



Athens Chamber of Tradesmen

<http://www.eea.gr/gr/en>

The “Athens Chamber of Tradesmen” is a public entity founded in 1925. It is the Chamber with the largest number of members in Greece: more than 100.000 active members in the commerce and services sector.

The Chamber is directed by a 61 members council elected every four years and a 5 members management committee.

The Athens Chamber of Tradesmen has an extended network of collaborations:

- Greek Chambers’ network that is member of Euro Chambers.
- National Chamber Network of Women Entrepreneurs
- UEAPME (European Association of craft, small and medium sized enterprises)
- Arab-Greek Chamber of Commerce and Development
- Greek National Committee of the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC)

We are strongly focusing on implementing quality control systems according to the requirements of ISO 9001: 2008, Management Sufficiency (type II) of the Special Secretariat for Digital Planning as well as the certificate ELOT 1429:2008 and ELOT 1431-3:2008 for management and implementation of co-financed projects.

Mission

The Athens Chamber of Tradesmen is a **statutory advisory body** of the Government on issues pertaining its members and the National economy in general. It represents and **promotes** their interests to the relevant governmental bodies in an effort to ensure their viability and growth.

At the same time the Chamber provides its members with **continuously improved services** adapted to their specific needs.

Activities

The Athens Chamber of Tradesmen apart from activities arising from its statutory role, strives to upgrade the services provided as well as introducing new ones, by utilizing experiences from other countries and opportunities offered through National and European Programs.

Specifically the activities of the Athens Chamber of Tradesmen the last years include:

1. Business Registry, Licensing, Certificates

The Chamber supports the **Official Business Registry**, under the **National Network** (GEMI), the electronic data base responsible of recording data on all forms of business entities in Greece. It provides **"one stop shop"** services for the creation of new companies, it nominates the discrete **“Title of a company”** as well



as a special register of insurance agents, insurance brokers and insurance advisors, coordinators and estate agents and issues licenses for insurance agents and others. For a more effective and faster service from the Athens Chamber of Tradesmen, its members have the ability to utilize the services of «e-Chamber" and the «e-banking» offered to them.

2. Consulting and advisory body of the Government

Participates in **government committees** and boards representing the interests of its members (such as the consultation committee of the Ministry of Finance, committees of Prefecture of Attica and the municipality of Athens, committees of the social security organization in Greece, the Second Chance Policy, the Insurance Agency professionals etc.).

3. Arbitration

Conducts **settlement of disputes by arbitration** and carries out sampling after application by its members. The list of experts and arbitrators include not only members of the board of directors of the Chamber but third parties as well.

4. Information Services

Provides **comprehensive information** and updates to its members regarding the economy, national and European programs and on specific issues related to their business activities.

Provides **legal and tax advice** to its members on issues that are for their interest with daily presence of experts in the premises of the Chamber.

5. Participating in European Networks

It hosts the “**SME National Contact Point/ HORIZON2020**” framework program for Research and Innovation of E.U., nominated by the Greek Ministry of Education and Religious affairs/General Secretariat for Research & Technology, providing awareness technical assistance & support to SMEs participating in HORIZON 2020.

Furthermore, it hosts the “**Focal Point for 2014**” of **EUROPE DIRECT Network** and systematically co-operates with the partners of the **Enterprise Europe Network** of D.G Enterprise of European Commission.

6. Participating in National and European programs

It has participated in various EU and national programs such as

- «Creation of the Center of Business and Technology Development of Attica (KETA)» financed by the Operational Program of Competitiveness (OPC) (CSFIII)
- "Transnational placement of new employees, in the food sector, members of the Chamber in order to acquire specific skills in catering and “Hotel Management units" funded by the European program Leonardo da Vinci.

- “Creative Clusters Network Open Innovation”: co-financed by E.C and the Greek Government under the operational program of Attica and the municipality of Athens
- “Fostering sustainable employment and micro-entrepreneurship through innovative green economy activities in Athens etc”: co-financed by E.C. and the Greek Government on “local employment plans for Greece (TopSA)” under the operational program of the region of Attica.
- Projects on “vocational training for employees in small firms (1-25 LAEK)” financed by the account for employment and vocational training. Consulting Services

Additionally advice is offered for open call of proposals of European programs (co-financed by the Greek Government and E.C.) that are addressed to the small and medium sized enterprises.

7. Promoting green entrepreneurship

Facilitates the “**Forum of Green and Innovative Entrepreneurship**” in cooperation with Chambers, Universities, social partners and policy makers to encourage very small enterprises in the Region of Attica on the implementation of **environmental practices** in their daily operation and supports for **production of green products and provision of green services**

8. Education and life - long learning

Organizes seminars on the following subjects:

1. **"Safety Techniques"** for employers (with less than 50 employees), who wish to be trained to undertake themselves the tasks of the safety technician in their company.
2. **"Basic Principles of Food Hygiene and Safety"** for employees to ensure the quality and the production of safe products and consumer protection on the hygiene and safety of foodstuff.
3. **Teacher training seminar on first Aid and fire safety**, for the **teaching staff of driving schools** in order to provide them with the appropriate teaching competences (knowledge, skills, and tools).
4. **Seminars in various fields** such as marketing, sales, advertising, human resources management, information technology, evaluation and assessment of real estate, legal Tax, English, organization and administration of modern business etc., in cooperation with its subsidiary companies.

9. Promoting international co-operation and networking

Develops partnerships with various organizations in Greece and abroad to **promote the interests of its members**, as well as to **exchange experiences and obtain know how**. Supports the participation of its members in



international fairs and business missions and occasionally organized or co-organized in collaboration with other bodies or associations.

10. Conference Organization

Organizes or co-organizes with other relevant National or European bodies **conferences** that examine issues concerning its members (such as dealing with the crisis, etc).

11. Sectoral Studies

Conducts **sectoral studies** where apart from the current situation, the perspectives and opinion of the professionals have been recorded and analysed. Furthermore it operates an **online library** that gathers all studies, researches and reports with the aim to keep its members informed.

12. Awards

It organizes **competitions** to **reward entrepreneurs** or young people for their entrepreneurial spirit, their creativity or their services e.g the student essay contest where students were awarded for the most creative and practical essay on the subject of 'Opportunities within the Crisis. "

Infrastructure

The Athens Chamber of Tradesmen is housed since 1955 in the Palace Konstantopoulos located at 44, Panepistimiou and Harilaou Trikoupi Street in **Athens** and in Glyfada (branch). Existing building infrastructure includes facilities for serving its members, offices and storage areas, auditorium for the 61 member Board of directors and rooms fully equipped with teaching equipment.

It has **48 employees** of different background including extensive experience on registries, on vocational subjects and on the design and management of European programs.

Through the portal the services of **“e- Chamber”** are available to its members, a modern web-based tool, that provides new and efficient ways to access business - services in the chamber that is also connected to the modern social networking tools (facebook, tweeter etc.)