
Social Entrepreneurship in Greece: Challenges and Prospects

SHORT BIOS

◆ **Maria Nefeli Chatzioannidou** is the youngest female member of the Hellenic Parliament and has specialised in social entrepreneurship and innovation for more than 12 years. She studied economics, finance and management at Bocconi University. She has a master's degree in social innovation and entrepreneurship in the UK and has completed the Cambridge University Executive Course Shaping the Future: Women Leading Change.

She co-founded her first social enterprise Code it Like a Girl at the age of 21 and she is the founder of the non-profit organisation, Great Women (Yperoxes Gynaikes), which has more than 200,000 members on its platforms.

She collaborates with organisations and businesses in Greece providing consulting services in matters of social responsibility, while at the same time she is a mentor in international and Greek entrepreneurship programmes.

She is Secretary of the Hellenic Parliament, Secretary of the Committee on Social Affairs, as well as a member of the Committee on Equality, Youth and Human Rights and the Subcommittee on Disability Issues.

She has been awarded the Greek International Women Award in the Social Responsibility category, the Study UK Alumni Award in Social Action and the EUCLID Network included her in the list of TOP 100 Women in Social Enterprises in Europe. In 2025, she was included in the European list of Friends of Europe as one of the 40 most powerful European Young Leaders.

She is 33 years old and has two daughters.

◆ **Stella Kasdagli** is a writer, an inclusion expert and the co-founder of WHEN, a non-profit organisation in Greece working for the economic development of women and for gender equality in the workplace. She is also the co-founder of inc.lude, a specialised agency offering consulting and training services that enable companies of any size and industry to enhance equity, diversity and inclusion in all aspects of their structure,

culture and public profile. Stella holds a Master of Arts in Media Cultures from the University of East London.

Stella is also a published author, a translator and the facilitator of impactful workshops on professional development, gender issues and social change. She previously studied French literature in Athens, Greece and Media Studies in London, and has worked for 10+ years as a women's magazine and online editor. She is an IVLP alumna and a 2023 Vital Voices Visionaries Fellow, and the recipient of the Study UK Alumni Award in Social Action. She has published ten books for the empowerment of girls, women and teens, and lives in Athens with her husband and two daughters.

◆ **Ifigeneia Alexandra Bakella** studied law and human rights at the University of Essex, where she also completed her master's degree in refugee care, focusing on the psychosocial approach to refugees and other vulnerable populations.

She has been actively involved in volunteering and human rights advocacy since the age of 15, which led her to establish her own organisation, Genesis Hellas, in 2018. The organisation focuses on combating poverty and supporting vulnerable populations, with a particular emphasis on the homeless in Athens. With a vision of improving society and creating positive change, she continues to work voluntarily to support vulnerable communities and to promote volunteering and empathy for all living beings while balancing work and raising her three-year-old son.

◆ **Dimitrios Chaidas** is a strategic communications expert and Founder and Managing Director of DevComm. He is an award-winning social entrepreneur committed to promoting sustainable development through strategic communications. With more than ten years of professional experience, Dimitrios has led large-scale communications projects in Europe and beyond. He has advised over ten European Union departments and agencies (including the European Commission's DG INTPA, DG ENEST, DG MENA and FPI) on engaging millions of EU citizens and stakeholders. Dimitrios has also collaborated with EU Delegations and five UN agencies (including FAO, UNDP and WHO) on EU-funded external actions.

In February 2024, Dimitrios was awarded the prestigious Study UK Alumni Award in Social Action by the British Council and the British Embassy in Athens, following the completion of his Vice-Presidency of the Board of Directors at the Onassis Scholars' Association.

Dimitrios is a graduate and fellow of the University of Oxford, the University of Edinburgh and the University of Athens.