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The Greek Society for Music Education (G.S.M.E.) was founded in March 1997 as a non-profit, scientific organization, with the main purpose of promoting music education in Greece and of developing music education as a field of scientific study. G.S.M.E. collaborates with universities, music pedagogical foundations, social unions, and governmental institutions, as well as with international societies that work on the same purposes in Europe and in the other continents. Sharing the same basic principles and goals with ISME, G.S.M.E. became an Affiliated National Organization of ISME in 1998.

From the very beginning, the Society, with its rapidly growing membership and its scientific profile, being the only music education organization in the country that covers all levels of music education in Greece, supports and promotes music education in various ways. The G.S.M.E. Board of Directors, Committees and all officers engaged, work also in advocacy matters and bring forth proposals for improvement of music education to the Greek State e.g. Ministry of Culture, Ministry of Education and the Pedagogical Institute (nowadays Institute of Educational Policy).

In 2005 in a special General Assembly for that purpose, a few revisions were made in the Society's constitution. Another minor revision is planned to take place during the next biennium.

The governing body of G.S.M.E. is a Board of Directors, consisting of 7 members elected by its membership (President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, and 3 members). Term of office nowadays is for two years (it used to be 3 years before the constitution revision in 2005).

G.S.M.E. has formed working groups and committees –among others- in the areas of Pre-school music education, Primary music education, Secondary music education, Curriculum Study and Development, the Pedagogy of piano teaching and Music Therapy as well as Music in Special Education. It also has its own choir that performs throughout Greece and abroad. At the Society's headquarters in Thessaloniki, there is a library from where members can borrow music education materials (books, journals, videotapes, DVDs, CDs and CDRoms and the like). The Society continually informs its members and visitors of its activities and updates in the field of music education, through its website ([www.eeme.gr](http://www.eeme.gr)) as well as video clips in YouTube (<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCfFzmREJ1tWi74UDrkOOOug>). The G.S.M.E. membership systematically receives information electronically about activities of the Society and topics of general interest.

G.S.M.E.'s Editorial Board publishes a newsletter 3 times per year (55 issues to date) and a yearly journal: *Music Education* (26 issues to date - with practical teaching ideas and lesson plans). Also one more journal -a refereed scientific one- under the supervision of an editor- is published annually: *Musical Pedagogics* (14

issues to date). Both journals include English abstracts. Also, G.S.M.E. has published 3 books on Music Pedagogy, one of them, in two languages (Greek and English).

The Society has organized numerous seminars, workshops, lectures, one day and two day conferences, several artistic events in collaboration with various cultural organizations and 7 national/international conferences. The 1<sup>st</sup> G.S.M.E. Conference was held, on June 26-28, 1998 and the 2<sup>nd</sup> Conference on June 30 - July 2, 2000, both in Thessaloniki. The 3<sup>rd</sup> Conference, celebrating the 5<sup>th</sup> G.S.M.E. Anniversary was held on June 28 - 30 2002, in Volos. The 4<sup>th</sup> Conference was held in Lamia 1-3 July 2005. The 5<sup>th</sup> Conference took place in Thessaloniki June 29<sup>th</sup> – July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2007, celebrating the Society's 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. The 6<sup>th</sup> Conference was held in Athens October 30<sup>th</sup> – November 1<sup>st</sup>, 2009 and the 7<sup>th</sup> Conference in Thessaloniki November 27<sup>th</sup> – 29<sup>th</sup>, 2015. Between its 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> Conference, G.S.M.E. organized and hosted the ISME 30<sup>th</sup> World Conference in Thessaloniki in July 15<sup>th</sup> – 20<sup>th</sup>, 2012.

In that ISME Conference, G.S.M.E. together with the Music Library of Greece "Lilian Voudouri" received the ISME – Gibson award and jointly created The "Euterpe: Greek songs for schools - Digital Music Anthology" repository. This is a unique digital collection of songs for the support of music teaching in Greece. In its platform at <http://euterpe.mmb.org.gr/euterpe/?locale=en> one can search for music scores and many more learning objects for schools (both in Greek and English). Each song is presented in music notation software (finale) and is accompanied by useful teaching ideas. The collection includes songs from rare music anthologies of the 19th and early 20th centuries as well as Greek folk songs and songs contributed by contemporary composers and music educators. The material in the repository gets enriched consecutively.

Within the framework of the celebrations for the Society's 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in 2017, the current Board of Directors has decided to organize a variety of events like lectures, workshops, and recitals in a monthly basis that will lead to the big celebration at the next G.S.M.E. conference in 2018.

### **G.S.M.E. and ISME**

From the very beginning of its founding, G.S.M.E. started collaborating with ISME and from 1998 is an Affiliated National Organization of ISME (nowadays INA). Since then -in many ways- it makes known the work of ISME in Greece and promotes ISME membership by distributing ISME material. Also in its journals and Newsletters have appeared periodically articles from IJME translated after the permission of ISME as well as report articles about ISME activities and at the G.S.M.E. conferences there has always been a display of ISME publications and information material for ISME's upcoming conferences. G.S.M.E. also has a link of ISME in its website.

As early as in January 2000, as president back then of G.S.M.E., I presented proposals of the G.S.M.E. Board on possible venues for collaboration between the ANOs to the ISME Board at a special meeting in Liverpool (ISME European Meeting).

Since its affiliation, the Society has sent representatives to all the ISME Conferences until now, who met with ISME officers and special focus sessions i.e. with the other INAs. Also, at the ISME World Conferences in Edmonton (2000), Bologna (2008) and Beijing (2010), as well as in Thessaloniki (2012), G.S.M.E. had a display of its publications and information materials.

G.S.M.E.'s close collaboration with ISME along the years was also strengthened by its excellent cooperation with the ISME International Office as well

as with the presence of ISME officers in some of its conferences. ISME past-Presidents Einar Solbu and Anna Lucia Frega attended the 5<sup>th</sup> Anniversary conference in 2002 in Volos and presented a keynote and paper and workshop respectively. In 2007 the -at that moment- ISME President-elect Håkan Lundström and the ISME Secretary General Judy Thönell attended the 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary conference in Thessaloniki and extended ISME's greetings. In 2009 the -at that moment- ISME President-elect Graham Welch held a keynote speech at the conference in Athens. The peak of the close collaboration of the two organizations was of course the ISME 30<sup>th</sup> World Conference in Thessaloniki in July 15<sup>th</sup> – 20<sup>th</sup>, 2012 hosted by G.S.M.E.