

His Excellency Prokopios Pavlopoulos
President of the Hellenic Republic
Presidential Mansion
Vasileos Georgiou B 2
Athina 106 74
GREECE

11 October 2016

Dear Excellency,


We are writing on behalf of the American Statistical Association (ASA) to express our concern about the recent decision of the Greek Supreme Court to press charges against Andreas Georgiou, past president of ELSTAT. Based on information available to us, we have questions about the validity of the case against Mr. Georgiou. In particular, the European Commission's August 2016 Statement on Social Statistics and Statistical Data in Greece affirms Mr. Georgiou's analyses for the years 2010-2015. Furthermore, the European Commission's 2010 Report on Greek Government Deficit and Debt Statistics highlights discrepancies and misreporting in the 2009 statistics provided by the Greek authorities (prior to Mr. Georgiou's tenure).

These two pieces of information combined lead us to question why Mr. Georgiou, whose previous analyses have been evaluated positively, is being investigated for work that potentially corrected the 2009 deficit numbers. We are also concerned that the European Commission has not provided an evaluation of these revised 2009 numbers and have reached out to Mr. Juncker, Mr. Moscovici, and Ms. Thyssen with this question.

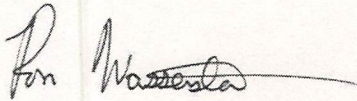
We echo the call of our esteemed colleagues in the Royal Statistical Society (RSS) that those working within the Greek statistical service must be able to perform their professional duties with integrity, and free of any political interference or pressure, real or implied. We oppose the persecution of official statisticians and hope you agree. Indeed, your own finance minister affirmed this view in his February 2015 letter to the Eurogroup where he outlined the Greek government's commitment to the institutional independence of ELSTAT.

We urge you to ensure that Mr. Georgiou is given not only a scrupulously fair hearing, but also one that follows a transparent process such that international organizations (such as ASA and RSS) can follow and evaluate the proceedings.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Megan Price', with a large, loopy flourish extending to the right.

Megan Price, Chair, ASA Committee on Scientific Freedom and Human Rights

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ron Wasserstein', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Ron Wasserstein, Executive Director, American Statistical Association