



## GREECE

**Flag Description:** nine equal horizontal stripes of blue alternating with white; there is a blue square in the upper hoist-side corner bearing a white cross; the cross symbolizes Greek Orthodoxy, the established religion of the country.



**Background:** Greece achieved independence from the Ottoman Empire in 1829. During the second half of the 19th century and the first half of the 20th century, it gradually added neighboring islands and territories, most with Greek-speaking populations. In World War II, Greece was first invaded by Italy (1940) and subsequently occupied by Germany (1941-44); fighting endured in a protracted civil war between supporters of the king and Communist rebels. Following the latter's defeat in 1949, Greece joined NATO in 1952. A military dictatorship, which in 1967 suspended many political liberties and forced the king to flee the country, lasted seven years. The 1974 democratic elections and a referendum created a parliamentary republic and abolished the monarchy. In 1981 Greece joined the EC (now the EU); it became the 12th member of the euro zone in 2001.

**Geography.** *Location:* Southern Europe, bordering the Aegean Sea, Ionian Sea, and the Mediterranean Sea, between Albania and Turkey. *Area:* total: 131,940 sq km. *Area - comparative:* slightly smaller than Alabama. *Border countries:* Albania 282 km, Bulgaria 494 km, Turkey 206 km, Macedonia 246 km. *Coastline:* 13,676 km. *Climate:* temperate; mild.

wet winters; hot, dry summers. *Terrain:* mostly mountains with ranges extending into the sea as peninsulas or chains of islands. *Natural resources:* lignite, petroleum, iron ore, bauxite, lead, zinc, nickel, magnesite, marble, salt, hydropower potential. *Natural hazards:* severe earthquakes. *Environment - current issues:* air pollution; water pollution. *Geography - note:* strategic location dominating the Aegean Sea and southern approach to Turkish Straits; a peninsular country, possessing an archipelago of about 2,000 islands.

**Military:** Hellenic Army (Ellinikos Stratos, ES), Hellenic Navy (Ellinikos Polemiko Navtiko, EPN), Hellenic Air Force (Elliniki Polimiki Aeroporia, EPA) as of 2007.

192x Car, Armd, 4x2. Lancia (Irish pattern). (see UK for vehicle details).

same TO&E as regular British formations (see South Africa for vehicle details).

### 1943 Veh, Recce. SA Recce Car 4x4, Mk 3 ME



Above: Greek crewed South African Reconnaissance Car Mk 3 in the eastern Mediterranean.

**Remarks:** Greek units with Commonwealth Forces in the Mid-East were supplied with the

### 1945 Car, Armd, 6x6. M8 Light Armored Car.



Above: M8 Armored Car during a victory parade after the end of WWII. (Photo: Author's collection)

**Remarks:** The M8 series was used by Greece well into the 1960s (see US for vehicle details).

**1945 Veh, Recce. Car, Scout, Humber Mk I.**



Above: A Humber Scout Car Mk I, as supplied from British stocks after WWII. (Photo: T. Metsovitis)

**Remarks:** (see UK for vehicle details).

1948 Car, Armd, 4x2. Car, Armd, Imp, 4x2.

**1960 Truck, Utility, 1/4-ton, 4x4, M38A1**



Above: M38A1 during military exercise. (Photo: Author's collection).

**Remarks:** (see US for vehicle details).

**1970 Veh, Util. VW181 Kurier, 4x2.**



Above: Type 181 with soft-top and brush guards. (Photo: Author's collection)

**Remarks:** An unknown number of VW Type 181 utility vehicles were acquired from West Germany for liaison work (see Germany for vehicle details).

**2001 Veh, Recce, 4x4. Panhard VBL.**

**Remarks:** 29 vehicles were delivered from France in 2001 (see France for vehicle details).

**2002 Veh, Util, Trk, Util, Armd, HMMWV**  
(see US for vehicle details)