



GEORGE A. PAPANDREOU

Investing in new technologies leads

Our country is moving forward. This should be initially translated in changing the behaviour of each one of us. All of us need to do our duty towards the country. To deliver a country free of our generation's problems to the generations to come.

Let me tell you that just me or the 15 ministers by ourselves, we cannot make it. I will always be in front, I will always be first in battle, but I will not make it, the country will not make it without you, without your active participation. If the regeneration of Greece does not become everyone's business, our business, honestly, no matter how hard we try or vote draft laws, these changes will not become real.

For this reason, it is now the time for earnestness and duty, it's time for a new patriotism. It is time for awakening our society's healthy forces, those who really and definitely want to change our country, in order for us all together to move forward.

To leave behind everything that has literally been pulling our country apart for years, words that have unfortunately entered in our daily vocabulary, such as kickback, jobbery, craftiness, nouveau riche, serving, indifference, corruption, have to be let back.

I think that we should take advantage of the technological developments in Information and Communication Technologies. I believe that for Greece's development, renewal and reconstruction, the tools of e-government and social networks provide a great opportunity for us in order to «bypass» the bureaucratic culture.

We have repeatedly spoken about our vision, which is the change of the country's production and development model.

We are making a turn towards green development, renewable energy sources, and a new development model for tourism, as well as for our agricultural production.

All these sectors are vertically and horizontally connected by three key concepts: quality, extroversion, innovation. All these together also mean investing in people.

You are aware of my belief that investing in new technologies leads the way to a better tomorrow for all, that could be the foundation for development. For this, despite the financial stringency, we will invest in Information Technology and new technologies; this is one of the most important development tools that we have.

Our first major intervention is the immediate implementation of e-Government. The second pillar of our policy is the spread of broadband. The third pillar is to ensure access for all citizens and businesses to a digital environment. Our interventions in the ICT sector are related to services for the citizens, the state's waste reduction, the tools and the ways for accelerating the ICT projects, the strengthening and the development of the industry through the use of ICT, and Fiber to the Home.

Projects that have started to be designed and implemented are the Single Payment Authority - for civil servants and eventually for all transactions with the State, the Citizen's Card bearing all the information necessary to serve the citizens without bureaucratic procedures, the Electronic Procurement System, the Electronic Prescriptions System, the Electronic System for Fuel Monitoring, the productive operation of hospitals' information systems and the monitoring their budgets, the on-line monitoring of the State's budget.

We believe in the country's new growth environment and we know that you can play a decisive role. To "export" Greece, through new products, new services, innovative solutions; to link resources and culture, services and Greek products of value with pioneer technologies. We will do everything in our power to ensure that creative companies, creative people involved with new technologies, will have the most possible opportunities.

I invite you to take advantage of these

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the way to a better tomorrow for all



opportunities; you to be the first to change, to launch the spirit of a different entrepreneurial culture in the country, emphasizing on extroversion, quality, functionality of your products and services.

Digital economy offers great opportunities to SMEs, both in manufacturing and in services; either for their own benefit or as suppliers to larger companies. Digital economy offers great opportunities to SMEs. New, innovative companies can create new and often, high-value jobs. They support other industries and give them the right to viability, in a competitive global economy. We plight for a new entrepreneurship, through the effort we will make as a State, emphasizing on sustainability, innovation and human skills that are necessary for the enhancement of Greek economy's competitiveness, but also, to enter into a different, green economy, a different model for development.

Industries such as tourism, culture and food have great potential for development and funds' attraction; they can benefit from new technologies and create products and services that

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will enhance our country's business potential. Emphasis should and will be given on attracting initiatives aiming to promote innovation. Today, following the difficult decisions we had to make in order to save our country, I had the fortune to participate in your conference. And I say that I was fortunate, because the audience in this room is, by itself, one of the great hopes, on which Greece is investing. We invest in you, to get out of the crisis, gaze to the future with hope, with optimism and confidence. And with your initiatives, with your decisions, I am sure that you will substantially contribute in this sudden turn of our history and we will achieve our goals together. 

Mr. George A. Papandreou is Prime Minister of Greece.

Prime Minister's speaking points from the Gala Dinner for the 15th anniversary of the establishment of SEPE.