



Developments in vocational education and training policy in 2015–17

GREECE



Cedefop monitoring and analysis of VET policies

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policy in 2015-17**

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This report was produced by Cedefop and reflects contributions from Cedefop's VET policy and systems team, and Cedefop experts working on common European tools and principles for education and training, and statistics. It is based on detailed information on VET policy implementation submitted by Cedefop's European network of expertise on VET (ReferNet) and other sources.

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Aspects of vocational education and training context in 2015

At the beginning of the reporting period, the proportion of upper secondary students enrolled in vocational education and training (VET) programmes in Greece was below the EU average: 31.5% in 2014 compared to 48% in the EU (Cedefop, 2017a, p. 57). 10.5% of upper secondary initial vocational education and training (IVET) students were following work-based programmes in 2014, against 34% in the EU (Cedefop, 2017a, p. 57). The employment rate of recent upper secondary graduates was also low: 38.8% in 2014 (European Commission, 2015, p. 8) compared to 70.8% in the EU; for VET graduates only, the rate was 37.5% in 2015 (European Commission, 2015, p. 7), compared to the EU average of 73%. Adult participation in lifelong learning was also low: 3.3% in 2015 compared to 10.7% in the EU (Cedefop, 2017a, p. 57) (Table 1).

VET in the country was faced with a lack of attractiveness (Cedefop, 2014, pp. 17-20) and the challenges of increasing participation, involving employers, increasing the labour market relevance of programmes, developing quality assurance and setting up information systems to guide the development of provision. Steps were being taken to address the issues. The 2013 Law on secondary education ⁽¹⁾ introduced an optional final apprenticeship year for students in formal upper secondary VET schools (EPAL), leading to a higher level of qualifications (European qualifications framework (EQF) level 5). A new type of VET school, SEK, was being introduced outside the formal education system, offering three-year initial VET programmes (including one year of apprenticeship) to people having completed compulsory education. A European Social Fund (ESF) funded internship programme, targeted at supporting internships of graduates from post-secondary non-tertiary VET (IEK institutes), was being carried out. On the adult side, a 2013-15 lifelong learning programme had been adopted in 2013, paving the way for actions to increase the provision of adult education and better address the needs of priority target groups.

⁽¹⁾ Law No 4186/2013.

Table 1. Framework data: score on VET indicators in Greece and in the EU: 2010, last available year and recent trend

Indicator label	2010		Last available year		Recent trend (per year)			
	EL ^f	EU ^f	Yr	EL ^f	EU ^f	Range	EL	EU
Access, attractiveness and flexibility								
IVET students as % of all upper secondary students	A	A	'14	31.5 ^b	48.0 ^b _{E1}	'13-'14	▪ -2.2	▪ -0.9
IVET work-based students as % of all upper secondary IVET	A	A	'14	10.5 ^b	34.0 ^b _{E2}	'13-'14	▪ 1.3	▪ 0.1
IVET students with direct access to tertiary education as % of all upper secondary IVET			'14	81.2	69.2 ^{E3}			
Employees participating in CVT courses (%)	16.0	38.0 ^e	'10	16.0	38.0 ^e			
Employees participating in on-the-job training (%)	6.0	20.0 ^e	'10	6.0	20.0 ^e			
Adults in lifelong learning (%)	3.3		'15	3.3	10.7 ^b	'13-'15	↗ 0.1	→ 0.0
Enterprises providing training (%)	28.0	66.0 ^e	'10	28.0	66.0 ^e			
Female IVET students as % of all female upper secondary students	A	A	'14	23.0 ^b	42.7 ^b _{E1}	'13-'14	▪ -4.1	▪ -1.0
Employees of small firms participating in CVT courses (%)	7.0	25.0 ^e	'10	7.0	25.0 ^e			
Young VET graduates in further education and training (%)			'15		33.0 ^b			
Older adults in lifelong learning (%)	0.8	5.3	'15	0.8	6.9	'10-'15	→ 0.0	↗ 0.4
Low-educated adults in lifelong learning (%)	0.5		'15	0.4 ^C	4.3 ^{bC}	'13-'15	→ 0.0	↘ -0.1
Unemployed adults in lifelong learning (%)	3.7		'15	2.7	9.5 ^b	'13-'15	↘ -0.2	↘ -0.4
Individuals who wanted to participate in training but did not (%)	17.3 ^B	9.5 ^e _B	'11	17.3	9.5 ^e			
Job-related non-formal education and training (%)	71.2 ^B	80.2 ^e _B	'11	71.2	80.2 ^e			
Skill development and labour market relevance								
IVET public expenditure (% of GDP)			'13		0.56 ^b _{E4}			
IVET public expenditure per student (1 000 PPS units)			'13		6.4 ^b _{E5}			
Enterprise expenditure on CVT courses as % of total labour cost	0.5	0.8 ^e	'10	0.5	0.8 ^e			
Average number of foreign languages learned in IVET			'14	0.6 ^b	1.0 ^b _{E6}	'13-'14	▪ 0.0	▪ 0.0
STEM graduates from upper secondary IVET (% of total)	A	A	'14	46.4 ^b	30.0 ^b _{E7}	'13-'14	▪ 2.3	▪ -0.4
Short-cycle VET graduates as % of first time tertiary education graduates			'14	0.0 ^z	9.3 ^{E8}	'13-'14	▪ 0.0	▪ 0.4
Innovative enterprises with supportive training practices (%)		41.5 ^{E9}	'12	42.5	41.6 ^{E9}			
Employment rate for IVET graduates (20- to 34-year-olds)			'15	58.2 ^b	77.2 ^b	'14-'15	▪ 5.2	▪ 0.3

Indicator label	2010		Last available year			Recent trend (per year)		
	EL ^f	EU ^f	Yr	EL ^f	EU ^f	Range	EL	EU
Employment premium for IVET graduates (over general stream)			'15	0.2 ^b	5.3 ^b	'14-'15	▪ 2.2	▪ 1.0
Employment premium for IVET graduates (over low-educated)			'15	6.7 ^b	23.7 ^b	'14-'15	▪ 4.1	▪ 0.1
Workers helped to improve their work by training (%)			'15	87.4 ^u	83.7			
Workers with skills matched to their duties (%)	44.6	55.2	'15	57.2	57.3	'10-'15	▪ 2.5	▪ 0.4
Overall transitions and labour market trends								
Early leavers from education and training (%)	13.5	13.9	'15	7.9 ^c	11.0 ^c	'10-'15	↘ 1.2	↘ 0.6
30- to 34-year-olds with tertiary attainment (%)	28.6	33.8	'15	40.4 ^c	38.7 ^c	'10-'15	↗ 2.5	↗ 1.0
NEET rate for 18- to 24-year-olds (%)	20.3	16.6	'15	23.7	15.8	'10-'15	↗ 0.7	↘ 0.1
Unemployment rate for 20- to 34-year-olds (%)	19.5	13.1	'15	34.8	12.9	'10-'15	↗ 3.1	↗ 0.1
Employment rate of recent graduates (%)	58.6	77.4	'15	45.2 ^c	76.9 ^c	'10-'15	↘ 2.5	↘ 0.2
Adults with lower level of educational attainment (%)	37.3	27.3	'15	29.6 ^c	23.5 ^c	'10-'15	↘ 1.5	↘ 0.8
Employment rate for 20- to 64-year-olds (%)	63.8	68.6	'15	54.9	70.0	'10-'15	↘ 1.9	↗ 0.3
Employment rate for 20- to 64-year-olds with lower level of educational attainment (%)	57.8	53.4	'15	48.1 ^c	52.6 ^c	'10-'15	↘ 2.0	↘ 0.2
Medium/high-qualified employment in 2020 (% of total)			'16	73.8 ^d	82.8 ^d			

(^f) UOE (UNESCO OECD Eurostat) back reconstruction of 2010 values based on ISCED (international standard classification of education) 2011 not yet available.

(^b) AES (adult education survey) 2011, used as proxy for 2010 baseline.

(^c) 2014 b flags in Eurostat online tables ignored on the basis of other relevant Eurostat metadata.

(^d) Forecast made in 2016.

(^{E1}) Based on 28 countries; partial information for NL.

(^{E2}) Based on 25 countries (missing: ES, PL, RO); partial information for NL.

(^{E3}) Based on 27 countries (missing: NL); partial information for EL, IT.

(^{E4}) Based on 19 countries (missing: BE, DK, IE, EL, FR, HR, IT, PT, SK).

(^{E5}) Based on 21 countries (missing: DK, IE, EL, FR, HR, IT, PT).

(^{E6}) Partial information for NL.

(^{E7}) Based on 25 countries (missing: HR, IT, UK).

(^{E8}) Based on 23 countries (missing: BE, IE, FR, CY, UK).

(^{E9}) Based on 22 countries (missing: DE, IE, EL, NL, SI, UK).

(^b) Break after 2010, therefore baseline data not included.

(^u) Eurostat: 'low reliability'.

(^z) Eurostat: 'not applicable'.

(^e) Eurostat: 'estimated'.

NB: EU refers to EU-28, unless otherwise specified. Arrows ↗ or ↘ signal a positive or negative trend based on more than two data points and of magnitude 0.1 per year or more. Trends based on more than two data points but of smaller magnitude are indicated by →; trends based on two points only are marked ▪. Trends are estimated by means of regression models.

Source: Cedefop, 2017a, p. 57.

CHAPTER 1.

MTD 1 – All forms of work-based learning with special attention to apprenticeships

1.1. Policy priorities for 2016-20

For 2016-20, the country's priorities in this area ⁽²⁾, as set by the Director General for vocational education and training (DGVET), are to:

- (a) revise and reorganise VET in response to current socioeconomic challenges;
- (b) make VET more attractive, of better quality, and viable despite severe socioeconomic restraints.

1.2. Main actions taken in 2015-17

1.2.1. 2015 Law on modernising and expanding VET

A law on modernising and expanding VET was approved in August 2015 ⁽³⁾, accompanying expanding apprenticeship and increasing private sector participation. Apprenticeship was from then on carried out at:

- (a) EPAS apprenticeship schools, under the supervision of the national employment service (OAED) of the Ministry of Labour, to be continued up until the school year 2020/21;
- (b) EPAL, the formal upper secondary VET system, within the framework of the optional apprenticeship class year, combining theoretical and laboratory/workshop sessions at school with practical training in companies and organisations;
- (c) the vocational programmes offered by IEK, which provide a semester of compulsory internship or apprenticeship.

As a result, SEK programmes were discontinued in 2016 ⁽⁴⁾ and will be phased out by 2019.

⁽²⁾ According to a survey by Cedefop among Directors General for VET in early 2016.

⁽³⁾ Law No 4336/2015. For more details see: <http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/news-and-press/news/greece-apprenticeships-essential-part-national-vet-strategy>

⁽⁴⁾ Law No 4386/2016 (caters for the students already enrolled into these schools).

1.2.2. The 2016 national strategic framework to improve VET and apprenticeship

Following the 2016 national strategic framework to improve the quality of VET and apprenticeships, two laws ⁽⁵⁾ and a series of implementing provisions ⁽⁶⁾ were published in 2016 and 2017 regulating the EPAL apprenticeship year, the key element of the reform; setting the quality framework for VET curricula and the quality framework for apprenticeships; and introducing pilot apprenticeship curricula. The strategic framework includes detailed information on the tasks of two new bodies:

- (a) the national apprenticeship coordination committee, that supports decision-making at national level by preparing recommendations and draft legislation. All key stakeholders are represented in the committee;
- (b) regional public employment service (PES) centre-based apprenticeship support teams, to assist finding training places. In each public employment service centre, an apprenticeship support team composed of teachers and trainers has been established, with various duties:

⁽⁵⁾ Law No 4386/2016 (Government Gazette (GG) 83B/8.5.2016) with provisions regarding the implementation of the post-lyceum (apprenticeship class) and Law No 4452/2017 (GG 17A/15.2.2017) (with mostly administrative provisions).

⁽⁶⁾ Common Ministerial Act No 20405/373 (GG 1371B/17.5.2016) on the implementation of the pilot apprenticeship class (post-lyceum-apprenticeship class); Common Ministerial Act No 217890/ΓΓ4 (GG 4176B/23.12.2016) on the implementation of the pilot apprenticeship class (post-lyceum apprenticeship year) in the region of Crete; Ministerial Act No Φ7/179513/Δ4 (GG 3529B/1.11.2016) (signed by the Minister of Education and the Deputy Minister responsible for VET) on the organisation and functioning of the apprenticeship class for EPAL graduates; Common Ministerial Act No 462/6 (GG 16B/12.1.2017) on the definition of the number of learners of all VET types and levels who will fill apprenticeship places or do practical training in the public sector; Common Ministerial Act No 26385 (GG 491B/20.2.2017) on the quality framework for VET curricula; Ministerial Act No 26412 (GG 490B/20.2.2017) (more details on the quality framework for VET curricula); Common Ministerial Act No 26381(GG 490B/20.2.2017) on the implementation of the apprenticeship class which falls under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Education; Common Ministerial Act No 7977/167 (GG 661B/2.3.2017) – amendment of Common Ministerial Act 462/6 – redefinition of the number of learners of all VET types and levels who will fill apprenticeship places or do practical training in the public sector; Common Ministerial Act No 26385 (GG 491B/20.2.2017) on the quality framework for apprenticeships; Law No 4452/15.2.2017 (GG 17A) caters for: (a) the time of beginning and ending of each academic year of the apprenticeship class (for the period 2016-17 it's possible to expand the academic year in 2018 also); (b) defines the time-schedule of the apprenticeship class as follows: seven hours per week the apprentice attends a laboratory class, 28 hours (four days) per week learning at the workplace takes place (it lasts an academic year). The law covers administrative issues for the implementation of apprenticeships too.

- (i) liaise with the employer's counsellor or sectoral organisations and chambers for organising dissemination activities and seminars, also in schools;
- (ii) maintain a database with apprenticeship positions and distribute them according to the demand on specialties;
- (iii) follow up the contract implementation and mediate, if necessary;
- (iv) inform, annually, the national apprenticeship coordination committee for the implementation of apprenticeship schemes and participate, in cooperation with the National Organisation for the Certification of Qualifications and Vocational Guidance (EOPPEP) and the central union of chambers in the voluntary accreditation of employers (the goal is the creation of an accredited employer's register).

Measures to support apprenticeship include pilots and actions to ensure adequate number of apprenticeship places (local pacts, learning management platform, indirect incentives to businesses, financing), assessment and feedback.

Piloting apprenticeship in EPAL started in school year 2016/17 in two specialities (electrology installations and agricultural trade) ⁽⁷⁾ and a new pilot project was also launched in February 2017 ⁽⁸⁾. The national launch of the EPAL apprenticeship scheme took place in March 2017 in seven specialities (1 200 apprentices). During the school year 2017/18 the post-secondary apprenticeship year will be expanded, with apprenticeship schemes in 16 specialities. IEK apprenticeship schemes are scheduled to begin in October 2017. A total of 7 800 apprenticeship positions, including EPAS, EPAL and IEK combined, is planned.

1.2.3. Involving social partners

Social partners participate in the national apprenticeship coordination committee. They assist the development of training in enterprises and cooperate with the support teams and with chambers to support enterprises both centrally and locally in finding apprenticeship positions. Social partners also raise their members' awareness of the added value of apprenticeships for economic development and on the issue of training quality.

⁽⁷⁾ In the first year, learners completed the practical training at the workplace and at schools. The next step is attendance (for those who wish to participate in the certification exams) at the preparatory course (70 hours).

⁽⁸⁾ In Heraklion, Crete, in cooperation with Germany, the local chamber and the Greek-German Assembly.

1.2.4. Participation in European partnerships on apprenticeship

In line with a 2012 memorandum signed by Germany, Greece, Italy, Latvia, Portugal and Slovakia, a joint meeting was held in May 2016 to discuss different issues on apprenticeship.

A memorandum of bilateral cooperation in VET was signed with Germany early 2017.

Also, as part of the structural reform support service (SRSS) of the European Commission to support job creation and sustainable growth, a project with OMNIA (Finnish project partner) is currently in place. The main focus is on:

- (a) development of consultation between the business world and the VET system in the region of Attica (construction is the main sector);
- (b) developing a train-the-trainers model;
- (c) setting up a key competences framework;
- (d) implementing learning outcomes in VET curricula;
- (e) capacity building for the implementation of the European credit system for vocational education and training (ECVET).

CHAPTER 2.

MTD 2 – Quality assurance mechanisms in line with EQAVET and continuous information and feedback loops to IVET and CVET ⁽⁹⁾

EOPPEP was appointed as the quality assurance national reference point (QANRP) in 2011. A national quality assurance framework (Π3) aligned to the European quality assurance in vocational education and training (EQAVET) recommendation has been devised and was officially presented in July 2011. It has been partially implemented over a pilot phase covering post-secondary. IVET providers have been required since 2010 to draw up action plans at the beginning of the year and prepare an annual evaluation report. Since 2013, they have been required to perform self-assessment.

Accreditation and monitoring of continuing vocational education and training (CVET) providers focuses on their financial and legal solvency; their physical infrastructure is based on quality standards and criteria set by EOPPEP following ministerial decision. EOPPEP, as part of its monitoring, performs on-site inspections to include them in the national register.

Data on IVET graduates who participate in internships paid by the General Secretariat for lifelong learning (jointly funded by the ESF) have been collected regularly. After 2010, follow-up studies recorded data on graduate transitions

⁽⁹⁾ Sources:

European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (Cedefop):

<http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en>

ReferNet: <http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/events-and-projects/networks/refernet>

Priorities reported by Directors General for vocational training for 2016-20;

EQAVET (2016 Secretariat survey, website, newsletters): <http://www.eqavet.eu>

2016 compendium of EQAVET NRP *Erasmus+* funding:

http://www.eqavet.eu/Libraries/Annual_Network_Meeting_2016/Compendium_EQAVET_2016.sflb.ashx

Council recommendations on the 2016 national reform programmes:

<http://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/policies/european-semester/2016/#>

Education and training monitor 2016 country reports:

http://ec.europa.eu/education/policy/strategic-framework/et-monitor_en

from dual system professional schools (EPAS). The public employment service uses data on job vacancies to inform the apprenticeships provision. Since 2014, data on job hires and layoffs are used to monitor skills needs. In 2015, social partners joined forces to run an employer survey and the Ministry of Labour, Ministry of Education and social partners began developing a skills needs anticipation mechanism to inform VET provision.

2.1. Quality assurance in line with EQAVET

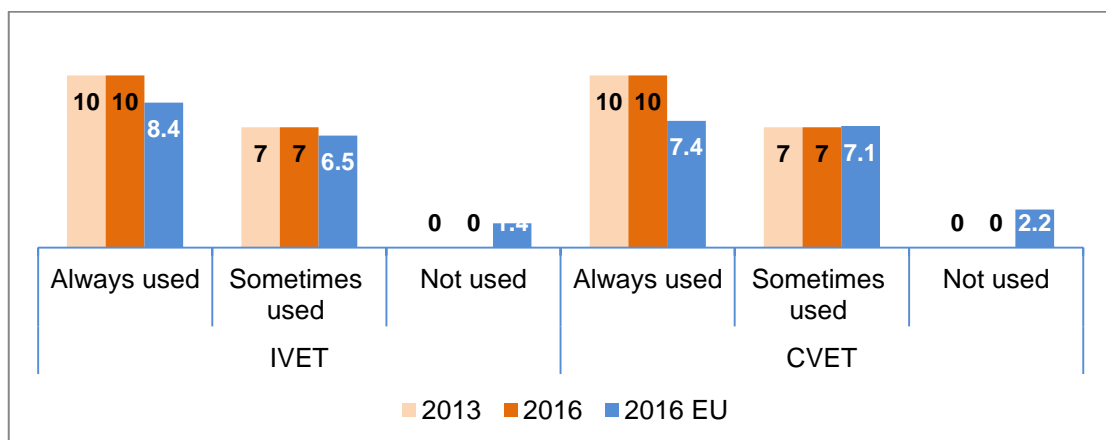
For 2016-20, the country's priority in this matter is to finalise the implementation of the existing Π3 quality assurance framework.

During the reporting period, *Erasmus+* funding is being used to develop quality assurance mechanisms linked to the implementation of the Hellenic qualifications framework and, more specifically, to ensuring the quality of the certification process based on learning outcomes. A handbook was produced in consultation with policy-makers, education institutes and social partners on the key quality assurance features and arrangements for apprenticeship and was piloted in the tourism sector by developing assessment standards based on learning outcomes.

The systematic use of EQAVET indicators to monitor the VET system ('always used' item in

Figure 1. Use of EQAVET indicators), has remained unchanged compared to 2013. Greece was above the EU average in IVET and CVET in 2016. All EQAVET indicators are used, including those on the destination of VET learners on completion of their training, the use of acquired skills at the workplace, and mechanisms to identify training needs at the workplace.

Figure 1. Use of EQAVET indicators



NB: Of the 17 indicators suggested by the 2009 EQAVET recommendation, 10 were 'always used' in IVET in 2013 and 2016 in Greece compared to 8.4 in the EU on average in 2016.

EU average was calculated based on available information for 31 out of 35 VET systems.

Source: Cedefop calculations based on EQAVET Secretariat surveys for 2013 and 2016 data.

2.2. Continuous information and feedback loops in initial VET and continuing VET

The country's priorities in this matter for 2016-20, as set by the Director General for vocational education and training, are to:

- (a) develop a holistic approach in quality assurance that responds to education and socioeconomic needs;
- (b) increase VET awareness and attractiveness.

The legal framework for a skill needs forecasting system was established in 2016 ⁽¹⁰⁾; the system is fully operational. EIEAD (the National Institute of Employment and Human resources) has the mandate to coordinate the development of this system and a coordination committee was put in place consisting of representatives from the ministries of Labour, Education, and Economy, EOPPEP, regions, OAED and social partners. EIEAD has been publishing reports every six months and the results of the forecasting system have been used to inform the development of new occupational profiles and curricula. They have also been used to inform the selection of new apprenticeship specialities to be implemented in the school year 2017/18.

⁽¹⁰⁾ Law No 4368/2016.

CHAPTER 3.

MTD 3 – Access to VET and qualifications for all through more flexible/permeable systems, guidance and validation of non-formal and informal learning

3.1. Policy priorities for 2016-20

For 2016-20, the country's priorities in this area, as set by the Director General for vocational education and training, are:

- (a) for young people: ensure access to formal qualifications as a way to enable young people to upskill to emerging skills requirements;
- (b) for adults: ensure access to VET and return to labour market;
- (c) for recently arrived refugees: ensure the identification of their educational level and qualifications aiming to define educational needs, care and support.

3.2. Main actions taken in 2015-17

3.2.1. Permeability and flexibility

3.2.1.1. *Transition from upper secondary general education to upper secondary VET*

Following the 2016 national strategic framework (Section 1.2.2), the A class (first of three school levels) of EPAL (upper-secondary VET) becomes common to all students. Second level (B' class) is where sectoral division takes place, while in C' class (third level) learners opt for a speciality. From then on, A class focuses on development of key skills. As a consequence, it becomes easier for students from the first year of upper secondary general education to switch and join EPAL through enrolling in the 2nd class of upper secondary vocational education. This reform allows for more permeability between upper secondary general education and EPAL. As of October 2017, following the Education Ministry's initiative *A new beginning for EPAL*, basic skills-enhancing measures, socio-psychological support and integration actions will be piloted in A classes as further support to EPAL freshman students.

3.2.1.2. *Transition from upper secondary VET to University*

Law No 4386/2016 (Footnote 4) reinforces the access of EPAL graduates not only to technological tertiary institutions but also university departments relevant to their studies.

3.2.2. **Transparency, recognition, validation**

3.2.2.1. *National qualifications framework* ⁽¹¹⁾

A Hellenic qualifications framework (HQF), with eight levels based on learning outcomes, has been developed. It is defined in terms of knowledge, skills and competence. First stage development has focused on qualifications awarded within the formal system but, in a long-term perspective, the plan is to accommodate non-formal and informal learning. A qualifications framework for higher education is a part of the overarching HQF. EOPPEP is in charge of developing and putting the HQF into practice. A steering committee for referencing the HQF to EQF is in place. In the reporting period, the framework is awaiting formal adoption. A draft presidential decree on the HQF has been prepared. The HQF was referenced to the EQF in 2015 but self-certification against the qualifications framework for the European higher education area (EHEA) remains a challenge.

3.2.2.2. *Validation* ⁽¹²⁾

EOPPEP is responsible for the certification of non-formal and informal learning and for accreditation of other awarding bodies. Although a national system for the certification of outputs is under development ⁽¹³⁾, it is yet to be finalised; an overall national comprehensive strategy for validation remains a challenge. Validation is in place in private security services but used to a lesser extent for licensing specific technical occupations, such as plumbers, technical works machinery operators, liquid and gas fuel installation and welding. For those qualifications (certificates) that can be acquired through validation, the standards are defined by the occupational standards. A regional voucher scheme is being

⁽¹¹⁾ Cedefop, 2017b.

⁽¹²⁾ Cedefop, 2017b; Cedefop et al., 2017.

⁽¹³⁾ Certification of outputs refers to the certification of graduates of initial vocational training and continuing vocational training, certification of qualifications; it falls under the responsibility of EOPPEP – Paragraph 2 of Article 17 of Law 4186/2013 on restructuring of secondary education and other provisions:
http://www.ilo.org/dyn/natlex/docs/ELECTRONIC/100472/120536/F1637832161/GR_C100472%20Grk.pdf

introduced to cover validation expenses for individuals in a wide range of qualifications. Law No 4386/2016 opened certification procedures to all interested parties meeting prescribed eligibility criteria ⁽¹⁴⁾. For example, it provides for the possibility for adults to obtain qualifications through certification of CVET or forms of non-formal VET different from IEK. Implementation regulations are under way. Presidential decrees to put in place a national system for the certification of outputs have been drafted. They are expected to be issued in 2017 and then implemented.

⁽¹⁴⁾ The updated system foresees three pathways:

- (a) direct certification of conditions and criteria;
- (b) participation in an assessment process, and then certification;
- (c) enrolment in training programmes and subsequent certification.

CHAPTER 4.

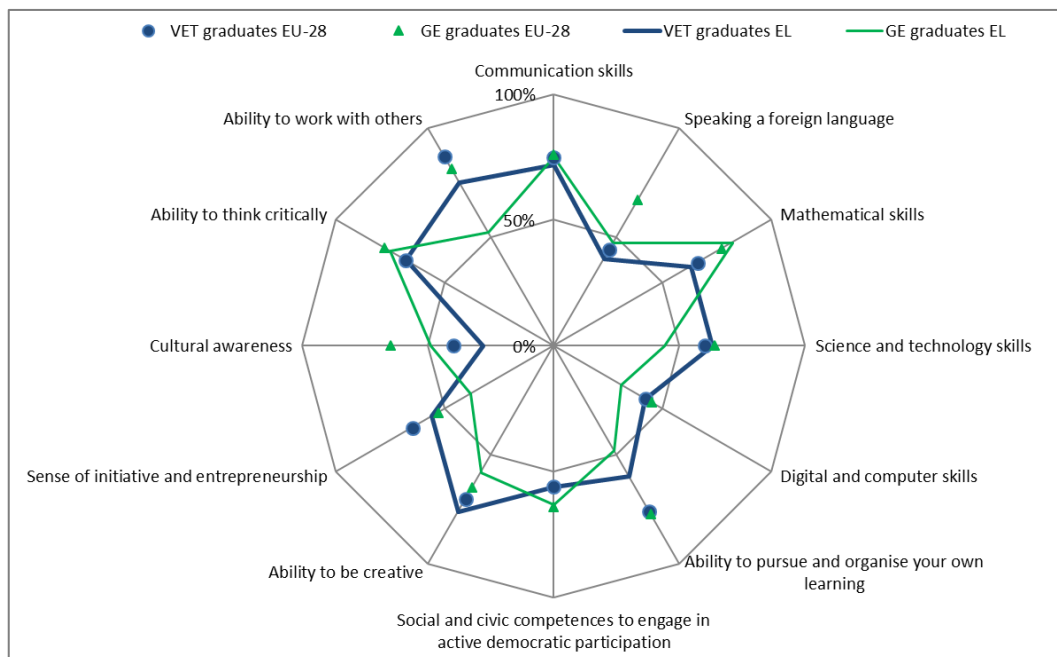
MTD 4 – Key competences in both IVET and CVET

4.1. Baseline

Compared with general education graduates, those who completed VET programmes feel they have:

- (a) stronger (ranged by priority):
 - (i) ability to work with others;
 - (ii) science and technology skills;
 - (iii) ability to be creative;
- (b) weaker:
 - (i) cultural awareness;
 - (ii) mathematical skills;
 - (iii) foreign language speaking (Figure 2).

Figure 2. Self-evaluation of acquired skills in general education and VET



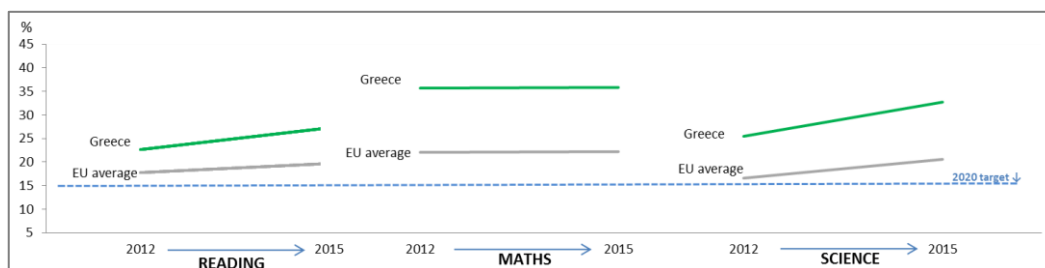
NB: GE stands for general education.

Respondents who attended upper secondary education. Interviewees were asked in summer 2016 about their overall experience in upper secondary education. Aggregated data do not take account of different types and sectors of VET and age groups of respondents.

Source: Cedefop, 2017c.

The key competences context in 2015 was mainly characterised by an increasing share of young low achievers in reading, maths and science compared with 2012 (Figure 3). The share of low achievers in Greece is much higher than the EU average, where the trend is similar.

Figure 3. **Share of 15-year-olds with low achievement in reading, maths and science**



NB: Low achievement means failing level 2 on the PISA (programme for international student assessment) scale.

Source: OECD, 2014; OECD, 2016.

As VET enrolls 31.5% of all upper secondary learners in the country ⁽¹⁵⁾, this trend is likely to be reflected in the key competences trained for in VET programmes.

4.2. Key competences in initial VET

The country's priority in this area for 2016-20, as set by the Director General for vocational education and training, is to increase the share of key competences in the curriculum framework and gradually take them into account in assessment practices.

The 2016 national strategic plan for VET and apprenticeships (Section 1.2.2), highlighted the need for integrating key competences for lifelong learning in VET curricula. The 2016-17 EPAL reform (Section 3.2.1.1) put emphasis on key competences at A class level (the first of three levels at EPAL schools). Since 2017, two ESF programmes have supported adjustment of VET curricula to this new setting, especially for numeracy and literacy. This process has also been supported by OMNIA (Section 1.2.4) who helped developing a guidebook for integrating key competences in VET curricula.

⁽¹⁵⁾ Data for 2014.

CHAPTER 5.

MTD 5 – Systematic initial and continuous professional development of VET teachers, trainers and mentors

The 2016 national strategic framework (Section 1.2.2) foresees many actions that demand teacher and in-company trainer initial training and continuing professional development (CPD). In the reporting period, policy emphasis has been put mostly on designing the reforms. Implementation is likely to be intensified in the next phase.

5.1. Initial training for teaching/training staff in VET schools

The country's priority in this area for 2016-20, as set by the Director General for vocational education and training, is to strengthen the current legal framework and programmes for teacher training to introduce coherent educational and pedagogical policies and systematically upgrade training staff.

An August 2017 Law stipulates that starting from September 2019, the certification of teaching competences of VET teachers and adult trainers will become a prerequisite for their enrolment in training programmes partly funded by the State. This will affect post-secondary non-formal IVET and CVET teachers.

An amount of up to EUR 5.75 million for 2016-18 has been earmarked for recruiting VET teachers for the newly introduced post-secondary apprenticeship (Section 1.2.2).

Teaching staff in public post-secondary VET institutions come from two alternative lists:

- (a) one comprising holders of the teaching competence certification, obtained on passing the certification exams;
- (b) a second list with trainers who possess specific qualifications – tertiary education degrees, teaching experience, relevant training – but have not (yet) completed the certification process. Since December 2015, the mechanism for certification of trainers from this second list, which was previously funded by the operational programme *Development of human*

resources, has become self-funded via certification fees that the candidates have to pay on submission of their application and portfolio.

5.2. Continuing professional development for teaching/training staff in VET schools

For 2016-20, the country's priority in this area, as set by the Director General for vocational education and training, is to strengthen the professional development of teachers and trainers in VET schools.

The VET strategy includes provisions for teachers' CPD in all forms (school-based or apprenticeship) and levels of VET (upper-secondary IVET, post-secondary IVET and CVET). Adjustment of teachers' CPD is planned to ensure a smooth transition to the new VET system; it will be focused on implementation of the post-secondary apprenticeship year, the new learning-outcomes based VET curricula (to be designed as of October 2017), and reinforcement of links with the labour market.

Particular attention is paid to the CPD of teaching staff who worked in school-based programmes and will be (re)allocated to the new apprenticeship programmes (mostly the EPAL class, 4th year, but also public IEK, post-secondary VET institutes that may opt for apprenticeships). Focus is on developing their knowledge and competences for collaborating with enterprises and apprentices. Also important is peer-learning and capturing the experience of teachers who already piloted work-based learning activities (other than apprenticeships) in previous years. Approximately EUR 4.1 million are earmarked for CPD of teaching staff in school-based settings from 2016 to 2019.

A CPD programme targeted at training 27 500 teachers in using information and communication technology (ICT) in teaching and 60 000 teachers in introductory ICT training was established in 2015.

Several sensitisation seminars (of short duration) on apprenticeship have also been carried out in 2016 and 2017, before the first implementation of the post-secondary apprenticeship year.

5.3. Initial and continuing training for trainers and mentors in enterprises

For 2016-20, the country's priority in this area, as set by the Director General for vocational education and training, is to improve the quality of VET trainers and strengthen their professional development.

The 2016 national strategic framework (Section 1.2.2) introduces broad provisions on requirements and training of enterprise staff that will become apprenticeship tutors, linked to a future goal of accreditation of companies that participate in apprenticeships. The strategy foresees that in-company trainers (at least one per company) will attend a short and flexible training programme, focusing on pedagogical knowledge and competences. Participation by professional associations and chambers is encouraged.

A Joint Ministerial Decision (JMD) under the title *Apprenticeship quality framework* was signed in February 2017, with specifications for in-company trainers. In-company trainers should attend a training programme designed jointly by the national employment service, chambers and education institutions. According to the JMD, Greek authorities are aiming at creating a register of certified in-company trainers. However, for the first three years of the implementation of apprenticeship courses, employers are not obligated to meet the above-mentioned criteria.

Several pilot projects have also been put in place, aiming at capacity building for in-company trainer training:

- (a) a 2015-17 *Erasmus+* project in cooperation with Germany and Cyprus, resulted in a guidebook for in-company trainer training published by the Institute of Educational Policy, and a training course held in cooperation with OAED. The guidebook was distributed to all employers that participated in the first large scale phase of the post-secondary apprenticeship year (2017);
- (b) in 2017, one of the deliverables from cooperation with the Finish Educational Organisation OMNIA (Section 1.2.4) was an action plan and guidebook on how to train in-company trainers;
- (c) within the framework of an apprenticeship pilot project (2017) that the Ministry of Education is running in Heraklion (Crete) in cooperation with the local chamber and the Greek-German Assembly, a number of experts will be trained in Germany, to act as multipliers that will train (at a regional level) VET teachers and in-company trainers.

The Ministry of Education, based on the outcomes of the above projects, aims at designing, in cooperation with chambers and social partners, a permanent framework for training in-company trainers.

Conclusion

Since 2015, Greece has taken measures to develop and implement apprenticeship, strengthen quality assurance, and set up a skills forecasting system to guide the development of VET provision. Steps have been taken to improve access for all to VET and qualifications, particularly through permeability measures. Progress has also been made in further developing the Hellenic qualifications framework and the validation system. Initiatives have been undertaken to support the initial and continuing training of VET school teachers and in-company trainers and mentors.

The actions carried out show that the main lines of the Riga conclusions and the country's policy priorities for 2016-20 are being addressed. Information currently available to Cedefop suggests issues which could benefit from further consideration:

- (a) initiatives in support of entrepreneurship education;
- (b) guidance;
- (c) further implementing ECVET;
- (d) providing groups in need – particularly the unemployed – with training opportunities;
- (e) further supporting the development of key competences in CVET.

List of abbreviations

AES	adult education survey
CPD	continuing professional development
CVET	continuing vocational education and training
DGVT	Director General for vocational education and training
ECVET	European credit system for vocational education and training
EHEA	European Higher Education Area
EIEAD	National Institute of Employment and Human resources
EOPPEP	National Organisation for the Certification of Qualifications and Vocational Guidance
EPAL	upper secondary VET school
EPAS	dual system professional school
EQAVET	European quality assurance in vocational education and training
EQF	European qualifications framework
ESF	European Social Fund
Eurostat	statistical office of the European Union
GDP	gross domestic product
GE	general education
GG	Government Gazette
HQF	Hellenic qualifications framework
ICT	information and communication technology
ISCED	international standard classification of education
IVET	initial vocational education and training
NEET	not in education, employment, or training
OAED	national employment service
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
PES	public employment service
PISA	programme for international student assessment
PPS	purchasing power standards
QANRP	quality assurance national reference point
SRSS	structural reform support service
STEM	science, technology, engineering and math programmes
UOE	UNESCO OECD Eurostat
VET	vocational education and training
Π3	national quality assurance framework

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