The trends of political CSR in Greece: A comparison among pioneers of CSR

Metaxas, Theodore and Tsavdaridou, Maria

Department of Economics, University of Thessaly, Greece,
Department of Planning and Regional Development, University of
Thessaly, Greece

2016

The trends of political CSR in Greece:
A comparison among pioneers of CSR

MARIA TSAVDARIDOU
University of Thessaly Department of Planning and Regional Development
Email: tsavdaridou@uth.gr

THEODORE METAXAS
University of Thessaly Department of Economics
Email: metaxas@econ.uth.gr

Abstract

The political turn of CSR is one of the dimensions of CSR that concerns many academics, policy makers, NGOs and even more politicians. The last decade this political turn in CSR is under examination especially with the recent developments in Europe in economy and politics which justify the formation of a various theoretical perspectives on the political dimension of it. The following article will discuss the implementation of CSR activities in Denmark and UK in different political time periods along with a presentation of how CSR has evolved in Greece during the period of economic crisis. The implementation of successful CSR practices through legislation, partnerships or guidelines are some of the means that will be used to describe how governments or enterprises use them in order to promote CSR. The case of Greece is a unique case study due to the difficulties that our country faces in every aspect of its everyday life but this article will designate the fact that during the last ten years different governments and the remaining Greek enterprises are still engaged in the CSR field with partnerships, laws or national plans.

Keywords: political CSR, globalization, political theories, governments, enterprises

1.   Introduction

The role of enterprises during the years of economic crisis is extremely crucial because of the current political developments in Europe and in Greece. This time period is the opportunity for enterprises to strengthen their relations with society developing successful CSR practices. The term of CSR has transformed in the new global economic reality from its ethical and volunteer nature to an indirect political solution towards the numerous economic, environmental, social problems that society face and are unable to cope with for various reasons (corruption, economic, legal gaps etc). The political nature of CSR relates to gaps in local or regional governance (Scherer et al 2016). Usually the development of CSR goes through a strict or loose legal framework according the place where the enterprise is located. Governments also play their role in this business area and usually they become alias to help enterprise overcome difficulties that concern legal gaps. The new CSR in this global system where the legal framework faces difficulties in some countries the social responsible activities from enterprises come to contribute to fair global governance so that CSR can be

implemented with self regulation or implementation of a lenient legislation. Corporations started to behave as political actors, a tendency that became even stronger over recent years (Schrempf- Stirling and Palazzo, 2016). The political role of CSR is one of the most popular topics among academics, politics and other stakeholders. Several new views or debates about this political turn of CSR add up to the existing literature about CSR (Parker, 2009, Osborne, 2006, Scherer et al, 2016, Whelan, 2012).

The volunteer character of CSR can play a crucial role and contributes through control or co regulation to the formation of political actions. Yet, it is interesting to notice the shift of the volunteering nature of CSR in the new EU changed definition of CSR in 2011 from voluntary to "the responsibility of enterprises for their impacts on society". There is confusion between what is mandatory and what is voluntary in CSR field offering endless opportunities to elaborate and argue on CSR nature. But the last decade governments have become more active in their new global role with CSR initiatives that promote partnerships, non financial reporting which reflect the character of new governance that emphasize participation, learning and consensus about appropriate standards of business behavior (Rosenau, 2005) making more obvious and compelling the shift of voluntary nature of CSR.

Even though enterprises have been extremely criticized for the impact their operation has on environmental, economic or social level the introduction of CSR designates the change that occurs in the last 20 years in the enterprise world. The traditional view for enterprises is reflected in Friedman's (1970) article stating that corporations have as responsibility to seek only profit. Yet the new role of enterprise is closely connected to the needs of society and governments try to reap the benefits of CSR as a valuable political and economical tool. The other view for political turn of CSR is expressed by Fougère (2011) who believes that capitalistic enterprises are powerful political entity with specific interests so they should be excluded from the formation of politics if we need a democratic political system and a sustainable environmental and social cohesion.

This purpose of this article is to explore the political CSR in Greece as it is formulated the last 10 years and especially during crisis period and attempt a comparison among pioneers countries in order to provide the best practice example of how governments regardless the political parties implement effectively CSR campaigns and how enterprises and governments work together for the common good. The added value of these case studies is to contribute and enhance the current bibliography on political CSR and also promote the example of Greece as a country that is committed to the principles of CSR despite its financial and political problems. The case studies of Denmark and UK are useful examples of best practices for policy makers in Greece.

2. Theories of Political CSR

The political role of enterprises emerges the last decade among the academic literature and a debate is on for the role of enterprises in the political system and vice versa. Yet, the existence and interference of enterprise in politics has always been there in an indirect or direct way. Numerous elections have been supported by private sector and governments have requested managers as contributors to various social issues or problems.

The political turn of CSR is a time period that evolved because of the political and economic trends and is analyzed either as time of periods of political CSR along with the political theories by Mäkinen & Kourula (2012) or as waves or pressure waves in order to chronological place the evolution of CSR in the new global agenda as a controversial component for governments and enterprises (Muhle, 2010 and Pandey and Peterson 2014).

The political turn is examined by Mäkinen & Kourula (2012) who analyzed the political theories which overlap in three key time periods of political CSR. These political theories are libertarian laissez-faire, classical liberalism, liberal equality, welfare state capitalism, property-owning democracy, and market socialism and the overlapping key time periods are classic, instrumental and the period of political turn.

The pressure waves present the literature around CSR and how it evolved in periods of time again but not related to political theories but oriented to the CSR evolution. The first wave has as representatives Bowen 1953, Davis 1960 and Friedman 1970 and refers to the period of social responsibility as well as the traditional view of Friedman which is related to pure profit (Pandey and Peterson 2014) and also it is an important period for the environment because the society demands a solution to social and environmental problems and NGOs start to play their role (Muhle, 2010). Similar Mäkinen & Kourula (2012) describe the classic period related to principles of altruism and morality along with those opposed to the new role of managers in the general welfare and the instrumental period is connected to the moto "do well by doing good" and places the instrumental period with libertarian or classical political settings. The second wave for is characterized by the word Sustainable Development and reflects the tendency of social pressure towards corporation Pandey and Peterson 2014. The third wave is the global pressure wave for Muhle (2010) because the pressure is global due to the corrupted behavior towards human rights by multinational companies. The third period for Mäkinen & Kourula (2012) is the political turn of CSR and is related to the concept of corporate citizenship.

Overall the time period of CSR or the pressure waves of CSR which all end at the political turn of CSR as part of our global society and the chronological cartography of CSR shows how it evolved after the WW II until now and designates the important and defining

role of enterprises in every aspect of our world as well as the power of public opinion towards the expectation they demand from enterprises along with the participation of governments.

One of the most recent definition that reflects the political turn of CSR as Political CSR or PCSR is by Scherer et al 2016

PCSR entails those responsible business activities that turn corporations into political actors, by engaging in public deliberations, collective decisions, and the provision of public goods or the restriction of public bads in cases where public authorities are unable or unwilling to fulfill this role. This includes, but is not limited to, corporate contributions to different areas of governance, such as public health, education, and public infrastructure, the enforcement of social and environmental standards along supply chains or the fight against global warming, corruption, discrimination or inequality.

These corporate engagements are responsible because they are directed to the effective resolution of public issues in a legitimate manner, often with the (explicit) aim of contributing to society or enhancing social welfare, and are thus not limited to economic motivations (Scherer et al, 2016 p. 276).

2. Method

This political turn of CSR is a mix of actions and decisions by governments and enterprises that use tools with political character in order to accomplish the goals that each group sets either it is liberal or conservative. Yet, the implementation of CSR is a tendency of neo liberal governments (Vallentin and Murillo, 2009). The implementation of CSR through governmental initiatives encompasses different tools that target enterprises or the public. The character of political CSR is analyzed and discussed among academics in various ways. The story of CSR is already a topic that offers a plethora of views and opinions with those against and in favor, with many definitions and examples of how to do or success stories. Due to the complicated character of CSR it is only natural to discuss about the political role of enterprises and governments through CSR since it is a trade that already exists but depending on the side (governments or enterprises or NGO) takes the current characteristics and theoretical framework that best fit. To sum up, some of the key theories around the political CSR as formulated by the current bibliography (Frynas and Stephens, 2015) are: Institutional theory, Stakeholder Theory, Herbasian, Rawlsian and Social Contract.

The categorization of these theories around "*the complex and multi-faceted nature of political CSR*" by Frynas and Stephens (2015) comes to shape the current trends about the governmental character of CSR.

Institutional Theory: How corporation behave in an ethical manner is a legitimate expectation. According Brammer et al. (2012) CSR rests upon a paradox between a liberal

notion of voluntary engagement and a contrary implication of socially binding responsibilities.

Stakeholder Theory: According to the pressure of different stakeholders the firm tends to develop specific activities in terms of CSR and the political character of the stakeholder theory concerns how stakeholders involved in the regulatory process (Walker, 2012).

Herbasian: Habermas considers a political theory based solely on the ideal speech situation as "too idealistic" (Habermas, 1998: 244). Instead, he proposes a conception of "deliberative democracy" in which both forms of coordination – ethical discourse and economic bargaining – are taken into account (Habermas, 1998). In political CSR this theory comes to politicize CSR and corporation's entity as political actors (Scherer and Palazzo, 2011) in deliberative democracy politics starts at the level of deliberating civil society associations, in order to conceptualize the growing relevance of private actors in global governance processes.

Rawlsian: Applies Rawls' Theory of Justice in order to establish the just (and legitimate) rights and responsibilities of the corporation as a social and political actor. Social Contract refers to the political role of corporations and how it should be (Frynas and Stephens,2015).

Based on the above theories on political CSR the tools that political CSR uses by each interest group to implement CSR based activities are characterized as informational, economic and legal instruments (Bemelmans-Videc et al. 1997; Jordan et al. 2003) and according to Steurer (2009) also partnering and hybrid.

Informational instruments focus on knowledge and the ethics behind the persuasion model and this involves trainings, campaigns and websites. Economic instruments concern how to attract through money what companies need and it is all about taxes and awards. Legal instruments are translated as laws, directives and regulations. Partnering instruments: An important element of CSR is partnerships among different groups in order to achieve their goals. Hybrid instruments: CSR platforms, centres and strategies

These instruments are used by governments, stakeholders, managers, organizations or NGOs and could characterize as soft policy instruments and their results reflect the voluntary and soft character of CSR essence. The successful implementation of CSR is a complex combination of politics, ethics and economics or CSR is the vehicle to bring together different actors (governments, enterprisers) to work together using the above soft instruments to accomplish their goals from their own perspective without excluding the hard law in cases that must be applied.

Another view on the CSR instruments is that of Hassel (2009) who presents all the available tools those policy makers uses with the help of private organizations to succeed in

their field. In other words governments can set up or support watchdogs for corporate compliance with voluntary standards and insist that those firms which repeatedly use blue-wash strategies not be represented by global industry associations. Some of these global watchdogs are OECD, ISO 26000, UNGC, EITI, GRI, DJS, SRI.

The examples of how political CSR is applied in this article are based on the political tools mentioned by Steurer (2009) and categorized as informational, legal, economic, partnering and hybrid according. The political CSR initiatives or the legislation that each country implemented in Table 1 is not limited to the specific studied activities or laws. The selection was based on the most important and representative activities or laws from each country. Each country has its own cultural or political characteristics so the political CSR takes the form and elements of the current political system along with the cultural and social characteristics.

The studied countries are Greece, Denmark and UK and although Denmark and UK pioneers in CSR compared to Greece yet the purpose of this article is dual: provide the best practice examples of Europe for policy makers in Greece and to present the recent trends of CSR in Greece through a turbulent time period of economic and social crisis.

2.1 GREECE

The political CSR in Greece is in a transitional stage (Giannarakis, Theotokas, 2011, Skouloudis, Evangelinos, 2009) although since 2000 there has been a significant effort to raise awareness among enterprises with the help of organizations like CSR Hellas. CSR Hellas is a network of enterprises that founded in 2000 and until now works for the promotion of CSR among enterprises and their stakeholders.

The Ministry of the Economy, Competitiveness and Shipping is responsible for the promotion of CSR. In 2014 the National Strategic Plan for CSR for the time period of 2014 to 2020 was published by the Ministry along with the participation of actors like the CSR Hellas, SEV, and Athens University of Economics. The purpose of this publication was to promote a development model based on participatory process that constitutes three basic axes:

• Policies and standards for the promotion of CSR by public authorities (Provide information for CSR, strengthening the potentials of a company to implement CSR, promotes branding and labeling, transparency, communication and rewards for CSR activities and social responsible public commissions).

• Measures and tools of public policy to facilitate the implementation of policies and actions of CSR by enterprises(laws and directives, taxes, allowances, campaigns, networks, use of hybrid tools)

- CSR Implementation fields in accordance to national priorities which concern human capital, leadership, market, natural and social environment.

The National Strategy for CSR has specific goals and these are to designate the role of the state through promoting CSR among enterprises, implementing CSR programs and developing CSR activities by the state. Further the targets of the National Strategy are to describe the necessary structures, to design, practice, evaluate and set a timetable for this National Strategy.

The lack of a specific oriented National CSR plan is mostly supplemented by the European framework covering different perspectives of CSR like human rights, environment, health and safety mostly using directives.

An important part of this publication is the fact that the state recognizes the weakness in their legal framework for CSR and compensates it through the technical knowledge that provides the networks like CSR Hellas, Universities and NGOs. The participatory effort among different actors to raise awareness and promote a responsible behavior for enterprises also is accomplished through Europe 2020[1.]

The legal framework for CSR in national level encompass laws and directives that facilitate Greek governments to encourage the existing enterprises to implement CSR activities providing guidelines, campaigns and the basic tools (with the support of CSR related actors) to accomplish through partnerships successful CSR practices.

The only relevant legislation directly linked to CSR is the law 3487/2006 which derives from the EU Modernisation Directive 2003/51/EC into Greek national legislation. It is a law that in accordance to the directive is in favor of transparency and control of the corporate economic data and obligates listed companies to publicize the hazards that connect to the capital assets while also it obligates the regulatory authorities to evaluate the above hazards. The law applies two at least conditions of the directive which are : exceed a Balance Sheet value of EUR 2.5million, net sales of EUR 5 million and average personnel number of 50 throughout the financial year. The obligation to publish an Annual report with quantitative and qualitative data can facilitate the company to have sufficient autonomy to pursue projects that have a longer horizon whilst leaving the existing legal mechanisms of accountability to shareholders intact (Johnston, 2009).

The 3487/2006 law could be characterized as "soft law" since it is an integration of the European directive and the UNEP (UNEP, et al 2013, p. 44) categorize it as Governmental initiator and a voluntary generic reporting guidance.

Further to the Greek legislation which supports in a discrete manner CSR, there are various practices that are integrated in initiatives and programs like the promotion of

---

[1] Europe 2020: It is a ten year strategy launched in 2010 to create the conditions for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth.(http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/index_en.htm)accessed 17/3/2015

enterprise excellence in environmental concerns and corporate social responsibility in sectors of energy, tourism, technology and research through the Operational Programme «Competitiveness and Entrepreneurship» (OPCE II).

The Memorandum of partnership between the General Secretariat for Gender Equality and the Hellenic Network of CSR in 2011 promotes gender equality issues in workplace specifying the responsibilities of both parties. Gender equality in workplace includes promotion of policies that increase the number of women employment in all levels of hierarchy including in sectors of research and innovation.

According to the National Strategy for CSR the relative national legislation which are adjustment/ratification of the international legislation are outlined in a chronological series starting from 1952 including laws and directives like the International Convention concerning Forced or Compulsory Labour, the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises, European Social Charter, Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, Convention concerning the Prohibition and Immediate Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour, International Labour Organization Tripartite Declaration of Principles concerning Multinational Enterprises on Social Policy, ISO 26000 - Guidance Standard on Social Responsibility, United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, «Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions, a renewed EU strategy 2011-14 for Corporate Social Responsibility».

The national laws that are related to CSR according to the National Strategy 2014 are:

L.3304/2005 on the Application of the principle of equal treatment regardless of racial or ethnic origin, religious or other beliefs, disability, age or sexual orientation implements the Directives 2000/43/EC and 2000/78/EC

Presidential Decree148/2009 on Environmental responsibility for the prevention and restoration of environmental damages (implements the Directive 2004/35/EK) and recognizes the environmental responsibility through the principle of "polluter pays"

L.3850/2010 which is a code of laws for the protection of health and safety in workplace

L.3855/2010 on Green Public Contracts that describe the main administrative actions for the development of a national policy and a road map for Green public contacts.

L.3896/2010 on equal opportunities and equal treatment of men and women in workplace and employment in public and private sector

L.4019/2011 on Social Economy and Social ENTERPEUNSHIP that concern the establishment of enterprises that promote social and economic integration of marginalized social groups, poverty reduction and discrimination and social exclusion.

According to Nasioulas (2012) the law of 4019/2011 is the first law introducing the concept of Social Economy in Greece and as it states: *Law 4019 does not elaborate on the concept of Social Economy. The utilization of the term is proved to be superfluous and eventually misleading, since the basic subject of this legislative action is to introduce the SCEs (Social Cooperative Enterprise[2]). Second major deficiency of the Law is that it provides for the establishment of a General Social Economy Register which is eventually found not to include any other of the widely accepted (Nasioulas, 2010, 2011a,b, 2012) institutional forms of Social Economy organizations(Nasioulas, 2012 p.166).*

L.4093/2012 is defined the minimum wage and comes into force a pilot project about the guaranteed minimum income

Presidential Decree 135/2014 about environmental authorization for projects and activities. This presidential decree attempts to promote voluntary environmental CSR initiatives by private and public authorities and evaluate these initiatives based on their environmental impact.

Also a range of national policies, action plans and programs under the National Strategic Reference framework (NSRF) are related directly or indirectly with CSR and concern policies of waste management, integration of Roma, action plans for Human Rights, Green tourism, Green enterprise, innovative entrepreneurship, Eco-Commerce, training for the exit from economic crisis-Social Economy.

Beyond the political effort to promote CSR there are stakeholders that support the state initiatives and are the Hellenic Network for CSR, the Greek Global Compact, the SEV-Hellenic Federation of Enterprises and the Social Economy Institute.

2.2 UK

UK is a country with a political culture and tradition strongly connected to the rule of law, procedural democracy, liberal freedoms, territorial unity, parliamentary supremacy, and the legitimacy of the crown (Mathis, 2008). The UK legislation towards companies can be characterized as friendly for business. The role of the government in relation to CSR and specific the Labour government sees itself as having to play a complementary role in fostering CSR knowledge across the business sector and encourage it to adopt best practice. According to Bichta (2003) the government believes that this can be done by setting minimum standards for industry to abide by, providing fiscal incentives, encouraging industry

---

[2] The Social Cooperative Enterprise is established as an entity of Social Economy. It is a civil cooperative with a social cause possessing entrepreneurial capacity by law. The Social Cooperative Enterprise members can be either individuals or juridical entities. Its members participate with one vote regardless of the cooperative shares they possess (Nasioulas, 2012 p165)

to take the initiative and adopt voluntary measures on CSR and co-operate with government to promote CSR at the national and international level (Bichta, 2003).

UK is the country where the first UK Minister for CSR, Kim Howell, had been appointed within the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) in order to demonstrate the centrality of CSR to economic policy (Brown and Kundsen, 2012).

The UK government view in 2002 on CSR has been demonstrated in particular government initiatives: the appointment of a cabinet minister, Stephen Timms, on CSR and the publication of the first CSR (UK) annual report (2002). The new thinking was also reflected in the DTI's company law review (1998–2001) which considered the merits of extending directors' duties to stakeholder groups such as the local community; and in the white paper on competitiveness (DTI, 1998c) which stresses the importance of highlighting best practice on corporate responsibility, and the 1998 pre-budget statement which announced a review of fiscal incentives which could foster the involvement of companies with the community (Bichta, 2003).

Later in 2004, CSR Minister Timms, launched a program to define an international strategy for CSR in order to promote the competitiveness and image of UK globally. The country appointed seven Ministers of CSR until 2010(Brown and Kundsen, 2012).

Also, in 2006 the Companies Act required all large and medium sized UK incorporated companies to provide a narrative within their annual report on the company's performance, position and risks ('Business Review'). Quoted companies should also disclose in their annual review information on environmental, employee, social and community matters to the extent necessary for an understanding of the development, performance or position of the company (Companies Act, 2006 available at http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/46/pdfs/ukpga_20060046_en.pdf)

The Climate Change Act in 2008 was related to the UK accounts for all six Kyoto gas groups. The government required to exercise powers under the Companies Act to require the inclusion of GHG reporting in a company's Directors' Report. (www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2008/27/contents). The Carbon Reduction Commitment (CRC) in 2010, required companies to measure and report on all their emissions-related to energy use to the Environment Agency, and purchase allowances. Organizations that use more than 6,000MWh per annum (equating approximately to an annual electricity bill of £1,000,000) will be under the scheme. (www.environment-agency.gov.uk)

The UK Corporate Governance Code launched first in 1992 has as purpose to facilitate effective, entrepreneurial and prudent management that can deliver the long-term success of the company. The code therefore expects that all companies with a Premium Listing of equity shares regardless of whether they are incorporated in the UK or elsewhere should apply in their annual reports and accounts the values of the company. The main

principles of the UK Corporate Code are: accountability, transparency, probity, and focus on the sustainable success of an entity over the longer term (FRC, 2014).

In 2013 the UK government required for incorporated companies listed on the London Stock Exchange main market to report their levels of greenhouse gas emissions as a requirement from the Climate Change Act 2008. This requirement was accompanied by the UK Government Greenhouse Gas Reporting Guidance providing help to the companies complying with the greenhouse gas (GHG) reporting regulation, a requirement from the Climate Change Act 2008 and all organizations with voluntary reporting on a range of environmental matters, including voluntary GHG reporting and through the use of key performance indicators (KPIs).

The global governance example is reflected in UK by two significant prime ministers, conservative Thatcher and liberal Blair (Brown, 2012). The dynamic of the two governments in order to promote and use CSR effectively in the business world is analyzed by Moon (2004).

In 1980, Thatcher had to face the problem of unemployment and the urban blight. The foundation of Business in the Community was an important initiative by Thatcher in order to promote CSR along with the Community Action Programme which had as a target to raise awareness among enterprises in order to offer jobs to underdeveloped communities through sponsorships and also promote PPPs (Public Private Partnerships) in order to contribute to urban regeneration projects. A major quotation that reflects this period is of General Secretary for the Environment Michael Heseltine who said towards the Institute of Directors Secretary of State for the Environment: we (government) do not have the money. We do not have the expertise. We need the private sector again to play a role which, in Britain, it played more conspicuously a century ago than it does now: (quoted in Richardson 1983: 1 cited in Moon 2004).

2.3   DENMARK

The government of Denmark is one of the pioneers in promoting the concept of CSR among enterprises SME and multinational. In 1994, the Minister of Public Affairs, Karen Jespersen used the term "Social Responsible Corporation" and also began the campaign "Our common concern" which affected many European countries ever since. The campaign was a solution to the welfare problem as well the high numbers of unemployment that the state faced. The increase of allowance that the citizens received from the state led to Jespersen to reinforce the strategy of CSR. Although the welfare model in Denmark is based on the fact that the level of prosperity for a society is defined by the way it responds to the need of weak citizens the government soon (unlike Greece) understand the economic burden of this

obstacle. One of the ways to deal with unemployment was to turn to the concept of CSR and the campaign "Our common concern" aimed to find social policies and partners to help the state (Habisch et al., 2005, p. 27). The following year 1995 the Minister through inclusive labor market strategy mobilized partnerships between local and private authorities. This successful initiative had as a result the establishment of "social coordination committees" which took the form of new social legislation and the representatives of these committees were from the Danish Employers Confederation, the Confederation of Danish Trade Unions, the Public Employment Agency and other organizations. This forum was formed in order to map unemployment and social exclusion and to develop a strategy which would include socially excluded people in the labor market.

The "social chapter" launched in 1999 by the National Association of Municipalities, the National Association of Countries, the Trade Union and Copenhagen and Frederiksberg Municipalities was an attempt to motivate all Danish local authorities to employ socially excluded people by engaging in social partnerships with private companies. The agenda of the social chapter included: Retention (elderly, disabled persons); Integration (recruitment of long unemployed or disabled persons); Prevention (social problems between employees or other health issues).

Besides these CSR oriented policies, legislation and measures that Danish government took in order to find solution to their unemployment and lack of social cohesion problems reinforced their CSR strategy with initiatives like The Enterprise Pool (part of the campaign Our common concern) which was a way for private and public corporations to ask for economic support in order to promote CSR practices and the total amount spent for this purpose was DKK 131 million for the period of 1995-1999. Many others tools like the Social Index (evaluation tool), CSR Networks (consultation tool), Network Prize (award tool), Copenhagen Centre (consultation tool)

In 1996 Denmark also implemented a Green Accounting Scheme (revised in 2010) with two primary purposes: making information about large businesses and heavy polluters' environmental impact publicly available, as well as encouraging businesses to address environmental matters. The Scheme is mandatory for more than 400 companies and it requires a statement from senior management level, and accounts of material input, emissions and waste. Recently the Danish Minister for the Environment has also shown interest in developing new methods for environmental accounting and reporting.

Another CSR project by the Danish Commerce and Company Agency was "People and Profit" launched in 2006. It was a practical guide for CSR in order to inspire SMEs and their managers to adjust their activities in line with CSR strategy and consisted of five phases: Preliminary study; Mapping; Development of tools; Development of SMEs' CSR initiatives; Implementation, Embedding.

The People and Profit project took place from 2005 to 2007 and more than 12,000 managers from companies across Denmark were trained in 2006 and 2007. The results of this project was Three quarters (75 per cent) of Danish SMEs have implemented CSR practices, Workforce-related CSR activities in particular are estimated to have a positive financial impact (TNS Gallup, 2005, p. 8)

The Danish Government Centre for CSR was established in 2007 which coordinated government initiatives on CSR issues. Additionally, it provided tools for enterprises that are interested in CSR and helped them to increase their competitive advantage (see http://www.csrgov.dk). An important guide for enterprises is the CSR Action Plan presented by the Danish government, which aims at strengthening the international marketing of Danish states. The action plan contains a total of 42 initiatives in four key areas: Strengthening the respect for international principles; Increasing responsible growth through partnerships; Increasing transparency; Using the public sector to promote a good framework for responsible growth

From 2009, large businesses in Denmark must take a position on CSR in their annual reports and must account for their work on CSR in future annual reports. This requirement was introduced in 2008 when the Danish Parliament adopted the proposed 'Act amending the Danish Financial Statements Act'. The statutory requirement was part of the 2008 Government's action plan for CSR, and is intended to inspire businesses to engage more actively and strategically in CSR in line with international principles, and communicate their policies and actions; and consequentially, to contribute to improving the international competitiveness of Danish trade and industry.

In 2012 the Danish Government launched a new action plan for CSR to provide guidance and create shared value for business and society through innovative partnerships between the private sector, the public sector and civil society. It also laid out the plan to strengthen accountability though the implementation of the UN Guiding Principles and transparency requirements. In addition to the reporting requirements in place since 2009, the new requirements on human rights and climate issues require disclosure on whether or not the company has policies to ensure respect for human rights and/or to reduce the climate impact of its activities. Companies must report on these two issues and list policies, activities and results.

In Denmark, legislation has been an important trigger for increased sustainability reporting according to international guidelines. Encouraging companies to sign up to the UN Global Compact also resulted in an increase from 30 to 187 Danish signatory companies (at 1 November 2010). The Danish example shows that it is possible to combine mandatory reporting with the possibility of leaving the way open with regard to how reporting is implemented by companies.

The Danish Government has also implemented rules, effective from 1 April 2013, on improving the gender balance in the management of large Danish companies. The rules state that the 1100 largest companies in Denmark are obliged to set a target figure to address the underrepresented gender on the board of directors. Furthermore, they have to establish policies on how to improve the representation of the underrepresented gender in the management in general. Similar to the rules concerning the largest Danish companies' engagement in CSR, the rules state an obligation to report on the target figure and policies, including the status on meeting targets and implementing policies. The report must be contained within the annual report. The new rules differ in that a company will be sanctioned for not establishing a target figure or policy, or not reporting on them. Thus, companies must comply with the new rules but are free to set a target figure and establish policies suitable for the company.

3.   CONCLUSION

Table 1 presents initiatives, legislation and partnerships among enterprises, governments and organizations in UK, Denmark and Greece in different time periods with different political parties in order to promote CSR policies and each party achieve their desired outcome. The CSR initiatives were categorized as informational, economic, legal and partnering or hybrid.

 The comparison among the two pioneers countries is discussed in the article of Brown and Knundsen (2012) offering their perspective on how each country implemented CSR through governmental initiatives and the purpose behind these CSR policies. The question they raise in their article is whether government CSR policies in these countries are directed toward substituting or mirroring domestic social or environmental policies or if are looking to place their companies in to the global competitive system. The comparison between the two countries is oriented towards the purpose of their CSR governmental policies which for Denmark mirror the existing welfare services meaning that initiatives such as social inclusion employment focus on domestic governance while UK government efforts aim at global governance promoting the competitiveness of the country by reducing state intervention in favor of an increased private sector role.

Table 1: Political CSR initiatives in Greece, Denmark and UK

Instruments	Informational	Economic	Legal	Partnering	Hybrid
GREECE	National Strategic Plan for CSR(2014)	OPCE II 2014-2020	L.3304/2005 PD 148/2009 L.3855/2010 L.3896/2010 L.3850/2010 L.4019/2011 L.4093/2012 PD 135/2014	National Strategic Plan for CSR (2014)	Hellenic Network for CSR SEV-Hellenic Federation of Enterprises The Social Economy Institute
DENMARK	People and Profit project "Our common concern"	People and Profit project Danish Financial Statements Act	Green Accounting Scheme	Social chapter	The Danish Government Centre for CSR
UK	UK Government Greenhouse Gas Reporting Guidance Community Action Programme 1980	UK Corporate Governance Code Pre-budget statement 1998	Companies Act 2006 Climate Change Act 2008	Business in the Community	Business in the Community

The Danish exemplar of CSR might not be the normative case in comparison with most European countries, for it is a blend of two attitudes: 'do good' and 'do business'. It seems to be the ideal case when we come to discuss CSR, but whether it is more 'business' than 'do good' is something to be considered. Denmark is an inclusive society and has a level of transparency higher than in other countries due to the fact that Danish managers enjoy the trust of the people (Olsen, 2003). The culture of this country is strongly characterized by the sense of justice and ethics and a stable political system. According to a survey of the Downing Street Strategy Unit (Bibb & Kourdi, 2004, p. 11), the Danish are one of the most trusting peoples.

It is obvious that the government of Denmark since 1994 tries to give guidance to enterprises with action plans and laws in order to promote CSR among their business world. The social and economic aspect of CSR is supported by government with campaign "Our common concern in 1994 or later in 1999 the social chapter People and Profit in 2007 which were attempts to motivate enterprises. The environmental aspect was addressed by the Green Accounting Scheme.

The case of CSR in political terms and as it is outlined above has weaknesses and yet opportunities and as the SWOT analysis in the National Strategy of CSR is presented it offers the chance to overcome the major obstacle of economic crisis and work for the development of a national successful CSR strategy. The introduction of laws related to enterprises like the laws N.4019/2011, N.3855/2010, N.3850/2010, N.3896/2010 and the publication of National Strategy for CSR in 2014 are the first steps towards an organized effort to integrate the principles of CSR in laws and guidelines from all stakeholders and the state. To sum up the laws and directives that concern economic issues are 3487/2006, the OPCE II and 4019/2011.

The environmental issues are related to laws like PD 1481/2009, L3855/2010, 135/2014 and social issues concern the Memorandum of partnership between the General Secretariat for Gender Equality and the Hellenic Network of CSR in 2011, L 3304/2005, 3580/2010, 3896/2010, 4093/2012. Along with these laws, directives and partnerships there are a range of national activities related to the triple bottom line of CSR.

Yet, the opinion of The Social Economy Institute in 2012 as far as the social economy was rather discouraging due to the lack of monitoring to cooperatives, social cooperatives and non - profits in Greece and the fact that there was Non -articulation of procedures, typical but not practically applied provisions, best practices coupled with unheard-of bureaucracy: islands of excellence lost in the vast labyrinth of the residual sector (EU,Social Business, Initiative,2012).

The case of Greece is unique in political CSR agenda due to crisis, its current political conditions and of course it's modern culture which has nothing in common with our historical culture. Even though the legislation towards friendly CSR initiatives is an effort to promote CSR among Greek enterprises it is a long way till Greece reaches the levels of UK or Denmark. The Hellenic Network of CSR along with other organizations that have been established in order to promote and enforce CSR activities and the National Plan for CSR frames a rather controversial situation since large Greek enterprises close one after the other. Yet, it is necessary as (Scherer and Palazzo, 2011) said that the private sector could offer public goods when governments lack or are unwilling to provide them for their citizens.

4. REFERENCES

Bibb, S. and J. Kourdi (2004). Trust Matters for Organisational and Personnal Success
Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan

Bemelmans-Videc, M., Rist, R., & Vedung, E. (1997). Carrots, sticks and sermons: Policy instruments and their evaluation. New York: Transaction Publishers.

Brammer Stephen, Jackson Gregory and Matten Dirk. (2012). Corporate Social Responsibility and institutional theory: new perspectives on private governance. Socio-Economic Review, (10), pp. 3–28

Brown Dana and Jette Steen Knudsen. (2012). Visible Hands: Government Policies on Corporate Social Responsibility in Denmark and the UK. Paper presented to the CES Conference 23 March 2012

Bichta Constantina. (2003). Corporate Social Responsibility. A role in government policy and regulation?. Centre for the study of Regulated Industries (CRI), University of Bath School of Management

Danish Business Authority. (2011). The Danish Financial Statements Act: Experiences after 3 Years of Mandatory CSR Reporting [online] Danish Business Authority.

Available at <http://www.dcca.dk/graphics/publikationer/CSR/CSR_and_ Reporting_in_Denmark.pdf> [Accessed on 30 March 2016].

Danish Business Authority CSR and Reporting in Denmark: Impact of the third year subject to legal requirements for reporting CSR in the Danish Financial Statement Act. (2011). Danish Business Authority.
Available at: <www.dcca.dk/graphics/ publikationer/CSR/CSR_and_Reporting_in_Denmark_2nd_ year_2011.pdf> [Accessed on 30 March 2016].

Danish Government. (2012). Responsible growth – Action Plan for Corporate Social Responsibility.
Available at: http://csrgov.dk/file/318420/uk_responsible_growth_2012.pdf[Accessed on 1 April 2016]

European Commission -Social Business Initiative -GECES Group of Experts on Social Entrepreneurship. (2012). Monitoring the Social Economy in Greek
available: http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/social_business/docs/expert-group/geces/nasioulas3_en.pdf accessed 22/3/2016

Financial Reporting Council. (2014). The UK Corporate Governance Code
Available at: https://www.frc.org.uk/Our-Work/Publications/Corporate- Governance/UK-Corporate-Governance-Code-2014.pdf accessed in 9/5/2016

Frynas, J. G. and Stephens, S. (2015). Political Corporate Social Responsibility: Reviewing Theories and Setting New Agendas. International Journal of Management Reviews, (17), pp. 483–509. doi: 10.1111/ijmr.12049

Fougère Martin. (2011). Corporations as Political and Unpolitical Actors, Journal of Business Ethics and Organization Studies 16 (2), pp.12-21

Friedman, M. (1970). The social responsibility of business is to increase its profits. The New York Times September 13

Giannarakis, G. & Theotokas, I. (2011). The Effect of Financial Crisis in Corporate Social Responsibility Performance. International Journal of Marketing Studies, 3(1) pp. 2-10

Habisch, A. et al. (2005) Corporate Social Responsibility across Europe (Berlin: Springer-Verlag).

Habermas, J. (1998). Three normative models of democracy. In Habermas, J.,
The inclusion of the other: pp.239-252. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press

Muhle Ursula. (2010). The politics of Corporate Social Responsibility. The rise of a Global Business Norm. ISBN 978-3-593-39263-9

Hassel Anke, (2009), CSR Instruments – A guide for policymakers Hertie School of Governance, Working Papers No 38

Jukka Mäkinen & Arno Kourula. (2012). Pluralism in political corporate social responsibility Business Ethics Quarterly (BEQ) 22 (4) pp. 649-678

Mathis Arno. (2008). Corporate Social Responsibility and public policy-making perspectives, instruments and consequences. ISBN 978 90 365 2638 8

Moon Jeremy. (2004). Government as a Driver of Corporate Social Responsibility No. 20-2004 ICCSR Research Paper Series. ISSN 1479-5124

Nasioulas I. (2012). Social Cooperatives in Greece Introducing New Forms of Social Economy and Entrepreneurship, International Review of Social Research, 2 (2) pp. 151-171
Available at : http://www.social-economy.com/uploads/5/9/2/3/59238017/nasioulas_-_social_cooperatives_in_greece.pdf accessed 22/3/2016

Olsen, L.. (2003). Corporate accountability – the case of Denmark, in: M. Morsing, & C. Thyssen (Eds) Corporate Values & Responsibility – The Case of Denmark, pp. 229–239 (Samfundslitteratur). London.

Pandey V, Peterson H.Christopher. (2014). Three waves of CSR theoretical developments: Proposing a conceptual model of corporate social performance.
Working Paper 259. Institute of Rural Management Anand

Rosenau J. (2005). Governance and Global Sustainability: Setting the Stage, in Governance and Sustainability: New Challenges for States, Companies and Civil Society. Eds U Petschow, J Rosenau, E U von Weizsacker (Greenleaf, Sheffield)

Steurer R. (2009). The Role of Governments in Corporate Social Responsibility: Characterising Public Policies on CSR in Europe. Policy Sciences. 43 pp.49-72

Skouloudis, A. and Evangelinos, K. I. (2009). Sustainability reporting in Greece: Are we there yet? Environmental Quality Management, 19 pp. 43–60

Scherer Andreas Georg, Rasche Andreas, Palazzo Guido and Spicer Andre. (2016). Managing for Political Corporate Social Responsibility: New Challenges and Directions for PCSR 2.0 Journal of Management Studies (53)3 pp. 273-298

Schrempf-Stirling, J. and Palazzo, G. (2016). Upstream corporate social responsibility. The Evolution from contract responsibility to full producer responsibility. Business & Society, (55), doi: 10.1177/ 0007650313500233

TNS Galup. (2005). "People and Profit Phase 2-Mapping of CSR activities among small and medium sized enterprises"

UNEP, GRI, KPMG and the Centre for Corporate Governance in Africa. (2013). Carrots and sticks Sustainability reporting policies worldwide-today's best practice, tomorrow's trends
Available at : .https://www.globalreporting.org/resourcelibrary/Carrots-and-Sticks.pdf (accessed 17/3/2016)

Vallentin Steen Murillo David (2009). CSR as Governmentality. CBS Working Paper Series Working Paper No. 04-2009 ISBN 978-87-92114-21-1

Walker, E.T. (2012). Putting a face on the issue: corporate stakeholder mobilization in professional grassroots lobbying campaigns. Business and Society, (51), pp. 561– 601.