org/reporting/greece-education-reform-economy-unemployment-youth-university-admission-frontisteria> (accessed October 10, 2012). Angelos , Tzortzinis . " Greece." The New York Times . (2012). <http://topics.nytimes.com/top/news/international/countriesandterritories/greece/index.html> (accessed October 10, 2012). " Background: Greece ." U. S Department of State . (2012). <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/3395.htm> (accessed October 10, 2012). Chloe , Hadjimatheou. " Confronting suicide as Greek

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