

The five stages of the policy process

a. Initiation

b. Formulation

c. Implementation

d. Evaluation

e. Decision

A. Initiation: the decision to make or to change a decision or agenda setting

1. The Special Secretariat for **Strategic Foresight** (SSSF) informs the SGC on mega trends and challenges, and introduces long term objectives (direction of travel) on them. In praxis, strategic foresight can both initiate a policy but more often than not is a consideration that permeates the policy process, extending from policy initiation to formulation to implementation. And it certainly remains as a discussant throughout the law-making process. Currently, due to the novelty of the SSSF this step is not present.
2. SGC introduces the government's programme into the **Consolidated Programme of Action (ESKYP)**, taking into account budgetary costs (Article 49 Law on the Executive State). SGC sets costed actions per Ministry, with target, cost, and timeframe for their achievement. This step involves the approval of the ESKYP. The process of approval involves the submission of draft entries to the ESKYP per Ministry (προσχέδια δράσης). But these can, and usually, are amended and coordinated under Article 52 of the Law on the Executive State. In this respect, the process of steps 2 and 3 are amphidromous and depict a continuing dialogue between the centralised unit of the SGC and the Ministries. Within this amphidromous dialogue, Ministries and the SGC identify possible effects of megatrends to proposals and, in theory but not yet always in practice, invite the Secretariat Special for Strategic Foresight to advise on the reform of the proposal. Currently, the weight of this step remains with the SGC due to the gap between the skills and training of the SGC team and the Coordination Units in Ministries. In some Ministries there are not, and are exempt from having, Coordination Units, whereas in some Ministries there should be Coordination Units but have not been appointed yet.
3. Each Ministry identifies their own **Ministry Action Plan** with target, cost, and timeframe prioritization, as approved and depicted in the approved ESKYP. The Coordination unit of the Ministry, the Department of Finance (ΓΔΟΥ), and competent in materia departments study objectives, costs, and time and set an action plan for one year (which is fed to SGC). Actions can be carried over to subsequent years. Ministries propose regulatory solutions to identified problems. Currently, as per step 2, this step is not always present.

B. Formulation: detailed development of policy into specific proposals

4. The **Coordination unit of each Ministry link policy objective to regulation** (policy analysts), gather empirical evidence (digital analysts), and, where legislation is proposed, suggest legislative directions (drafters). This is foreseen by P.D. 77/2023. This is what is envisaged. However, in current practice, where there are no trained executive officers, this step is undertaken either unconsciously or not at all.
5. These options are prioritized by the Ministry, and the best one is **decided by the Minister**. Although this constitutes the desired best practice, currently, the Minister and their office undertakes both steps 4 and 5, with a difference marked between Ministries where there are (or not) Coordination Units.
6. **Policy consultation** takes place. This is not currently present, although there are some examples of consultation of the public in the formulation of policy as detailed below. It does constitute best practice for the future.
7. Where there is a legislative mandate, the Law on the Executive State requires that a **Bill team** is set up with permanent civil servants from the Coordination unit (3 specialties), the Legal Service, and the department of Finance. Either drafting guidelines or a draft law are drafted and sent to the SGLPA. Both are accompanied by an Analysis of Regulatory Effects (RIA/AΣYP). The Bill team produces either drafting guidelines for the SGLPA or a draft law. This step is not widely present. The first draft may be drafted by the Ministry, the Office of the Minister, or drafting teams often with external members and Chairs.
8. Internal (the Bill team) and external (Ministry) **scrutiny** is carried out. This step is present.
9. The draft is forwarded to the **SGLPA for its final drafting and scrutiny**, including scrutiny from the independent Committee for the Scrutiny of the Quality of the Law-making Process, which issues recommendations or dicta. The SGLPA has already established both processes and praxis in steps 8, 9, and 10, thus addressing to a great extent the gaps in the previous steps.
10. Legislation goes through **Parliament**.

C. Implementation: putting policy into practice

- This is outside of the legislative cycle, although it is here where the law is implemented, and monitoring takes place as per its provisions. This step is fulfilled to a great extent by the SGC.
- In view of the obligation for regular post-legislative scrutiny every three years, any issues are noted and compiled for the purposes of evaluation in the next step. As there have been no post-legislative scrutiny exercises despite the relevant statutory obligation, this part is not present.

C.Evaluation: upraising the effects and success of the policy

- 11. Post-legislative scrutiny every three years is foreseen but not yet applied.

D. Decision: continue, revise, or terminate

- 12. A new cycle of regulation and legislation is instigated as above.

Thornton's methodology of legislative drafting

It is worth noting that the 12 steps also reflect Thornton's methodology of legislative drafting, which introduced 5 stages in the drafting process (which is part of the legislative process, which in turn is part of the policy process):

1. Understanding the proposal;
 2. Analysing the proposal;
 3. Designing the law;
 4. Composing the draft;
 5. Verifying the draft.
- Thornton's stages are widely accepted as fertile to better legislation. They have therefore informed the design of the 12 steps, especially steps 7-12. They also informed the pre-drafting stages 1-6 as these must provide the necessary basis for 7-12.
 - See Helen Xanthaki, *Thornton's Legislative Drafting*, 6th edition (2023, Bloomsbury, London).