



# Vocational education and training in Greece

## Short description







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Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union, 2014

ISBN 978-92-896-1620-1

doi: 10.2801/76056

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# Foreword

The 2014 Greek Presidency of the Council of the EU takes place in the context of major economic and social challenges, as the crisis, which can be felt all over Europe, has hit Greece especially hard. To reverse negative trends, reforms have so far focused on economic issues; yet it is important to understand that education and training policies, especially vocational education and training (VET) policy, can play a major role in empowering people and enterprises to be competitive.

In Greece, VET is in transition. The 2013 legislation on secondary education aims to promote VET and strengthen its work-based component. The action plan for youth employment intends to better link education with work, upgrade VET, boost apprenticeship and broaden career guidance offered to young people. This comes at a time when addressing high youth unemployment and other labour market imbalances is more urgent than ever.

Increasing the provision of work-based learning, in particular apprenticeships, goes some way towards ensuring that young people are able to acquire knowledge, skills and competence that will lead to better job prospects. But legislative reforms are not enough. To make qualifications relevant requires closer communication between education and training and the world of work.

Enterprises need to understand that training young people is an investment in their own future. A better match between people's qualifications and tasks benefits both employers and employees. Young people and their families also need to realise the advantages of work-based learning. This is a particular challenge in a country where university education enjoys much higher prestige than VET. But people's perceptions are not always in line with reality. Unemployment among university graduates, though still lower than that faced by people with lower qualification levels, has been rising during the crisis. Moreover, the share of those who work at a level below their qualifications has risen by six percentage points <sup>(1)</sup>. Cedefop estimates suggest that by 2020 about 60% of jobs in Greece will require medium-level qualifications, often of a vocational nature <sup>(2)</sup>.

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<sup>(1)</sup> See Pouliakas, K. (2014). *A balancing act at times of austerity: matching the supply and demand for skills in the Greek labour market*. IZA Discussion paper; No 7915. <http://ftp.iza.org/dp7915.pdf> [4.3.2014].

<sup>(2)</sup> Cedefop (2012). *Future skills supply and demand in Europe: forecast 2012*. Luxembourg: Publications Office. Cedefop research paper; No 21.

Information on skills needed now and in the future must become an integral part of decision-making and steer both reforms of VET and students' choices.

Evidence from other countries shows that cooperation in shaping attractive and relevant qualifications can help increase ownership and commitment. Greece has been working on the development of the Hellenic qualifications framework and has officially presented it in February 2014. National qualifications frameworks focusing on what people are expected to know, understand and be able to do at different levels, and possibilities to assess and validate skills acquired in formal, informal and non-formal learning settings also help to ensure that people continue to develop skills throughout their working lives.

Fully implementing changes set in motion by legislative reform, initiatives on anticipating skill needs and cooperation with and policy learning from countries with well-established VET systems will take time. Achieving sustainable results will require commitment from all partners within education and training and the labour market.

This report provides an insight into the Greek VET system. By presenting its main features and current developments, we hope that it will contribute to a better understanding of VET in Greece and the challenges ahead.

Joachim James Calleja  
*Cedefop Director*



## Acknowledgements

This short description is the result of a team effort. It is based on the work of Alexandra Ioannidou (under contract No 2013-0110/0211) and her associate Aikaterini-Evdokia Petrounaku. Cedefop would like to thank Vlasios Korovilos, who coordinated the short description from the side of Cedefop and commented on it. Thanks also go to Pascaline Descy, Eleonora Schmid, Jasper van Loo, Fernanda Ferreira, Loukas Zahilas, Vicky Oraiopoulou and Yorgos Kostakis, who provided feedback on the report. Cedefop is also grateful to Ioanna Nezi, who edited the report and to Marena Zoppi and Eleanna Velentza, who provided technical assistance.

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# Greece



Area: 131 957 km<sup>2</sup>

Capital: Athens

System of government: Parliamentary democracy

Population: 10 815 197 (2011)

Per capita GDP (nominal): EUR 17 200 (2012)

## CHAPTER 1.

# External factors influencing vocational education and training in Greece

## 1.1. Demographics

The demographic factor is particularly important in a country like Greece which, compared to other countries in the European Union (EU) is geographically both small and, because of its islands, extremely dispersed. The most recent census <sup>(3)</sup> found that Greece had a population of 10 815 197, with slightly more women (50.8%) than men (49.2%). The main demographic trends are the gradual ageing of the population and the change in composition brought about by immigration.

Since the previous census (2001), the population has decreased by 1.38% (148 823). The biggest population group is that aged 30 to 44 (Figure 1). Greece also has a low fertility rate <sup>(4)</sup> (1.4 in 2011 compared to 1.5 in 2009), which is leading to a gradual ageing of its population.

According to the 2011 census the population of Greece comprises 9 903 268 Greek nationals (303 270 fewer than in 2001), 199 101 nationals of other European Union countries, 708 003 nationals of other countries (compared to 761 813 in 2001) and 4 825 stateless persons or persons of undetermined nationality.

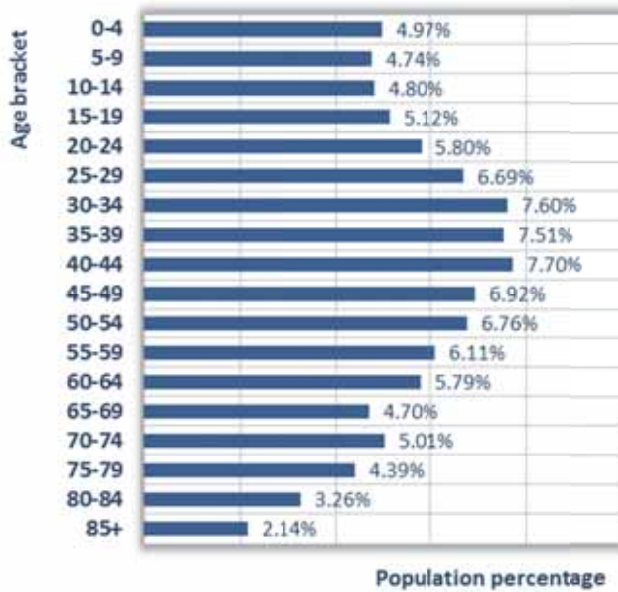
These demographic changes constitute a major challenge for the country's economy and development. The shrinkage of the labour force observed in Greece usually leads a country into social and economic decline. Based on an OECD study (2011) Greece's economically active population is expected to decrease by roughly 12% by 2050 (compared with 9% for the whole set of countries covered by the study, Figure 2). As the workforce decreases, so do social insurance contributions, while the state spends more on social security and the health system. At the same time, the increasing number of immigrants, especially from third countries, creates new issues relating to their integration into education and employment.

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<sup>(3)</sup> <http://www.statistics.gr/portal/page/portal/ESYE/PAGE-census2011> [30.10.2013].

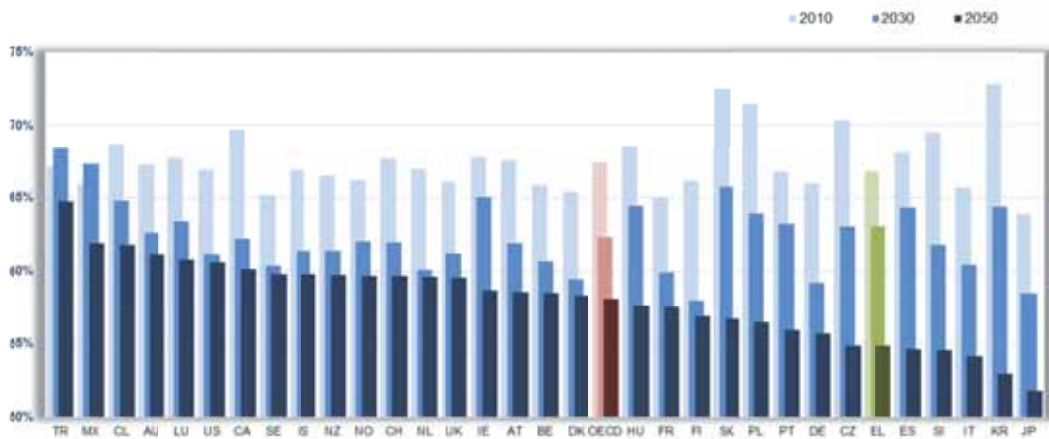
<sup>(4)</sup> <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.DYN.TFRT.IN> [20.10.2013].

Figure 1. Breakdown of population by age bracket (2011)



Source: Hellenic Statistical Authority (Elstat), population census, 2011.

Figure 2. Projected percentage change in active labour force by 2050



Source: OECD (2011).

## 1.2. Political and cultural framework

Since the outbreak of fiscal and economic crisis in Greece and the country's entry into the European financial stabilisation mechanism in 2010, the political scene in Greece has been changing rapidly. The economic crisis and the structural reforms that governments since that date have been attempting to

introduce have shaken political equilibria to the roots, turned the political scene upside down and provoked strong social reactions with changes in electoral behaviour, mass demonstrations and strikes.

The social impact of the crisis has been extremely serious. From the earliest days of the crisis (2010) increasing social inequality threatened social cohesion and protection. Within a year of its onset the number of households with no wage-earner or a wage-earner working for less than three months of the year had risen by 54%, while the increasing inequality of income distribution raised Greece to fourth place among the most unequal countries <sup>(5)</sup>. According to a recent study <sup>(6)</sup>, the largest share of inequality belongs to education, followed by employment.

The rise in inequality is observed in parallel with a decline in social protection. Although unemployment has more than doubled in Greece, the number of those receiving unemployment benefits has remained unchanged. While the percentage of those living in poverty increased by 38%, social expenditures fell sharply, so that the forecast significant reduction in the debt in 2013-14 will be due primarily to the reduction in social expenditures (Matsaganis, 2013).

Even before the crisis Greece had one of the highest poverty rates in the EU. The deep recession has driven poverty levels up, increased social exclusion, and slashed disposable income. The least well educated are at greater risk of poverty than those with a higher level of education (28.7% in 2012 for those with basic education or less, 24.2% for those with secondary or post-secondary education and 9.4% for those with university degrees) <sup>(7)</sup>.

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<sup>(5)</sup> Eurostat, income and living conditions (ILC) database.  
[http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/income\\_social\\_inclusion\\_living\\_conditions/data/database](http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/income_social_inclusion_living_conditions/data/database) [29.10.2013].

<sup>(6)</sup> Mitrakos, T. (2013). Ανισότητα και φτώχεια: τάσεις και προκλήσεις [Inequality and poverty: trends and challenges]. Presentation at *KEPE workshop on social cohesion and the economic crisis*, 30 May 2013.

<sup>(7)</sup> <http://www.statistics.gr/portal/page/portal/ESYE/PAGE-livingcond> [30.10.2013].

Table 1. **Risk of poverty by education level in Greece and the European Union (EU-27), 2005-12**

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
<b>Pre-primary, primary and lower secondary education (levels 0-2)</b>								
EU-27	22.7	23.1	23.5	23.4	23.2	23.0	24.0	23.9
Greece	27.0	27.1	26.2	27.2	27.2	27.0	29.6	28.7
<b>Upper secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary education (levels 3 and 4)</b>								
EU-27	12.5	12.7	13.3	13.0	13.0	13.4	14.1	14.5
Greece	14.2	15.6	15.5	15.5	16.4	18.5	19.7	24.2
<b>First and second stage of tertiary education (levels 5 and 6)</b>								
EU-27	6.7	6.3	6.7	6.6	6.7	6.9	7.4	7.5
Greece	5.6	5.7	7.5	6.8	5.3	5.8	7.1	9.4

Source: Eurostat, website database, 2013.

### 1.3. Economic background

Greece has been in recession since the autumn of 2009, when the risk of bankruptcy first officially appeared. The high levels of unemployment, the continuous wage and pension cuts, and the ever-increasing austerity measures have led to a decrease in purchasing power and a significant slide in per capita GDP. Despite the considerable drop in the cost of labour, investment remains low, while the political and institutional uncertainty impedes inflows of new capital.

The austerity measures are having a negative effect on GDP, which in 2012 was EUR 193 749 million. After dropping by 4.9% in 2010, 7.1% in 2011 and 6.4% in 2012 (based on 2005 values), GDP is expected to fall again in 2013, by 4.4%, before returning to growth (+0.6%) in 2014 <sup>(8)</sup>.

In the commercial sector <sup>(9)</sup>, turnover in the retail market has fallen sharply since 2010 (index value 91.7% in 2012 with base year 2005=100). The volume index for retail trade shows a corresponding decline, standing at 73.9% in 2012.

In the building/construction sector, the production index has plummeted in each of the past three years (-29.2% in 2010, -28.1% in 2011, -26.1% in 2012), a drop that is substantially greater than in the rest of the euro area and elsewhere.

In one sector the picture has been positive, and that is tourism, which is very important for Greece, on the one hand because of its economic and job-creating potential and on the other because of its social and environmental impact.

<sup>(8)</sup> [http://www.statistics.gr/portal/page/portal/ESYE/PAGWebsite database](http://www.statistics.gr/portal/page/portal/ESYE/PAGWebsite%20database) [20.10.2013].

<sup>(9)</sup> [http://www.statistics.gr/portal/page/portal/ESYE/BUCKET/General/ELLAS\\_IN\\_NUMERS\\_GR.pdf](http://www.statistics.gr/portal/page/portal/ESYE/BUCKET/General/ELLAS_IN_NUMERS_GR.pdf) [2.10.2013].



Eurostat figures show a remarkable rise in the number of hotel and other tourist accommodation nights from 2006 to 2011. Tourism sagged in 2012, but soared again in 2013, although without bringing an increase in jobs.

The Greek economy has recently shown signs of recovery. The public deficit <sup>(10)</sup> fell – compared to the preceding year – by 34.43% in 2010, 16.22% in 2011 and 7.32% in 2012 (not including the sums appropriated to support the banks), while as a percentage of GDP it dropped from 10.7% in 2010 to 9.5% in 2011 and 9.0% in 2012.

#### 1.4. Labour market

The recession has aggravated chronic structural problems in the labour market. Eurostat figures show that Greece has the fastest rising rate of unemployment in the EU, with jobless numbers having more than doubled (+209%) since 2008. The rise in the number of long-term unemployed is particularly worrying, since the longer people remain unemployed the less chance they have of entering the labour market.

The unemployment rate in Greece <sup>(11)</sup> reached 27% in the third quarter of 2013, up from 24.8% in the corresponding quarter of 2012 (Figure 3) and 7.6% in 2008. However, real unemployment in Greece appears to be much higher than the official figures show, and according to the General Confederation of Greek Workers (GSEE) has topped 30% <sup>(12)</sup>. The discrepancy is due among other things to the high percentage of people working in family businesses without receiving a regular wage ('concealed unemployment').

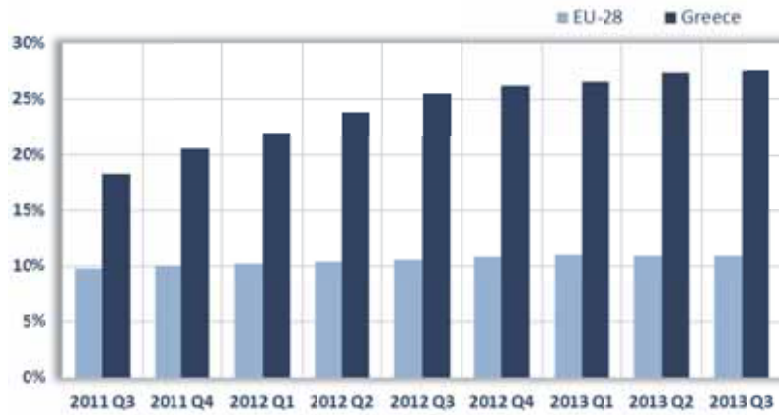
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<sup>(10)</sup> <http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/tgm/refreshTableAction.do?tab=table&plugin=1&pcode=tec00127&language=en> [20.10.2013].

<sup>(11)</sup> [http://www.statistics.gr/portal/page/portal/ESYE/BUCKET/A0101/PressReleases/A0101\\_SJO01\\_DT\\_QQ\\_03\\_2013\\_01\\_F\\_EN.pdf](http://www.statistics.gr/portal/page/portal/ESYE/BUCKET/A0101/PressReleases/A0101_SJO01_DT_QQ_03_2013_01_F_EN.pdf) [19.12.2013].

<sup>(12)</sup> <http://www.inegsee.gr/sitefiles/files/enhmerosh-teyxos-210.pdf> [24.12.2013].

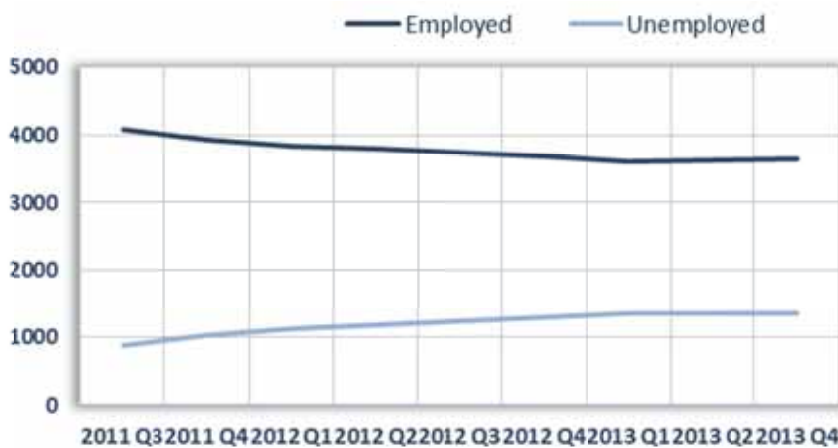
Figure 3. **Quarterly unemployment rates in Greece and the European Union (EU-28) (2011-13)**



Source: Eurostat, website database, 2014.

In the third quarter of 2013, the number of unemployed stood at 1 345 387, the non-economically active population at 4 422 800, and the working population at 3 635 905. For the first time since the beginning of the crisis employment rose in two successive quarters (by 1.1% in the 3rd quarter of 2013 compared to the 1st), but is still 2.8% below the figure for the third quarter of 2012. The national 2020 employment rate target, in the framework of the Europe 2020 strategy, which is 70% (European target: 75%), seems impossible to achieve in conditions of deep recession and lagging investment. Worse, there is a danger that, without job creation measures and a better matching of skills supply with demand, cyclical unemployment will turn into structural unemployment.

Figure 4. **Quarterly employment and unemployment figures (2011-13), in '000s**



Source: Elstat, labour force survey, 2013.

The share of part-time jobs rose to 8.2% of all employment. Of this subset of workers, 65.2% are working part-time because they could not find full-time jobs. Part-time employment rose particularly in the 15 to 24 age bracket and now accounts for 21.3% of labour contracts (see Table 2).

Table 2. **Share of flexible work arrangements (%) in labour contracts, by age group**

	2008		2012	
	15-24	25+	15-24	25+
Part-time employment	12.3	5	21.3	7.7
Temporary employment	29	10.2	26.1	9.2
Duration of temporary employment < 12 months	69.4	65.4	80.1	74.3

Source: Elstat, labour force survey, Cholezas' calculations, 2013.

Although higher levels of education are linked to lower unemployment, for higher technological education the unemployment rate remains high (30.6% in 2013) (Table 3).

Unemployment rates are particularly high for women and young people. For women the rate is 31.3% and for men 23.8%, while the differential between the sexes is more than 20 percentage points.

Unemployment is highest among those aged 15 to 24 (57.2%), reaching 62.8% for young women. Greece has had high youth unemployment since 1983, with rates in excess of 20% even in years of strong economic growth (e.g. at the beginning of the new millennium when GDP was rising by roughly 4% a year). There are several reasons for this: an overlong transition period from education to employment, early school leaving, lack of vocational education that attracts young people's interest, few opportunities to combine work and study, inability of the Greek labour market to create new jobs even in periods of high growth.

Table 3. **Unemployment rate and number of jobless by education level (3rd quarter 2013)**

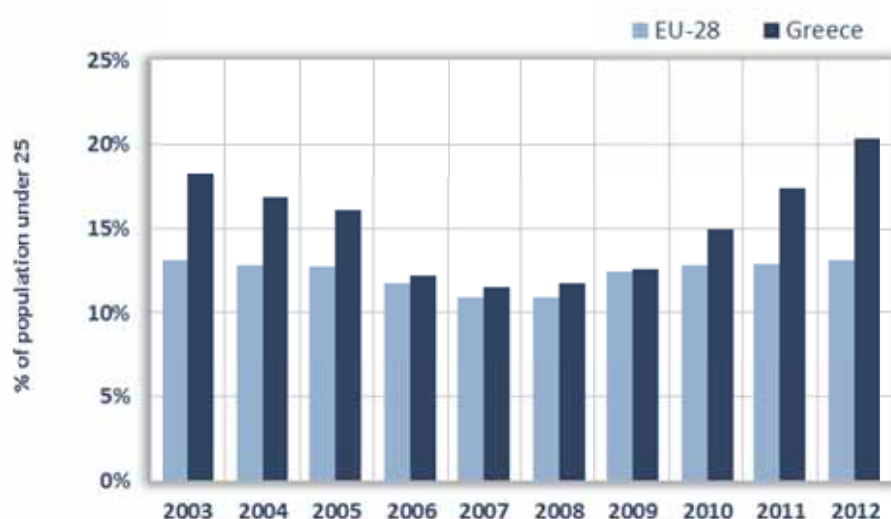
Education level	Population (in thousands)	Unemployment rate
PhD doctorate or MSc master's degree	191.6	15.7%
Tertiary education (university or higher VET)	1 195.0	18.8%
Bachelor degree (university or higher VET)	1 173.9	30.2%
Upper secondary school certificate	2 947.9	29.4%
Lower secondary school certificate	1 125.4	31.9%
Primary school certificate	2 323.4	25.8%
A number of years in primary school	242.1	39.6%
Never attended education/school	204.8	38.3%
Total	9 404.1	27.0%

Source: Elstat, labour force survey, 2013.

The government has recently stepped up its efforts to reduce unemployment and has produced an action plan to boost youth employment and entrepreneurship (2012). The scheme includes the creation of jobs for young people, supporting vocational education and training and apprenticeship systems, instituting systematic transition programmes from education into employment, boosting guidance and counselling, especially for young people, and increasing support for youth innovation and entrepreneurship (see Section 4.1.1).

The percentage of 15 to 24 year-olds not in education, employment or training (NEETs) in Greece rose steadily between 2008 and 2012 and has consistently been among the highest in the EU (Figure 5) <sup>(13)</sup>. The economic cost to the country from their exclusion from the labour market is estimated to be 3.3% of GDP (European average: 1.21%, Germany: < 0.6%).

Figure 5. **Young people (15-24) not in employment, education or training, 2003-12**



Source: Eurostat, website database, 2013.

The social cost of the increase in youth unemployment is equally high. It is estimated that young people not in education, training or employment express less confidence in democratic institutions and have a greater tendency to abstain from civic life. The problem of youth unemployment undermines growth prospects and erodes social cohesion (rise of extremist movements, weakened solidarity between generations, xenophobia and racism, anti-European and nationalist movements, etc.).

<sup>(13)</sup> <http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/pubdocs/2012/54/en/1/EF1254EN.pdf> [30.10.2013].

Table 4. **Europass CVs completed by citizens resident in Greece, 2007-13**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Europass CVs</b>
2007	3 369
2008	22 319
2009	32 267
2010	46 432
2011	98 008
2012	159 830
2013	257 085
<b>Total</b>	<b>622 275</b>

Source: Europass, website activity report, 2013.

The fiscal crisis and persistent economic recession in Greece, in conjunction with the increased emigration of highly qualified young people, particularly towards northern European countries, have had a direct impact on the supply of skills in relation to demand. One indication of this shift toward foreign job markets is the fact that the number of visits to the Europass website from Greece has multiplied by a factor of 10 since 2009, and the number of Europass CVs completed by residents of Greece by a factor of seven over the same period (see Table 4).

## 1.5. Educational attainment

The level of participation in education is generally high in Greece <sup>(14)</sup>. In 2012, more than 30% of those aged 30 to 34 had tertiary level qualifications (Figure 7). Participation in VET, on the other hand, has consistently been low (see Chapter 2).

The percentage of young people (18-24) leaving education and training early has fallen since 2006 (Table 5). Eurostat figures for 2012 show that the early leaving rate <sup>(15)</sup> in Greece (11.4%) is below the European average (12.7%, EU-28) but above the target set for 2020.

<sup>(14)</sup> <http://www.statistics.gr/portal/page/portal/ESYE/PAGE-livingcond> [30.10.2013].

<sup>(15)</sup> For the purposes of this figure early leavers from education or training are people aged 18-24 who: (a) have achieved only ISCED levels 0, 1, 2 or 3c, and (b) declared that they had not received any education or training in the four weeks preceding the survey.

Table 5. **Early school leaving rates, 2006-12**

	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
<b>EU-28</b>	15.4	14.9	14.7	14.2	13.9	13.4	12.7(*)
<b>Greece</b>	15.5	14.6	14.8	14.5	13.7	13.1	11.4

(\*) Interim data.

Source: Eurostat, website database, 2013.

As regards lifelong learning, the results of the labour force survey show a 2.4% participation rate for 2011 <sup>(16)</sup>, with the European average at 8.9%. The European benchmark was adjusted from its 2010 level of 12.5% to 15% for 2020. Nevertheless, participation rates have been falling across Europe: by 2011 just six countries had attained or exceeded the target <sup>(17)</sup>.

According to the European adult education survey <sup>(18)</sup>, the share of people aged 25 to 64 attending any kind of education in the previous 12 months was 14.5% in 2007, with no significant differences between men and women. The rate of participation in education activities of people with tertiary-level education (31.8%) is double that of those with a secondary education (15.2%) and eight times that of those with only a primary education (4%). Finally, 84% of those surveyed declared that the education activities in which they had participated had taken place outside the formal education system.

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<sup>(16)</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/education/news/rethinking/sw377\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/education/news/rethinking/sw377_en.pdf) [30.10.2013].

<sup>(17)</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-policy/adult\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-policy/adult_en.htm) [30.12.2013].

<sup>(18)</sup> [http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/microdata/adult\\_education\\_survey](http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/microdata/adult_education_survey) [30.10.2013].

## CHAPTER 2.

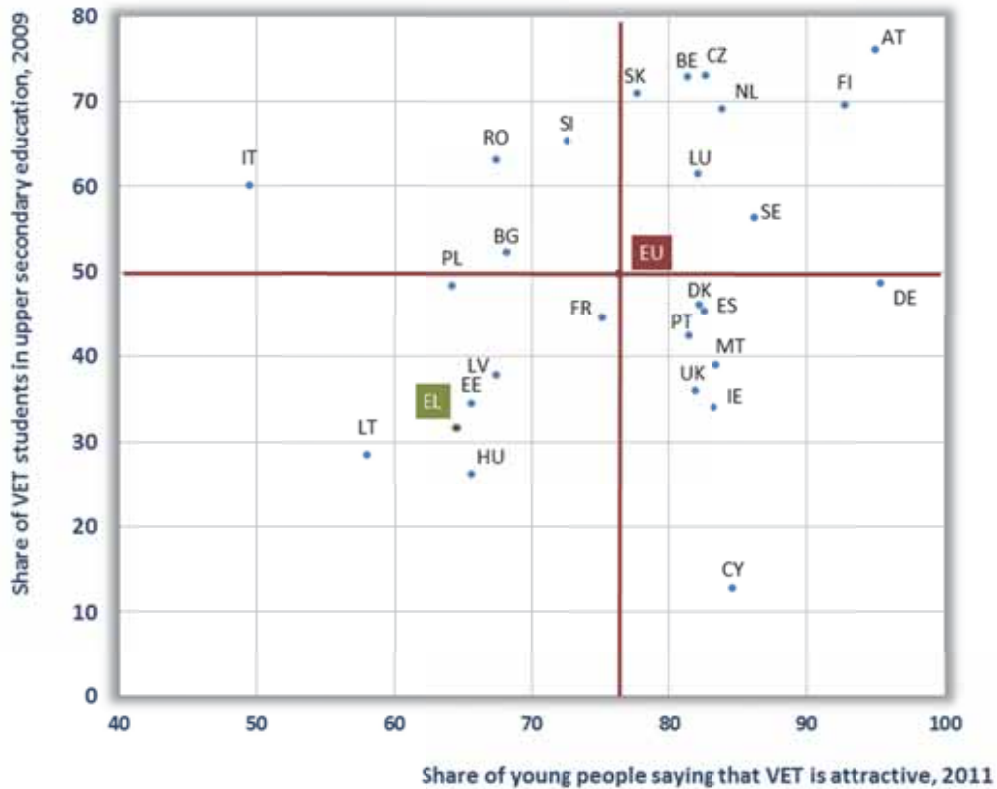
# Provision of vocational education and training from the lifelong learning perspective

## 2.1. General observations concerning vocational education and training in Greece

Greek society has always been characterised by a strong demand for general education and university studies. VET held little appeal for young people and was associated with 'laborious' and 'inferior' manual labour; on the contrary, general education is associated with expectations of improved social standing. Today, young people continue to see vocational education as a last resort, despite unceasing efforts by the authorities to present it as an alternative of equal value with general education. The statistics show that those with technical and vocational qualifications have less trouble finding jobs than those with general education.

Most youngsters (about 75%) still opt for the general upper secondary school giving access to university studies. Vocational education remains the second choice for most parents and children. It attracts low performers, who for the most part come from lower economic brackets. This tends to reinforce negative stereotypes and creates a vicious circle at the expense of vocational education (Ioannidou and Stavrou, 2013). Low participation in VET seems to be directly associated with its inability to attract young people (Figure 6).

Figure 6. Percentage of young people attracted to vocational education (2011) and percentage of vocational education students in higher secondary education (2011)



Source: Cedefop, based on Eurobarometer and Eurostat figures, 2013.

In addition, early leaving from VET is particularly high, reaching 20.3% for the country as a whole (Pedagogical Institute, 2006, p. 184), compared to 3.3% early leaving from the unified lyceum (*op. cit.*, p. 109) <sup>(19)</sup>. There are significant regional differences, with the highest early leaving rates occurring in Crete, Epirus and Central Macedonia (>20%) and the lowest in the Ionian Islands (<15%). The main reasons for leaving VET early, according to the Pedagogical Institute, appear to be the low social/economic/educational level of the student's family coupled with his/her working in the family business or in seasonal employment in the tourism sector (*op. cit.* p. 195).

The percentage of students who choose VET varies from region to region and ranges from 20% to 34%. Participation in vocational and general upper

<sup>(19)</sup> The reference population is the intake class of 2000-01, that is, students who enrolled in the first year of upper secondary school in 2000-01 but did not complete upper secondary education.



secondary school seems to be affected by a number of factors, including the structure of employment in each region, the standard of living, the educational level of the parents, the accessibility of the school, *inter alia* (CTI, 2011, pp. 106-107).

Eight of 10 students who opt for VET choose vocational upper secondary school, with just two out of 10 preferring an apprenticeship school (national average 17%; regional averages ranging between 10% and 26%). The apprenticeship schools (EPAS) operated by the Public Employment Service, the Manpower Employment Organisation (OAED) (see Section 2.2.4) attract far more students than the corresponding Ministry of Education schools (now called SEK), because their apprenticeship system gives their graduates better employment prospects.

A crucial issue for the attractiveness of vocational education, both generally and in relation to specific specialties, concerns occupational rights. While the construction sector, to take one example, grew considerably, related specialties in vocational upper secondary schools have seen low participation. This is because there are no established occupational rights for technicians with low or intermediate level qualifications, even though these trades demand enhanced knowledge and skills (such as ironworkers, builders, aluminium technicians, metal structure technicians, carpenters, cabinet makers, etc.). In several other occupations rights have not been secured, such as bakers, confectioners, butchers, cooks and tourism workers; needs are met chiefly by workers trained on the job. By contrast, establishing occupational rights in sectors such as plumbing and hairdressing has led to strong demand for related educational services (Pedagogical Institute, 2006, p. 150).

Since 2000, four laws – on the national system linking VET with employment (Law 3191/2003), systematising lifelong learning (Law 3369/2005), developing lifelong learning (Law 3879/2010), and restructuring secondary education (Law 4186/2013) – and numerous amendments have been enacted in an attempt to regulate the domain of VET and lifelong learning. This legislative activity is mainly due to the EU's post-2000 emphasis on creating a competitive Europe that is capable of meeting the new challenges of the knowledge-based society. But the Greek state also recognises the positive impact that developing lifelong learning would have on the country's economic life and on social cohesion. International surveys show that close links between vocational education and the requirements of the job market and economy are an essential precondition for an efficient, high quality system that would make it easier to move from school to active life (McCoschan et al., 2008; Wolf, 2011; Cedefop, 2012b).

The new law on the restructuring of secondary – including vocational – education (Law 4186/2013), which came into effect in September 2013, opens the VET system to the economy and the job market and attempts to regulate the field from the perspective of lifelong learning. Nevertheless, the major issues facing the Greek VET system persist: closer links with the job market and economy, more vigorous involvement of the social partners, sense of social coresponsibility and consensus on vocational training matters, decentralisation and greater school autonomy, attracting more young people into vocational training, improving the quality of initial vocational training and linking it more closely to continued vocational training (Ioannidou and Stavrou, 2013).

## 2.2. Description of VET within the Greek education system

In Greece schooling is compulsory for all children aged 5 to 15. Compulsory education includes primary (kindergarten, one year, and primary school, six years) and lower secondary education (three years), at a day or, for working students, an evening school.

Graduation from lower secondary education completes the cycle of compulsory schooling and students can then choose whether to continue in general or vocational education. If they choose to continue in general education they will attend classes at a general upper secondary school (GEL), for three years of upper secondary education; there are also evening schools for working students, and in these the programme is four years. Students enter upper secondary school at the age of 15 and graduate at 18. In the first year the programme is general, while in the second and third years students take both general education and special orientation subjects. The choice of subjects is informed by educational or vocational guidance offered through the decentralised structures of the Ministry of Education's Vocational Orientation Guidance and Educational Activities Directorate (SEPED) (see Section 4.2). Those who graduate from a general upper secondary school can sit the national examinations for admission to a tertiary education programme.

According to the new law regulating secondary education (Law 4186/2013), which aims among other things to attract more students into VET, students now have the following options in addition to the general upper secondary school:

- (a) initial vocational education within the formal education system <sup>(20)</sup> in the second cycle of secondary education at a vocational upper secondary school (day or evening school);
- (b) initial vocational training <sup>(21)</sup> outside the formal education system (referred to as non-formal) in vocational training schools (SEK), vocational training institutes (IEK), centres for lifelong learning and colleges.

### **2.2.1. Initial formal vocational education: vocational upper secondary schools (EPAL)**

At national level (Law 3879/2010 concerning lifelong learning), formal VET leads to the acquisition of certificates recognised nationally by public authorities, and is part of the education ladder. Formal education also includes education for adults.

According to the law on secondary education (Law 4186/2013), vocational education is provided by the vocational upper secondary school. These schools (public or private) are founded exclusively by the Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs and may be day or evening schools. The minimum age for enrolment in a vocational evening school is 16.

The public vocational upper secondary schools offer the specialties that are listed in the legislation. The programmes are organised by sector, group and specialty, with most sectors offering two or more specialties. The sectors currently covered are information science, mechanical engineering, electrical engineering/electronics/automation, construction, environment and natural resources, administration and economics, agronomy-food technology and nutrition, and occupations in the merchant marine (captain, mechanic).

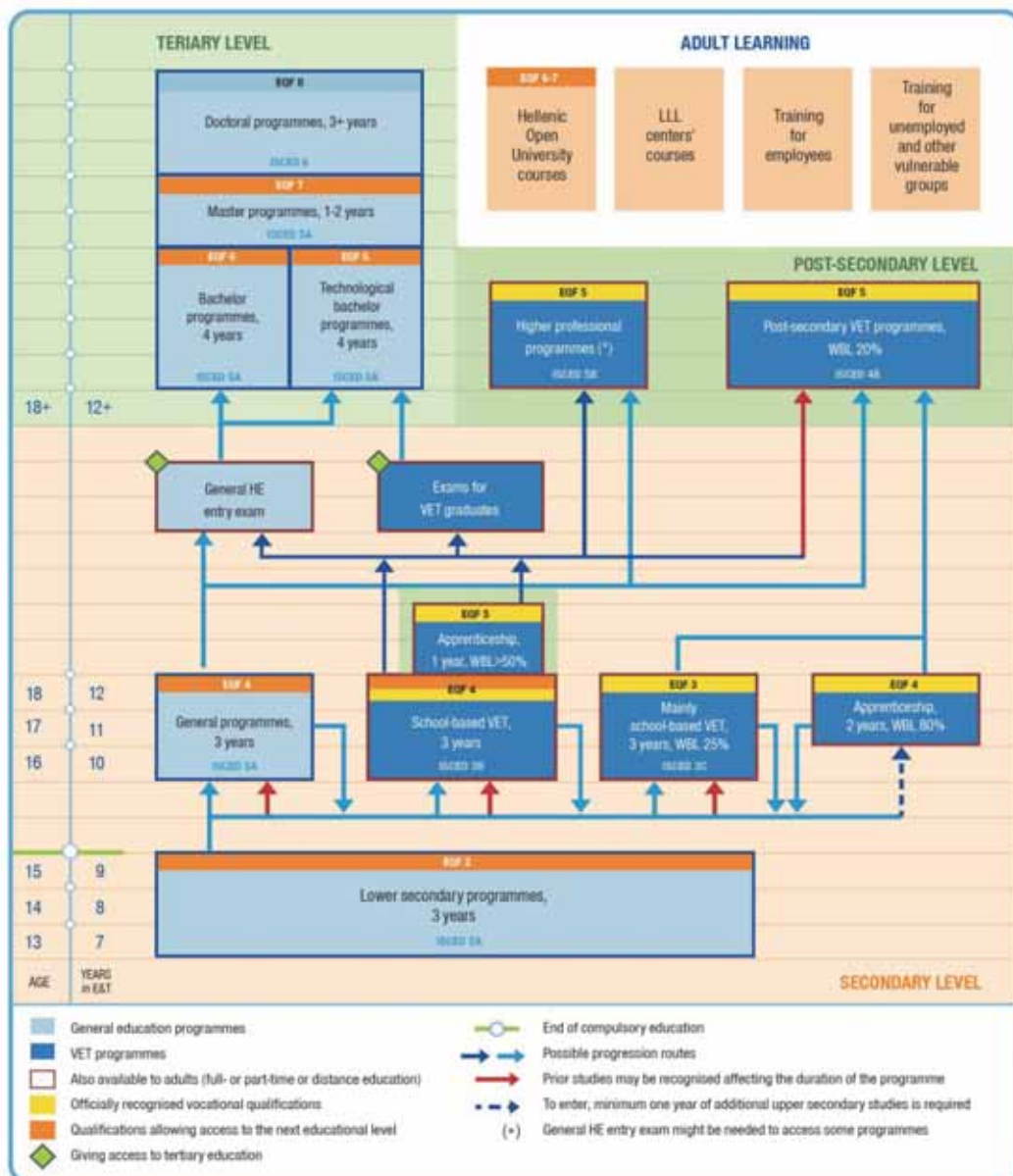
According to the new law specialties should be tailored to national and regional economic needs, following the recommendations of the ministries, regional administrations and social partners. Curricula can be developed in line with the European credit system for VET (ECVET), and take into account, where these exist, related job profiles certified by the National Organisation for the Certification of Qualifications and Vocational Guidance (Eoppep).

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<sup>(20)</sup> Formal education system: the system of primary, secondary and tertiary education. National legislation reserves the term 'formal vocational education' for programmes at upper secondary level (EPAL) that allow access to higher education through exams. Although they are fully or partially regulated by the state and lead to officially recognised qualifications, other upper secondary or post-secondary programmes and some CVET programmes are considered non-formal VET.

<sup>(21)</sup> In Greece, in this context, 'initial vocational training' refers to the training that provides basic knowledge, abilities and skills in trades and specialties, targeting the integration, reintegration, job mobility and enhancement of human resources in the labour market, as well as professional and personal development.

Figure 7. Vocational education and training in the framework of the Greek education system



NB: EQF levels are placed according to the January 2014 EQF-NQF referencing report.

ISCED 1997 was used on the chart. Conversion to ISCED 2011 is ongoing.

Source: Cedefop.

- Programmes at vocational upper secondary school can lead to two levels:
- a three-year programme;
  - an additional 'apprenticeship year'.

In the day schools the secondary cycle comprises three years. Students with lower secondary leaving certificates or equivalent qualifications enrol in the first

year without entrance examinations. Students promoted from the first year of a vocational upper secondary school are entitled to enrol in the second year of a general upper secondary school: this means that the system allows for horizontal mobility.

The 'apprenticeship year' (education in the workplace), which is optional and is an innovation introduced by the new law, is open to those who have earned the certificate and diploma attesting completion of the three-year upper secondary education at a vocational upper secondary school. Implementing OAED's dual learning principle, it includes learning at the workplace, a specialisation course, and preparatory courses for certification at the school. The vocational upper secondary schools and OAED share responsibility for implementing the apprenticeship year, assigning the students to work placements, and all that this entails.

Between 2001 and 2011, the number of vocational education schools fell by a third, with the private sector particularly severely affected (86.5%) (CTI, 2011).

The student population in vocational education also dropped sharply over the same period, decreasing by more than 35%. In the case of the private schools particularly, student numbers fell continuously over the period, decreasing by a total of around 91%. The number of female students declined steadily, with a net loss of more than 50% between 2001 and 2011. The percentage of foreign and repatriated students in the vocational upper secondary schools in the school year 2009-10 was 16% and 15% in the EPAS apprenticeship system (CTI, 2011).

That same year (2009-10), according to the CTI review, the sectors that attracted most EPAL students were health and welfare (20.3%) and information science (14.4%) (CTI 2011, p. 113). In both EPAL and EPAS, the sectors and specialties where some growth seems to be developing are related to services. Specialties oriented towards the processing industry, construction and agriculture are either absent or inadequate (CTI, 2011, p. 149-150). A study published by the Hellenic Federation of Enterprises (SEV) urges that sectors considered particularly important for the country's economic growth in 2014-20 be taken into account in determining the specialties to be offered by VET (health, energy, supply chain, information science, food, environment, metals and construction materials) (see Section 3.1). None the less, a number of the 52 specialties that the Minister for Education removed from public EPAL and EPAS programmes in 2013 were in popular or dynamically developing sectors.

Those who complete an upper secondary programme are awarded a vocational upper secondary school leaving certificate (equivalent to the general upper secondary school leaving certificate) and a specialisation diploma at

European qualifications framework (EQF) level 4 <sup>(22)</sup>, following school examinations administered by EPAL. Graduates of the ‘apprenticeship year’ receive a diploma at EQF level 5 <sup>(23)</sup> issued jointly by the Ministry of Education and OAED, after procedures for certification of their qualifications by the national agency have been completed. Graduates of a vocational upper secondary evening school do not have to enrol in the ‘apprenticeship year’ but can apply for certification of their qualifications if they have worked for at least 600 days in the specialty with which they graduated from the third year.

The body responsible for certification of qualifications and for awarding specialisation diplomas to graduates of ‘apprenticeship year’ is Eoppep, either alone or jointly with OAED. Those who pass certification examinations receive both the related specialisation diploma and a licence to practise their trade. As appropriate, other ministries that issue corresponding occupational licences may take part in conducting examinations.

Also, EPAL graduates and those holding an equivalent certificate from a previous form of school or programme or equivalent certificates from another country are entitled to take part in national examinations for admission to a technological educational institution (TEI) in specialties corresponding or related to their diploma; the number of such places is governed by a quota system. They can also take part in national examinations for admission to universities and TEI, on the same terms and conditions as apply to graduates of general upper secondary school.

For the ‘apprenticeship year’ responsibility for students’ work placements and associated matters is shared by EPAL and OAED. ‘Apprenticeship year’ programmes are to be financed from national and/or EU funds, with no contribution from the participating enterprises, in contrast to most other European countries that implement apprenticeship systems.

### **2.2.2. Non-formal VET: vocational training schools (SEK), post-secondary VET schools (IEK), colleges and lifelong learning centres (LLC)**

The Lifelong Learning Act (Law 3879/2010) defines as ‘non-formal’ education provided in an organised framework outside the formal education system which

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<sup>(22)</sup> Article 6 of Law 2009/1992 had specified the levels of certificates of VET. The new law restructuring secondary education (4186/2013) redefines these levels, which however do not correspond to any international classification (e.g. ISCED or EQF). The level in question refers to the most recent edition of the report comparing the national and the European qualifications framework (January 2014).

<sup>(23)</sup> See preceding note.

can lead to nationally recognised qualifications. It includes initial vocational training, continuous vocational training and adult learning.

Providers of vocational training (public or private) outside the formal education system are supervised by the General Secretariat for Lifelong Learning (GSSL) of the Ministry of Education. Under the new law, the specialties offered in public vocational training and the sectors under which they are classified is determined by decision of the Minister for Education in accordance with the needs of the national and local economy and proposals of regional administrations, competent ministries and social partners. Curricula for each specialty should take into account related job profiles or required occupational qualifications. Curricula for initial vocational training are developed and overseen by the GSSL and certified by the Eoppep (see Section 3.2). They can be defined in terms of learning outcomes and linked to credits, following ECVET.

#### 2.2.2.1. *Vocational training schools*

The newly-established SEK which replace the previous EPAS can be public or private and provide initial vocational training to those who have completed compulsory education. The programmes are of three years' duration; there are no tuition fees at public schools. Students who are over 20 or employed attend evening vocational training schools for four years.

The last year of the three-year SEK programme is apprenticeship. Holders of a lower secondary school leaving certificate or equivalent can enrol in the first year of a SEK without sitting examinations. Under the law on secondary education (Law 4186/2013), SEK programmes are structured into streams: agronomy/food technology/nutrition, technological applications, arts and applied arts, tourism and hospitality occupations. Each stream offers more than one specialty; certain specialties are offered outside those groups.

In 'apprenticeship year', workshop lessons are combined with workplace learning (28 hours/week). This process is governed by a contract between OAED and the employer, which should provide incentives for hiring the trainee after completion of the apprenticeship. Graduates of apprenticeship class can also attend a programme to prepare for the assessment and certification of their qualifications to earn their vocational diploma from Eoppep.

For want of data on the newly-established SEK, the figures that follow refer to the EPAS. In 2011-12, a total of 11 644 students were enrolled in 534 (non-OAED) EPAS across Greece (CTI, 2011). The most popular specialties were those for hairdressers (26%) and beauticians (15.4%), followed by thermo-hydraulic installations and central heating maintenance (13%) (CTI, 2011).

Students promoted from the second year of a SEK are awarded a level 2 vocational training certificate, according to the EQF <sup>(24)</sup>. Those graduating from apprenticeship year receive a diploma at EQF level 3 <sup>(25)</sup>.

Students at an evening SEK who opt not to enrol in an apprenticeship year can take part in qualifications assessment and certification procedures if they have worked for at least 600 days in the specialty with which they graduated from the second year of the SEK.

Tertiary education programmes are not open to SEK graduates (no 'vertical mobility').

#### 2.2.2.2. *Programmes in post-secondary VET schools (IEK)*

These public and private institutions provide initial vocational training mostly for graduates of upper secondary schools, and secondarily to those who have completed a SEK programme, with a view to integrating them into the labour market. They are open to EPAL graduates (who may enter the third semester of a related specialty), graduates of general upper secondary school, graduates of lower secondary school (in a limited number of specialties) and foreign nationals (with language competence certificates).

IEK programmes last five semesters, four of theoretical and laboratory training totalling up to 1 200 teaching hours in the specialty, and one of practical training or apprenticeship totalling 1 050 hours, which may be continuous or segmented. Each IEK can focus on a particular sector or offer training in several sectors, such as applied arts, tourism/transportation, food/beverage, industrial chemistry, informatics/telecommunications/networks, clothing/footwear, which include various specialties.

Students who successfully complete all the prescribed semesters are awarded an attestation of vocational training. This attestation entitles them to take part in the (practical and theoretical) vocational training certification examinations conducted under the jurisdiction of Eoppep, with which they acquire an upper secondary VET certificate. IEK graduates are awarded occupational specialisation diplomas at EQF level 5 <sup>(26)</sup>.

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<sup>(24)</sup> Article 6 of Law 2009/1992 specified the level of certificates of VET. The new law restructuring secondary education (4186/2013) redefines these levels, which however do not correspond to any international classification (e.g. ISCED or EQF). The level in question refers to the most recent edition of the report comparing the national and the European qualifications framework (January 2014).

<sup>(25)</sup> See preceding note.

<sup>(26)</sup> Article 6 of Law 2009/1992 had specified the levels of certificates of VET. The new law (4186/2013) redefines these levels, which however do not correspond to any



In 2012 there were 93 public IEKs in 74 cities and 46 private IEK in 15 cities, with respective student populations of 10 800 and 21 300 trainees. For the first semester of 2013 the existing data (GSLLa, 2013) record 9 460 students (3 868 men and 5 592 women) enrolled at public IEKs. Enrolment at IEKs fell between 2000 and 2010, while the percentage of women remained steadily above 50%. This trend may perhaps be explained by the creation of a large number of institutions of higher education offering similar specialties, which absorbed secondary school leavers with lower grades, and the uncertainty relating to the establishing of professional rights of IEK graduates.

#### *2.2.2.3. Tertiary level VET programmes in higher professional schools*

Vocational programmes are also offered at tertiary level by higher professional schools. Their programmes require at least two years of study and may be as long as five years. In most cases they include a period of practical training in the workplace, which is a particularly important feature of their courses. In some cases admission to these schools is contingent upon passing the general examinations for admission to higher education programmes, while others require special admission examinations (such as university-level schools of dance, theatre). These higher professional schools operate under the supervision of the competent ministries (Ministry of Tourism, Ministry of Culture, etc.).

The diplomas awarded by these schools, and consequently the qualifications they represent, are in some cases (such as the school of educational and technological sciences, the merchant marine academies) deemed equivalent to the diplomas awarded by TEI, that is, they correspond to EQF level 6. Otherwise (such as the higher professional schools of tourism occupations, military schools for lower grade officers, police academies, dance and theatre schools), they are considered non-university tertiary level institutions and the qualifications they provide correspond to EQF level 5.

#### *2.2.2.4. Programmes offered by colleges*

Colleges offer programmes based on accreditation and franchising agreements with foreign higher education institutions that are recognised by the competent authorities in the country in which they are established or included in a list set up by decision of the Minister for Education which contains internationally accredited programmes (Law 3996/2011, on the operation of colleges). These

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international classification (e.g. ISCED or EQF). The level in question refers to the most recent edition of the report comparing the national and the European qualifications framework (January 2014).

programmes lead to a first diploma after at least three years of studies or to a postgraduate qualification.

College programmes are outside formal education and training, but the diplomas, degrees, certificates, and any other type of attestation awarded by the colleges can be recognised as professionally equivalent to higher education titles awarded in the formal Greek education system <sup>(27)</sup>.

Such titles may be so recognised when they certify:

- (a) at least three years of study, in the case of university degrees,
- (b) up to three years of study in the case of postgraduate specialisation diplomas, and
- (c) at least three years of study in the case of doctoral programmes of other EU Member States which do not fall under the Directive 2005/36/EC.

Recognition of professional equivalence permits access to a specific economic activity that the title-holder can exercise as a salaried employee or a self-employed person on the same terms as holders of comparable titles of the domestic education system.

The Ministry of Education's Council for the Recognition of Professional Qualifications (SAEP) is responsible for recognising professional equivalence, insofar as existing professional profiles allow the adequacy of a title to be judged. Otherwise, responsibility for recognising academic equivalence lies with the National academic recognition and information centre (NARIC).

#### 2.2.2.5. *Continuing vocational education and training: LLCs and other bodies providing lifelong learning*

In Greece continuous vocational training and general adult education is provided by lifelong learning centres (LLCs). The Ministry of Education, through Eoppep, is responsible for safeguarding quality of non-formal education, evaluating these centres and monitoring their operation (see Section 3.4).

To decentralise actions in this area (Law 3879/2010 concerning lifelong learning) administrative bodies have been set up by the Greek regional administrations to manage the national lifelong learning network. Each region draws up its own programme, which includes investments, vocational training actions or programmes, and more generally actions implementing public policy on lifelong learning in the region. The municipalities can set up LLCs or mobilise the network of lifelong learning bodies in their region, offering programmes linked

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<sup>(27)</sup> The procedure is set out in Presidential Decree 38/2010 (GG I/78). In addition, the newer arrangements of Law 4093/2012 (GG I/222) aim at full recognition of the professional qualifications of graduates of colleges.

to the local labour environment and beyond. Most municipalities have set up LLCs, which provide a variety of general adult education and continuous vocational training programmes. As examples of this decentralisation of lifelong learning, in 2013 the Attica region implemented recycling and public awareness programmes, Crete organised programmes for energy inspectors, and all across Greece there were regional job-seeker training programmes in information and communications technologies. The Municipality of Athens offers its employees programmes focusing on behaviour and communication with the public, while the Municipality of Thessaloniki runs Open University programmes in cooperation with the academic community. Funding comes from cofinanced community programmes (OP 'Education and lifelong learning') and from the regular budget with the signature of programme contracts.

Continuing VET programmes are also provided by most universities, including the Hellenic Open University, in a wide range of subjects (including ICT, tourism studies, accounting, economics and administration, energy and environment, food safety, production management, and programmes for foreign students and repatriated Greeks).

Moreover, almost all the ministries and their supervisory bodies implement continuing vocational training programmes for their staff or for broader groups <sup>(28)</sup> (distance learning for Greek language teachers, cross-cultural communication, youth entrepreneurship, job-seeker training courses in green occupations, training for mediators, health professionals, judges, etc.).

For the present, qualifications that are acquired through continuing vocational training <sup>(29)</sup> are not correlated to levels of the national qualifications framework, but this will eventually be done.

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<sup>(28)</sup> For more information see GSSL 2013α, pp 49-88. By way of example we mention the Ministry of Education's special applications service, the General Secretariat for Lifelong Learning via the Youth and Lifelong Learning Foundation, the Centre for the Greek Language, the special service implementing ESF cofinanced actions of the Ministry of Labour, Social Security and Welfare, OAED, the National School of Public Health, the National School of Public Administration and Local Government, the National School of Judges, and others.

<sup>(29)</sup> 'Continuous vocational training' means training for persons in the labour force which supplements, updates or upgrades knowledge, competences or skills that were acquired from vocational education and initial vocational training systems or from professional experience, and which is intended to help them enter or reenter the labour market and to foster personal and career advancement (Law 3879/2010).

### **2.2.3. Vocational education and training for special groups**

In all the forms and at all levels of formal and non-formal VET provision is made for special categories of students. More specifically, special education vocational upper secondary schools and pilot vocational training and special education schools can be set up, as can public and private special education IEKs. Also, most lifelong learning providers have general adult education and continuous vocational training programmes for those with special needs (AMEA), for example in the LLCs or in centres specialising in social and vocational integration for the disabled, and for recovering or recovered addicts, like the Therapy Centre for Dependent Individuals (Kethea) or the Organisation Against Drugs (OKANA).

### **2.2.4. OAED apprenticeship programmes**

Apprenticeship was established by legislative Decree 3971/1959 and is based on the German dual learning system which combines in-class education with paid practical work in a business.

OAED operates a total of 51 EPAS apprenticeship schools, which have an average annual enrolment of 10 000 students, depending on the relevant annual announcement. Their courses last two school years (four semesters). They admit students aged 16 to 23 who have completed at least one class of the upper secondary school. The paid practical work takes place four or five days a week in public or private sector enterprises on terms specified in the relevant apprenticeship contract. Participating enterprises are subsidised. The school is responsible for finding work placements for its students.

As of 2011, the subsidy amount for enterprises is EUR 12 for each day of traineeship. The subsidy may be paid to the employer or directly to the apprentice. The amount paid to the trainee student is 70% of the minimum wage set by the national general collective labour agreement (EGSSE), for all four traineeship semesters.

The institution of apprenticeship has been strengthened across the country by the establishment and operation of 30 vocational education career offices (GDEE) within the framework of the EPAS. These aim to systematically link vocational education to the working world by placing students in appropriate jobs in private and public sector enterprises. The effectiveness of the apprenticeship system in terms of labour market integration is clearly illustrated by the percentage of trainees entering employment on completion of their studies (70%) (GSSL, 2013a, p. 74).

On completion of their studies EPAS graduates have obtained an EPAS specialisation diploma corresponding to EQF level 4, work experience, and accumulate pension rights.

Between 2001-02 and 2011-12 enrolment in OAED's EPAS schools dropped by more than 32%, a figure comparable to the general drop in numbers in VET training (EPAL and IEK). Over that period the number of girls in EPAS schools rose from 25% of the student population to 36.5%.

The most popular courses offered by these schools are those for electricians, plumbers, car mechanics, computer technicians and hairdressers.

### 2.3. Other forms of vocational training

Business and the social partners play an active role in continuing vocational training. The role of the state is confined to financing and, in some cases, assuring the quality of the services provided, through the accreditation of providers and teachers/trainers.

A fair number of enterprises provide systematic organised training programmes for their employees (in-house training), chiefly through seminars and accelerated programmes. In-house training is usually funded through the fund for employment and vocational training (LAEK), which is handled by OAED. LAEK programmes can include:

- (a) training programmes in Greece (in-house and inter-company);
- (b) postgraduate or other long-term educational programmes in Greece;
- (c) training programmes that take place outside Greece.

The social partners implement vocational training programmes for their members and for other groups of citizens. Most of these programmes are covered by cofinancing from the European Social Fund. The qualifications acquired from this type of training are not recognised by any national authority.

GSEE implements vocational training programmes aimed at workers in the private sector, the unemployed, and its own union officials. More specifically, these programmes target sectors like tourism, technical trades and manufacturing/construction, teachers and teacher trainers, commerce, environment, consumer protection, social economy, informatics and economics/administration.

The Hellenic Confederation of Professionals, Craftsmen and Merchants (GSEVEE) implements training and retraining programmes relating to tourism occupations, environmental management and basic technical vocational education skills, addressed to employers, self-employed persons, workers in every sector of the economy, and also to the unemployed, who accounted for about 6.5% of all trainees in 2013. The number of programmes more than

doubled between 2011 and 2013 (October), as did the number of trainees over the same period (from 5 319 to 11 285, an increase of 112%).

The Civil Servants' Confederation (ADEDY) implements programmes designed to improve and upgrade the knowledge and skills of civil service personnel, with a view to promoting modernisation of public administration services and improving the skills of public sector staff.

The National Confederation of Hellenic Commerce (NCHC) implements programmes for the personnel of commercial enterprises.

SEV has a branch (Sevstegi) that implements training programmes, initiatives and lifelong learning networks aimed at improving the knowledge, skills and competence of the country's labour force, promoting innovation and boosting the competitiveness and export orientation of Greek enterprises.

Training programmes are also run by certain press journalists' associations, the chambers of commerce, the Technical Chamber of Greece (TEE), the Hellenic Management Association (HMA), the Hellenic Adult Education Association, METAction (an implementing partner of the United Nations High Commission for Refugees), local entities, cultural groups and museums.

The social partners have lately assumed an even larger role in planning and implementing vocational training actions funded by the the European Social Fund (ESF). These actions address sectoral or local/regional labour market needs and combine training with guidance and counselling services and work placements to provide on-the-job experience (see Chapter 4). These training programmes cover both technical (ICT, safety and quality, sales, energy and environment) and general skills (communications, project management, teamwork, etc.).

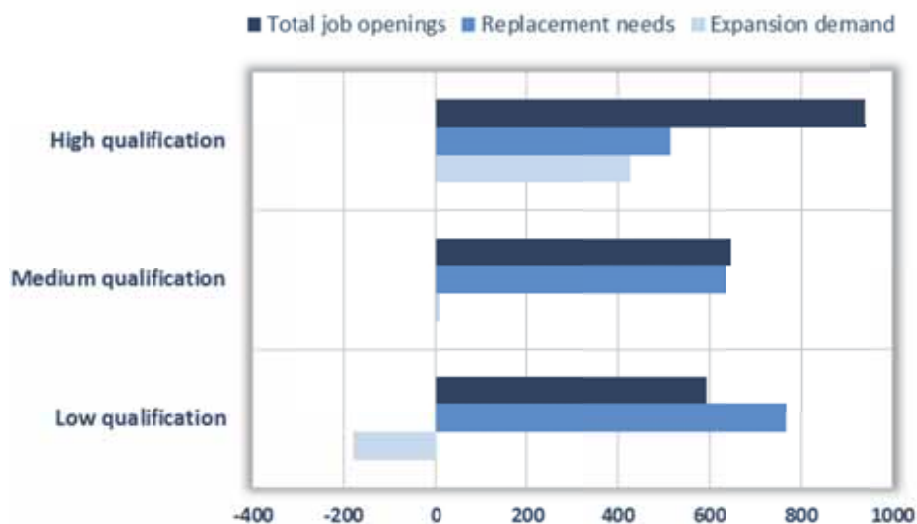
## CHAPTER 3.

# Shaping qualifications in vocational education and training

### 3.1. Diagnosing the skills needed by the labour market

Cedefop's medium-term forecasts to 2020 (Cedefop, 2010b) see a clear rise in jobs requiring high level formal qualifications (34%) in Europe, while 50% will be in jobs requiring medium-level qualifications; at the same time, most European countries expect a drop in employment of unskilled workers <sup>(30)</sup>.

Figure 8. **Future job opportunities by level of qualifications (Greece 2013-25), in '000s**



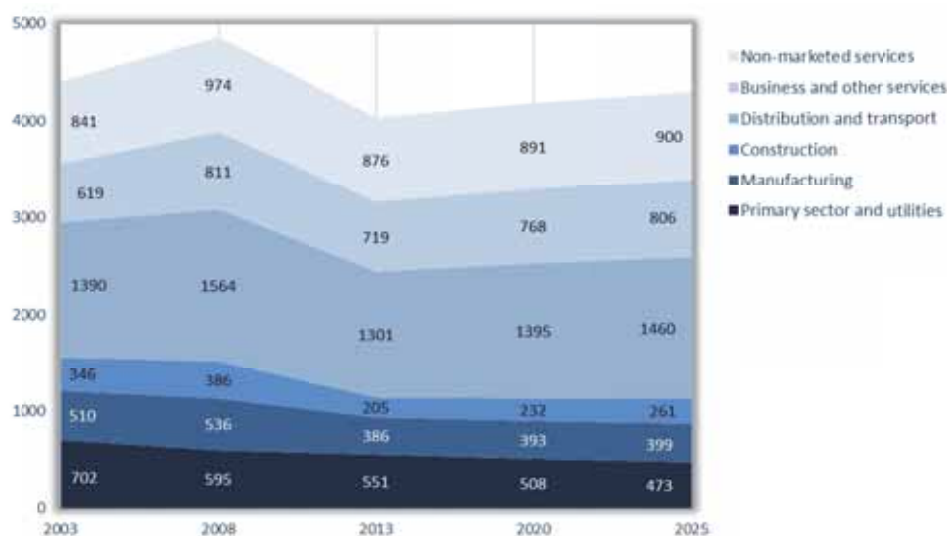
Source: Cedefop, skills forecast, 2014.

The trends recorded for Greece follow the general European pattern. Employment for those with low skills is expected to diminish (dropping from 32% to 21%), while jobs requiring mid-range and high-level qualifications are expected to rise (from 41% to 45% and from 27% to 34% respectively).

<sup>(30)</sup> For updated skill forecast information, <http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/EN/identifying-skills-needs/index.aspx>.

Job losses are expected mainly in the primary and secondary sectors, while the services sector is expected to continue generating new jobs (Cedefop, 2010a) (Figure 9). More specifically, employment in the distribution/transport sector is expected to increase by 159 000 new jobs between 2013 and 2025, in other services by 87 000 jobs and in construction by 56 000 jobs.

Figure 9. **Employment per sector (Greece), in '000s, 2003-25**



Source: Cedefop, skills forecast, 2014.

Attempts have been made in Greece to create a mechanism for early identification of medium-term trends in labour market needs through the Employment Observatory (PAEP SA) and later the National Labour and Human Resources Institute (EIEAD). These did not produce the desired results and could not be used to shape education and training policy. Consequently, 'the adoption of a long-term perspective for the development of skills and abilities in the population, even during the crisis continues to be a 'challenge for the Government and the social partners' (GSSL, 2013b, p. 17). Perhaps the biggest problem in connection with the strategic development of skills is the lack of adequate information about labour force abilities and skills. Greece is part of the second round of the OECD's PIAAC survey conducted in 32 countries to assess the skills of the adult population (16-65 years), the results of which are expected to be published in 2015.

The business survey carried out in 2011 by the Foundation for Industrial and Economic Research (IOBE) to forecast changes in regional local systems and local labour markets provides important information about domestic human resources needs and the skills in demand. Most companies (roughly seven out of 10) reported that their workers did not take initiatives or risks, were lacking in



organisational, project management and technology/innovation-handling skills, and often did not have the proper technical knowledge for the job they were doing. Clearly, today's labour force is deficient not only in social skills but also in job-relevant technical knowledge. There seems to be much less of a problem with foreign language and communications skills, and the limited use of basic computer applications (IOBE and Remaco, 2013, p. 53).

The Hellenic Federation of Enterprises (SEV) has developed a mechanism for diagnosing a company's needs as regards occupations and skills (SEV, 2013). It currently operates in eight sectors of particular interest to Greek industry and more generally to the Greek economy from the aspect of development and employment perspectives up to the year 2020: food, ICT, energy, construction products, supply chain, environment, metals and health. Using different growth scenarios for the period considered, it identified 87 key occupations as likely to require significantly different knowledge, skills and abilities in the future.

SEV's forecasts coincide to some extent with those of the McKinsey report on perspectives for growth in certain economic sectors in Greece in the next 10 years (McKinsey and Company, 2011). This study identifies the five major sectors (tourism, energy, food processing, agricultural production, retail and wholesale trade) and eight branches (rising stars), that are expected to grow dynamically and drive Greece's development efforts over the next 10 years: production of generic drugs, fish farming, medical tourism, care for the elderly and the chronically ill, creation of regional transit hubs, waste management, and secondary 'rising stars' including specialised categories of foods and the creation of targeted classical studies programmes. The study thinks that these branches will be able to generate 520 000 new jobs over the next few years.

None the less, the recent changes in the institutional framework for VET (Law 4186/2013 on secondary education) suggest that economic forecasts were not taken into account in deciding which specialties would be offered by VET bodies (EPAL, SEK and IEK). As a result, there is a risk of mismatch between skills being developed and the real needs of the economy.

In addition, in a period of deep recession and exceptionally high unemployment there is a risk greater than that of a mismatch of skills: which is that skills will lose their value. Unskilled and older workers are at greater risk, as are the long-term unemployed. There are clear signs that in Greece there is significant overeducation.

Policies designed to match supply and demand with skills include (GSLL, 2013b, p. 17):

- (a) systematic collection of data relating to the skills in demand in the rising specialties and sectors of the economy and those offered by the education

- and training system to limit all types of mismatches between supply and demand in terms of skills;
- (b) focusing on learning outcomes and the development of certifiable skills;
  - (c) more work-based education and training programmes;
  - (d) development of skills within the labour force, with support from business and the state, including the possibility of recognition and certification;
  - (e) boosting the development of new skills, such as problem-solving, communication, green skills, lifelong career management and entrepreneurship.

## 3.2. Basic thematic axes for the development of curricula and qualifications

### 3.2.1. Amending the recent legislation

The public vocational upper secondary schools offer specialties that are listed in the recent law on secondary education (Law 4186/2013) (see Chapter 2); these specialties and their provision are determined by decision of the Minister for Education.

The new law also provides that the specialties offered will reflect the needs of the economy, the proposals of the regional VET boards, social partners, chambers and professional associations, and the recommendations of the Labour Ministry and OAED, the Ministry of Development and other competent ministries.

The detailed curricula are to be shaped in accordance with the guidelines laid down by ECVET.

Where these exist, the job profiles certified by the National Organisation for the Certification of Qualifications and Vocational Guidance (Eoppep) will also be taken into account in designing the curricula by sector and specialty.

The law also requires that the duration and details of the timetable and curriculum be assessed and, if this is deemed necessary, revised at least every six years.

The initial vocational training curricula are developed by the GSLL (which also supervises all the public and private vocational training providers) and certified by Eoppep (see Section 3.2). The course outline for each specialty includes the job profile, the learning outcomes expressed as knowledge, skills and competence by subject and specialty, the corresponding credits, the match-ups between specialty and candidate placement, the timetable and specific curriculum, the teaching methods, the equipment.

### **3.2.2. Job profiles**

The job profiles developed and certified by the National Certifications Centre, now Eoppep, are complete descriptions of each occupation, including:

- (a) the title/definition of the job and/or specialty;
- (b) a background history;
- (c) the current legislative framework;
- (d) breakdown of the job and/or specialty into specifications;
- (e) knowledge, skills and competences required to practise it;
- (f) proposed pathways for acquiring the necessary qualifications;
- (g) indicative ways of assessing the knowledge, skills and competence associated with the job.

Job profiles are drawn up in cooperation with the social partners (workers and employers) and certified by Eoppep; to date, Eoppep has drawn up and certified 202 job profiles <sup>(31)</sup>. Job profiles were intended, among other things, to be used for the development of VET programmes and standards for the recognition and certification of qualifications. These aims have not yet been achieved and the use of the profiles has remained limited.

### **3.2.3. National qualifications framework, learning outcomes and development of a system for the recognition and certification of qualifications**

The development of Greece's national qualifications framework (NQF), which was instituted with the enactment of the law on lifelong learning (Law 3879/2010), is expected to be an important factor in the shaping of qualifications, the adaptation of programmes and the promotion of learning outcomes. The object of the NQF is to recognise and correlate the learning outcomes of all forms of formal and non-formal education and informal learning, so that they can be certified and classified and referenced to the levels of the European qualifications framework (Article 16).

The establishment of the NQF has brought about two main changes in the Greek education and training system:

- (a) the 'learning-outcome' approach has been officially adopted as a necessary condition for granting a qualification and/or designing new ones;
- (b) the possibility of checking and assuring the quality of all qualifications granted has been improved.

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<sup>(31)</sup> For the complete list of job profiles that have been developed see:  
<http://www.eoppep.gr/index.php/el/structure-and-program-certification/workings/list-ep>.

Already a host of Greek (public and private) and foreign entities have registered as providers of educational services and have been granted the right to issue awards. With the work on the NQF Greece has for the first time undertaken to systematise recognition of the titles granted by these entities and organise them into a unified framework. The initial phase covers the integration of the titles awarded by the formal education system into the NQF; the final target, however, is to bring all the certificates of education or training awarded in the country within the NQF (Eoppep, 2013).

The Ministry of Education is responsible for the overall supervision and operation of the NQF and the coordination of the bodies involved. Eoppep is responsible for:

- (a) developing the NQF and referencing it to the European qualifications framework;
- (b) recognising outcomes of non-formal education and informal learning;
- (c) referencing the qualifications gained via formal education, non-formal education and informal learning to the NQF levels;
- (d) creating sectoral descriptors in the form of the knowledge, skills and competence that correspond to the levels of the NQF.

Also involved in the development of the NQF was the national advisory committee, whose membership includes representatives of the providers of formal and non-formal education services, entities responsible for the recognition and certification of qualifications, the social partners, and expert consultants.

After the six-month online public consultation period (2010), the Ministry of Education and Eoppep drafted a proposal for the NQF (2013), which fine-tuned its structure and content and laid down conditions and criteria for its development and effective application (Eoppep, 2013). This draft formulation presented an initial classification of existing qualifications awarded in the framework of the country's formal education system. The NQF has eight levels, each of which will have its own set of sectoral descriptors and types of qualifications. The referencing of the NQF to the EQF was completed in December 2013, and the referencing report was presented to the advisory group for the European qualifications framework. For now the certification bodies whose qualifications are in the present phase covered by the NQF are the Ministry of Education, Eoppep, and the universities and technological educational institutions.

The greatest difficulty in the development and implementation of the national qualifications framework was associated with the application of the learning outcomes approach. Learning outcomes, defined as 'statements' of what a student/trainee must know, understand and be able to do after completing a learning process, are a prerequisite for the recognition and validation of non-

formal and informal learning: they provide a common conceptual framework within which different forms of learning (formal, non-formal, informal) can be integrated, evaluated, assessed and certified. Samples of this approach already exist in the detailed curricula and job profiles that have been produced to date. However, learning outcomes are still not generally used in VET curricula.

The final phase of development of the NQF covers:

- (a) the development and pilot implementation of a methodology for specifying learning outcomes;
- (b) the development of procedures and criteria for bringing the qualifications relating to certain sectors of the economy ('sectoral qualifications') within the NQF;
- (c) the development of a system by which certifying bodies can apply for their qualifications to be integrated into the NQF.

As the proposal for the Greek national qualifications framework says, 'once the NQF has been established and the process of referencing it to the European qualifications framework is completed, the plan is to develop – wherever this proves to be necessary – specific policies for the operation of new certification entities in the future and for defining the proper relationship between the NQF and the international 'sectoral' certification bodies' (Eoppep, 2013, p. 14).

A parallel project currently under way, alongside the development of the national qualifications framework, is the creation of a system for the validation and certification of qualifications. When completed, it will allow people who have acquired qualifications via non-formal and informal learning paths to have them validated and certified, independently of any education or training institution and without involving closed bureaucratic procedures, which systemically reproduce educational, vocational – and by extension social – exclusion. To date there has been no way of validating and certifying knowledge, skills and competences acquired through non-formal and informal learning, despite the fact that a substantial share of the vocational skills of Greece's citizens have been acquired in this way. This means that service users face a lack of professionalism, while workers without recognised and certified qualifications have little opportunity for career advancement.

The law calls for the development of a validation and certification system and the referencing of qualifications to the levels of the NQF (Law 3879/2010). While some preparatory work has been done, the project will take some time to complete. The competent agency – Eoppep – will:

- (a) license and monitor the operation of the bodies that certify the qualifications acquired through non-formal and informal learning;
- (b) develop and implement a credit transfer system for VET;

- (c) assure the quality of non-formal education;
- (d) propose the definition of professional rights for the holders of qualifications obtained in the framework of lifelong learning;
- (e) reference international sectoral qualifications to the NQF;
- (f) recognise the equivalence of educational qualifications earned abroad, apart from those of higher education.

The actions that are gradually expected to ease development of a validation and certification of qualifications system in Greece include:

- (a) creation and operation of a national advisory committee;
- (b) development of a unified framework (known as  $\pi^3$ ) for the qualitative upgrading of lifelong learning (initial/continuing vocational training and general adult education);
- (c) listing and formulating all the qualifications awarded by educational bodies and classifying them within the national qualifications framework (this is currently in progress);
- (d) redesigning the database of bodies and qualifications in line with recent EU guidelines (compatibility with the EQF web portal);
- (e) developing methods and tools for classifying qualifications within the national qualifications framework and referencing them to the levels of the EQF.

#### **3.2.4. Comparability, recognition and transfer of qualifications**

ECVET, which promotes utilisation of qualifications acquired in other countries and sectors, removal of barriers between the several areas of education, and recognition of qualifications both between different countries' education systems and between different systems of education within the same country, is expected to be an important factor in the future shaping of programmes and qualifications. In Greece, the law on the development of lifelong learning (Law 3369/2010) and the new law restructuring secondary education (Law 4186/2013) make provision for curricula to be geared to the ECVET system (Article 10). The organisation responsible for developing and implementing the VET credit transfer system is Eoppep, which must now proceed with this task in cooperation with the social partners. For the moment credit points for existing vocational training programmes are being awarded on a pilot basis.

Meanwhile, the State Scholarships Foundation (IKY), as coordinator of the national team of ECVET experts, has prepared a *Guide to the presentation, development and implementation of the European credit system for vocational education and training (ECVET) in Greece* (IKY, 2013). This guide, which has not yet been implemented, describes what has to be done to apply ECVET in Greece (learning agreements between VET providers, student mobility to hosting

institutions abroad, assessment of learning outcomes and awarding of credit points in the hosting institution, recording credit points in the trainee's personal transcript, validation of the learning outcomes acquired abroad and recognition of the credit points acquired as units of the vocational qualification).

### 3.3. Quality assurance

Assurance of the quality of VET is a prerequisite for the recognition of qualifications obtained from non-formal and informal learning, for the transparency of qualifications and for enhancing the reputation of VET. The creation of a unified quality assurance framework is essential, given that:

- (a) provision of educational services has spread to areas that until recently were not under the supervision of a national authority;
- (b) students/trainees are now aware that they have a say in the shaping of the services provided and the right to demand quality services;
- (c) training providers realise that assuring the quality of their services is a comparative advantage in a continuously expanding and changing market;
- (d) the educational process, especially at times of economic crisis and fiscal austerity, has to be productive and effective.

The law on lifelong learning (Law 3369/2010) sets quality standards for lifelong learning, instituting a requirement of teacher and trainer competence and professional development for teachers and trainers in adult education and stipulating continuous monitoring and evaluation of the national lifelong learning network. Specifically, it envisages (Article 18) that providers of lifelong learning services that are funded from the public purse must be evaluated as regards the realisation of the objects set out in their lifelong learning programme and receive subsidies based on their effectiveness and productiveness. It also provides (Article 19) for the establishment of a system for the professional development and evaluation of the trainers and staff involved in non-formal education and teachers in 'second chance' schools. These provisions have not yet been implemented.

Greece has incorporated the basic principles and quality criteria laid down in the recommendation for quality assurance in VET <sup>(32)</sup> in its  $\pi^3$  national quality assurance framework, which defines quality as the outcome produced when quality criteria are applied to all the components of the education process:

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<sup>(32)</sup> Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council (2009a).

- (a) the framework within which education and training are provided (structures, teaching material, programmes, teachers and trainers);
- (b) the procedures (teaching methods and application);
- (c) the learning outcomes (the knowledge, skills and competence acquired).

More specifically, the  $\pi^3$  framework lays down eight quality principles for lifelong learning <sup>(33)</sup>, which the competent authorities are asked to adopt and further refine (Ministry of Education, 2011). The fundamental principles are further qualified for each component of the educational process (inputs, processes, outputs), resulting in a list of 15 main indicators. For example, the principle that lifelong learning is effective is refined by two indicators: the degree of certification of the qualifications acquired and the degree of usefulness of the acquired qualifications in employment.

The  $\pi^3$  framework is intended to be applied by all providers of education and vocational training operating outside the formal education system. These bodies are expected to fall in line with the  $\pi^3$  national quality framework, further refine the quality indicators, apply measurement, evaluation and revision procedures to their systems and procedures, and supply data to the GSLL. The  $\pi^3$  quality framework was implemented on a pilot basis by, mainly, IEKs in 2011. The results of this first pilot approach were evaluated for the revision of the framework in 2012. Since then, nothing further has been done towards implementing it.

Other recent legislative initiatives in Greece aimed at upgrading the quality of education provided at all educational levels are:

- (a) Law 3848/2010 on upgrading the role of the teachers and trainers – establishment of norms for evaluation and meritocracy in education and other provisions;
- (b) Law 4009/2011 on the structure, operation, quality assurance of studies, and internationalisation of institutions of higher education.

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<sup>(33)</sup> In developing the fundamental quality principles the following were taken into account: (a) the most widespread and up-to-date definitions of quality; (b) the strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training (Europe 2020) (Council of the European Union, 2009); (c) the EFQM European excellence model (2010), which was used as a basis or benchmark for the practical application of quality in lifelong learning providers from different countries, such as Finland; and (d) recent conclusions from the revision of strategic approaches and priorities in VET.



## CHAPTER 4.

# Promoting vocational education and training

## 4.1. Incentives for entering vocational education and training

The percentage of young people who choose vocational education has consistently remained below 30%, when the corresponding EU average is 50% (Cedefop, 2012a). The reasons for this low take-up rate include the perceptions held by parents and children, the 'second-rate' image deriving from the poor performances of the students who choose vocational education, the lack of clarity in the regulations governing access to certain occupations, and the frequent but fragmentary reforms that fail to provide solid prospects for graduates of VET (see Chapter 2).

The Greek state is encouraging enrolment in VET through a series of regulatory, financial and other incentives addressed to individuals, businesses and VET providers<sup>(34)</sup>. The object of all these incentives is to increase the take-up of VET, prevent early school leaving and remove geographical, sectoral and institutional obstacles.

### 4.1.1. Incentives for the individual

The main incentives used by the state to encourage young people to enter VET are regulatory and financial. Public VET is free and, following examinations, assures graduates of most specialties access to the occupation and the labour market. With the establishment of the 12-month apprenticeship, EPAL graduates who pass their certification examinations receive a level 4 (higher education) qualification. EPAL graduates are also entitled to sit special examinations for entry into an institution of higher education (tertiary tier).

The new secondary education law (Law 4186/2013) also concerns VET. It aims to achieve closer ties with the labour market and the economy, so as to attract more young people to this sector. It is not possible to assess the results of the most recent reforms yet, since they were first implemented in the school year 2013-14.

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<sup>(34)</sup> These are participation incentives, which are not the same as learning incentives. The first (participation incentives) are associated with the means that will help people achieve a goal, while the second (learning incentives) are usually intrinsic and associated with satisfaction from participation in a learning procedure.

The lifelong learning law (Law 3879/2010) also provides for incentives for developing lifelong learning and updating the knowledge, skills and competence of the country's human resources (Article 18). These include:

- (a) linking non-formal education programmes to the formal education system through accredited modular programmes. These would allow the recognition, accumulation and transfer of credit points between systems;
- (b) granting education leave for participation in lifelong learning programmes, especially for workers in the private sector;
- (c) setting up personal education accounts, with contributions from the employer and the employee (and possibly the state) to cover the worker's training needs;
- (d) establishing personal learning time accounts to let workers take part in continuous training programmes.

Most of these legislative provisions have not yet been implemented.

A number of established initiatives are expected to give participation in VET a real boost in coming years provided that they are all fully implemented; these are:

- (a) the development of a system for the validation and certification of qualifications acquired through non-formal and informal learning;
- (b) recognition and referencing of learning outcomes from all forms of formal, non-formal and informal learning and linking them to levels of the national qualifications framework;
- (c) the development and implementation of a credit transfer system for VET;
- (d) the implementation of a national quality assurance framework in VET and lifelong learning.

Apart from such regulatory incentives, there are also financial incentives for workers and jobless to take part in continuous vocational training programmes, aimed at upgrading their knowledge, skills and competences. Continuous vocational training is subsidised primarily from ESF, but also from the Greek LAEK. In other cases, participation in adult education and continuous vocational training programmes is a prerequisite for entry into an occupation (such as energy inspectors, mediators) or for career advancement and qualification for positions of responsibility (such as teachers, public administration).

In response to the huge increase in youth unemployment (persons aged 15-24) <sup>(35)</sup>, the Ministry of Labour drew up, in collaboration with the Ministries of

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<sup>(35)</sup> The unemployment rate among young people aged 15-24 was 53.9% in the third quarter of 2012, when the action plan was drafted.

Education, Culture and Development, a unified operational *Action plan of targeted interventions to boost youth employment and entrepreneurship in the framework of the national strategic reference framework (NSRF) operational programme* <sup>(36)</sup> (2012). In the framework of this action plan, a number of vocational training-related initiatives are being implemented to foster employment and entrepreneurship of persons aged 15 to 24 and 25 to 35. These include:

- (a) strengthening vocational training and apprenticeship systems, particularly by combining training and work experience, through programmes that subsidise job placements for young people and practical training in workplace settings either during education or later (such as practical training for graduates of tertiary education institutions, IEKs or other bodies for initial vocational training, students in OAED apprenticeship schools and students at merchant marine academies);
- (b) institution of systematic transition-to-work programmes to help students gain initial work experience. These would need to be adapted to the needs and profiles of young job-seekers, through a combination of guidance, counselling, training and employment (e.g. job voucher schemes for young job-seekers);
- (c) providing more counselling and vocational guidance, especially for young job-seekers. Supporting vocational guidance in schools, career orientation and entrepreneurship counselling (such as through vocational education career offices, actions promoting youth entrepreneurship);
- (d) measures aimed at reducing early school leaving.

The action plan has a budget of EUR 600 000 000 and targets 350 000 beneficiaries. It is the first integrated effort on the part of the Greek State to boost employment and entrepreneurship among those aged 15 to 24 and 25 to 35, and particularly those with low-level qualifications. The plan embeds all the NSRF actions and programmes for young people that are supported by ESF and the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF). It identifies common points and creates joint actions bringing together planning and implementing bodies for education, employment and entrepreneurship policy. It also takes into account the recommendations of the social partners, and builds on evaluation and assessment of prior actions in an attempt to cure the weaknesses of similar past endeavours. It stands, therefore, as a kind of model for how the European youth guarantee scheme could work in Greece. Implementing this scheme will be a challenge, given the particular conditions prevailing in the country (extremely high

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<sup>(36)</sup> Ministry of Labour, Social Security and Welfare (2013).

youth unemployment, minimal demand from the labour market, the collapse of whole sectors of the economy, uncertain business environment, long period of transition from education to work, low prestige of vocational education, etc.). It does, however, create opportunities to try out new models – decentralised, innovative and viable – aimed at boosting youth employment (Cholezas, 2013).

#### **4.1.2. Incentives for businesses and VET training providers**

The lifelong learning law (Law 3879/2010, Article 18) establishes incentives for the development of lifelong learning and updating of the knowledge, skills and abilities of the country's human resources, including pegging subsidies for LLL providers to evaluation: that is, providers of lifelong learning (vocational training and general adult education) services that are supported by public funds should be evaluated as regards the realisation of the objects set out in their lifelong learning programme and be funded on the basis of their effectiveness and productiveness. This provision has not yet been implemented.

In addition, companies are entitled to receive back what they pay into LAEK if they carry out training programmes for their personnel <sup>(37)</sup>. The revenues of this account, which is managed by OAED, come from employers' contributions to the Social Security Organisation (IKA), with each company contributing 0.45% of its gross wage bill.

Many companies receive financial incentives to offer training places to students in or graduates of VET programmes. In this way they contribute to the education of the trainees, as for example in the EPAS apprenticeship schemes and SEKs, as provided by the new secondary education law (Law 4186/2013). There are also subsidies for companies that take part in vocational training actions funded by the NSRF (ESF) that combine training with counselling and work placement schemes (see Chapter 2).

## **4.2. Guidance and lifelong counselling**

Specialised centres offer counselling and vocational guidance (SYEP) services to students, job-seekers, workers interested in career management or a career change, parents, and special target groups (such as the disabled, immigrants).

The agency responsible for lifelong counselling and vocational guidance is Eoppep <sup>(38)</sup>, which is a member of the corresponding European network

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<sup>(37)</sup> <http://laek.oaed.gr/> [3.2.2013].

<sup>(38)</sup> <http://www.eoppep.gr/index.php/el/work-guidance-and-consulting/eoppep-syep/eoppep-part> [3.2.2013].

(ELGPN) that was set up by the European Commission in 2007. Eoppep is responsible for: helping to design and implement national counselling and vocational guidance policy, coordinating the action of public and private SYEP services providers, promoting the training and further education of SYEP staff and specifying the required qualifications, implementing actions in support of the activity of counsellors, and supporting citizens in matters relating to development and career management.

Eoppep's 'Ploigos' web portal is the national educational opportunities database, providing information about studies in Greece at all levels and in all types of education (general, vocational, initial vocational training, adult education, distance learning, etc.)<sup>(39)</sup>.

Teenagers especially can use the vocational guidance portal<sup>(40)</sup> to look for information about occupations, take skills and vocational guidance tests and create their own personal skills file.

There is also an electronic lifelong careers counselling forum with the codename IRIS, which is intended for public and private sector vocational guidance and careers counsellors and aims at encouraging supplementary actions by public and private sector counselling bodies and staff, nationally and in each region separately, and improving the quality of the services provided<sup>(41)</sup>.

The Ministry of Education offers in-school vocational guidance to students and parents (information about job and study possibilities, alternative pathways, risks that go with dropping out of school) through the decentralised structures of SEPED. The secondary school programme includes a vocational guidance class, and vocational guidance can be selected as the focus of inter-thematic projects. There are also counselling and guidance centres for meetings bringing together children or young people (up to age 25) and their teachers and guardians.

OAED also offers counselling services aimed at mobilising the unemployed and helping them enter the labour market. These services include<sup>(42)</sup>:

- (a) counselling and vocational guidance – career management, for first-time job-seekers with no clear occupational goal and people obliged to change their occupation;
- (b) counselling for people looking for work who have qualifications that are in demand in the labour market;

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<sup>(39)</sup> <http://ploigos.eoppep.gr/ekep/external/index.html> [3.2.2014].

<sup>(40)</sup> <http://www.eoppep.gr/teens/> [3.2.2014].

<sup>(41)</sup> <http://guidanceforum.eoppep.gr/> [3.2.2014].

<sup>(42)</sup> [http://www.oeed.gr/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=451&Itemid=606&lang=el](http://www.oeed.gr/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=451&Itemid=606&lang=el) [3.2.2014].

- (c) business initiative counselling, to encourage the development of business skills and help unemployed persons start businesses with enhanced viability prospects.

OAED is also a member of the European job mobility portal (EURES) network, which provides information, advice and hiring/placement services to workers and job-seekers in other European countries, and to employers looking to hire people. In Greece there are 39 EURES points in various cities <sup>(43)</sup>.

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<sup>(43)</sup> [http://www.oaed.gr/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=534&Itemid=189&lang=el](http://www.oaed.gr/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=534&Itemid=189&lang=el) [3.2.2014].

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# Webpages

[Accessed on 3.2.2014]

Youth unemployment	<a href="http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/pdf/themes/21_youth_unemployment.pdf">http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/pdf/themes/21_youth_unemployment.pdf</a>
Cedefop Europass website activity report 2012 (Greece, Greek)	<a href="http://194.26.23.24/Statistics/4._Annual_activity_by_country_and_language/2012/Europass_Statistic_Reports_Year_Locale_2012_el_GR.PDF">http://194.26.23.24/Statistics/4._Annual_activity_by_country_and_language/2012/Europass_Statistic_Reports_Year_Locale_2012_el_GR.PDF</a>
Government Gazette, Series I, No 566, 8.5.2006	<a href="http://www.eoppep.gr/images/EP/PistopoiisiPerigrammaton.pdf">http://www.eoppep.gr/images/EP/PistopoiisiPerigrammaton.pdf</a>
Eoppep, list of job profiles 1-50	<a href="http://www.eoppep.gr/index.php/el/structure-and-program-certification/workings/list-ep">http://www.eoppep.gr/index.php/el/structure-and-program-certification/workings/list-ep</a>
Eurostat, adult education survey (AES) database	<a href="http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/microdata/adult_education_survey">http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/microdata/adult_education_survey</a>
Eurostat, general government deficit/surplus	<a href="http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/tgm/refreshTableAction.do?tab=table&amp;plugin=1&amp;pcode=tec00127&amp;language=en">http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/tgm/refreshTableAction.do?tab=table&amp;plugin=1&amp;pcode=tec00127&amp;language=en</a>
Eurostat, income and living conditions (ILC) database	<a href="http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/income_social_inclusion_living_conditions/data/database">http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/income_social_inclusion_living_conditions/data/database</a>
The World Bank, data on fertility rate, total (births per woman)	<a href="http://www.inegsee.gr/sitefiles/files/enhmerosh-teyxos-210.pdf">http://www.inegsee.gr/sitefiles/files/enhmerosh-teyxos-210.pdf</a>
Elstat, population census 2011	<a href="http://www.statistics.gr/portal/page/portal/ESYE/PAGE-census2011">http://www.statistics.gr/portal/page/portal/ESYE/PAGE-census2011</a>
Elstat, living conditions in Greece	<a href="http://www.statistics.gr/portal/page/portal/ESYE/PAGE-livingcond">http://www.statistics.gr/portal/page/portal/ESYE/PAGE-livingcond</a>
Elstat, statistics database: Employment - Unemployment	<a href="http://www.statistics.gr/portal/page/portal/ESYE/PAGE-themes?p_param=A0101">http://www.statistics.gr/portal/page/portal/ESYE/PAGE-themes?p_param=A0101</a>

## Relevant national legislation

- Law 3996 (GG I/177 of 25.8.2008) concerning the establishment and operation of colleges and other provisions.
- Law 3191 (GG I/258 of 7.11.2003) concerning the national system linking vocational education and training with employment.
- Law 3369 (GG I/171 of 6.7.2005) concerning the systematisation of lifelong learning.
- Law 3879 (GG I/163 of 21.9.2010) concerning the development of lifelong learning and other provisions.
- Law 4186 (GG I/193 of 17.9.2013) concerning the restructuring of secondary education and other provisions.
- Law 3848/2010 (GG 71/I/2010) concerning upgrading the role of the instructor – establishment of norms for evaluation and meritocracy in education and other provisions.
- Law 4009/2011 (GG I/195 of 6.9.2011) concerning the structure, operation, quality assurance of studies, and internationalisation of institutions of higher education.

## List of abbreviations

<b>ADEDY</b>	Civil Servants' Confederation
<b>AMEA</b>	Disabled persons
<b>CTI</b>	Computer Technology Institute
<b>EAP</b>	Hellenic Open University
<b>ECV</b>	European curriculum vitae (Europass CV)
<b>ECVET</b>	European credit system for vocational education and training
<b>EGSSE</b>	National general collective labour agreement
<b>EIEAD</b>	National Labour and Human Resources Institute
<b>EK</b>	Education and training
<b>ELGPN</b>	European lifelong guidance policy network
<b>Elstat</b>	Hellenic Statistical Authority
<b>Eoppep</b>	National Organisation for the Certification of Qualifications and Vocational Guidance
<b>EPAL</b>	Vocational upper secondary school
<b>EPAS</b>	Vocational/apprenticeship school
<b>EQF</b>	European qualifications framework
<b>ERDF</b>	European Regional Development Fund
<b>ESF</b>	European Social Fund
<b>EU</b>	European Union
<b>EU-27</b>	The EU of 27 Member States (2007-13)
<b>EU-28</b>	The EU of 28 Member States
<b>EURES</b>	European job mobility portal
<b>GDEE</b>	Vocational education career offices (operated by OAED)
<b>GDP</b>	Gross domestic product
<b>GEL</b>	General upper secondary school
<b>GSEE</b>	General Confederation of Greek Workers
<b>GSEVEE</b>	Hellenic Confederation of Professionals, Craftsmen and Merchants
<b>GSLL</b>	General Secretariat for Lifelong Learning
<b>HMA</b>	Hellenic Management Association
<b>ICT</b>	Information and communication technologies
<b>IEK</b>	Vocational training institutes
<b>IKA</b>	Social Security Organisation
<b>IKY</b>	State Scholarships Foundation
<b>IME</b>	GSEVEE Small Enterprises Institute
<b>INEDBM</b>	Foundation for Youth and Lifelong Learning
<b>IOBE</b>	Foundation for Industrial and Economic Research
<b>ISCED</b>	International standard classification of education
<b>KANEP</b>	Education Policy Development Centre (GSEE)
<b>Kethea</b>	Therapy Centre for Dependent Individuals
<b>LAEK</b>	Special fund for employment and vocational training
<b>LLC</b>	Lifelong learning centres
<b>NARIC</b>	National academic recognition information centre
<b>NCHC</b>	National Confederation of Hellenic Commerce
<b>NEET</b>	Not in education, employment or training
<b>NQF</b>	National qualifications framework
<b>NSRF</b>	National strategic reference framework

<b>OAED</b>	Manpower Employment Organisation
<b>OECD</b>	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
<b>OKANA</b>	Organisation Against Drugs
<b>PAEP SA</b>	Employment Observatory
<b>PIAAC</b>	Programme for the international assessment of adult competences
<b>SAEP</b>	Council for the recognition of professional qualifications
<b>SEK</b>	Vocational training schools
<b>SEPED</b>	Vocational orientation, guidance and educational activities directorate (MinEd)
<b>SEV</b>	Hellenic Federation of Enterprises
<b>SYEP</b>	Counselling and vocational guidance
<b>TEE</b>	Technical Chamber of Greece
<b>TEI</b>	Technological Educational Institution
<b>UN</b>	United Nations Organisation
<b>VET</b>	Vocational education and training

## Country codes

<b>EE</b>	<b>European Union</b>
<b>BE</b>	Belgium
<b>CZ</b>	Czech Republic
<b>DK</b>	Denmark
<b>DE</b>	Germany
<b>IE</b>	Eire
<b>EL</b>	Greece
<b>ES</b>	Spain
<b>FR</b>	France
<b>IT</b>	Italy
<b>LU</b>	Luxembourg
<b>HU</b>	Hungary
<b>NL</b>	Netherlands
<b>AT</b>	Austria
<b>PL</b>	Poland
<b>PT</b>	Portugal
<b>SI</b>	Slovenia
<b>SE</b>	Slovakia
<b>FI</b>	Finland
<b>SK</b>	Sweden
<b>UK</b>	United Kingdom

	<b>Other countries</b>
<b>AU</b>	Australia
<b>CA</b>	Canada
<b>CH</b>	Switzerland
<b>CL</b>	Chile
<b>IS</b>	Iceland
<b>JP</b>	Japan
<b>KR</b>	Korea
<b>MX</b>	Mexico
<b>NO</b>	Norway
<b>NZ</b>	New Zealand
<b>TR</b>	Turkey
<b>US</b>	United States

## ANNEX

# Glossary

### **Lifelong learning**

All learning activity undertaken throughout life with the aim of acquiring and improving knowledge, skills and competences that foster the development of an well-rounded personality, employment-related prospects, social cohesion, the capacity to take part in civic affairs, and social, economic and cultural development. It includes formal and non-formal education and informal learning.

### **Formal education system**

The system of primary, secondary and tertiary education.

### **Formal education**

Education which is provided within the formal education system, leads to qualifications recognised at national level by public authorities and is part of the education ladder. Formal education also includes general formal adult education.

### **Non-formal education**

The education which is provided in an organised educational framework outside the formal education system and can lead to the acquisition of certificates recognised at national level. It includes initial vocational training, continuous vocational training and general adult education.

### **Informal learning**

Learning resulting from activities that take place outside an organised educational framework, throughout a person's life, in the context of leisure time or occupational, social and cultural activities.

### **General adult education**

Includes all organised educational activities for adults undertaken to enrich knowledge, to develop and improve abilities and skills, to develop the personality of the individual and of the active citizen and as a means of reducing educational and social inequalities. It is provided both by formal and non-formal education entities.

### **National qualifications framework**

An instrument for the classification of qualifications in the form of learning outcomes, according to a set of criteria for specified levels of learning achieved. In the national qualifications framework, the learning outcomes are defined in

terms of knowledge, skills and competence, without fragmenting the unified character of the learning.

### **Initial vocational education and training (IVET)**

General or vocational education and training that is provided in the framework of the initial education system, usually before entry into professional life but including certain cases of training after entry into professional life (e.g. retraining). It can take place at any level of the general or vocational education pathway of apprenticeship.

### **Continuous vocational education and training**

Education or training that takes place after initial education or entry into professional life and which aims at improving or upgrading knowledge and/or competences, acquiring new skills for a change of career or retraining and at continuing personal or professional development. It includes any form of education (general, specialised or vocational, formal or non-formal).

### **Post-secondary (non-tertiary) education ISCED 4**

The level between upper secondary and tertiary education. It serves to broaden the knowledge of graduates of upper secondary education. These programmes are designed to prepare students for the first tier of tertiary education or for immediate entry into the labour market. They do not lead to the award of a tertiary level qualification. Students admitted to this level will typically have completed upper secondary education.

### **Apprenticeship**

Systematic periods of dual learning with alternating long spells in the workplace and at an educational institution or training centre. The apprenticeship is governed by a labour contract with the employer and the apprentice receives some form of remuneration. The employer undertakes to provide the apprentice with training that will lead to employment in the specific occupation.

### **Qualification**

The formal outcome of an assessment and validation process which is obtained when a competent body determines that an individual has achieved learning outcomes to given standards.

### **Learning outcomes**

'Statements' of what a learner knows, understands and is able to do on completion of a learning process.





**CEDEFOP**

European Centre for the Development  
of Vocational Training

# Vocational education and training in Greece

## Short description

Luxembourg:  
Publications Office of the European Union

2014 – IV, 58 p. – 21 x 29.7 cm

ISBN 978-92-896-1620-1  
doi: 10.2801/76056  
Cat. No: TI-01-14-125-EN-C

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## Vocational education and training in **Greece**

### Short description

By providing an insight into the main features and current developments, this short description contributes to a better understanding of vocational education and training (VET) in Greece and the challenges that lie ahead, such as high youth unemployment and other labour market imbalances.

Recent reform initiatives aim to make VET more attractive in a country where the worlds of education and training and work have been quite apart. Recent legislation aims to reinforce work-based components of education and training, thus strengthening links with the labour market. Anticipating skill needs should also become part and parcel of educational policy. Provided all partners within the education and training field and the labour market are committed to their implementation, these reforms can go a long way towards addressing the challenges the country currently faces.

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Publications Office

978-92-896-1620-1



9 789289 616201