
VOCATIONAL EDUCATION
AND TRAINING IN EUROPE

GREECE





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This VET in Europe report is part of a series prepared by Cedefop's ReferNet network. VET in Europe reports provide an overview of national vocational education and training (VET) systems of the EU Member States, Iceland and Norway. The reports help to understand VET's main features and role within countries' overall education and training systems from a lifelong learning perspective, and VET's relevance to and interaction with the labour market.

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Table of contents

List of tables and figures	4
CHAPTER 1. External factors influencing VET	5
1.1. Demographics	5
1.2. Social developments	8
1.3. Economic background.....	11
1.4. Labour market	14
1.5. Educational attainment.....	20
CHAPTER 2. Provision of VET from the lifelong learning perspective.....	24
2.1. Government-regulated VET within the education system	26
2.1.1. Upper secondary vocational education programmes (EPAL) ..	29
2.1.2. Upper secondary apprenticeship programmes (mostly offered by OAED).....	31
2.1.3. Post-secondary apprenticeship programmes (EPAL apprenticeship class)	33
2.1.4. Post-secondary VET programmes	34
2.1.5. Continuing vocational education and training	36
2.1.6. Vocational education and training for special groups	37
2.2. Other forms of vocational training	37
CHAPTER 3. Shaping VET qualifications	39
3.1. Identifying skill needs	39
3.2. Developing curricula and qualifications.....	43
3.2.1. Specialties and curricula: Amending the recent legislation	43
3.2.2. Occupational profiles.....	44
3.2.3. National qualifications framework, learning outcomes and development of a system for the recognition and certification of qualifications	45
3.2.4. Comparability, recognition and transfer of qualifications.....	48
3.3. Quality assurance.....	48
CHAPTER 4. Promoting VET participation.....	51
4.1. Incentives	51
4.1.1. Incentives for individuals	51
4.1.2. Incentives for enterprises and VET providers.....	54
4.2. Guidance and counselling	54

Bibliography	57
Webpages	63
Relevant national legislation	64
List of abbreviations	65
Glossary	67

List of tables and figures

Tables

Table 1.	Demographic indicators (2010-14)	6
Table 2.	Poverty, income indicators and NEET rates in Greece, 2008-14	9
Table 3.	Risk of poverty by education level in Greece and EU-27 (2005-15)	11
Table 4.	Greek and Euro Area GDP as % of EU 28 GDP before and during the crisis	12
Table 5.	Unemployment by age group before and during the Greek crisis (quarterly data: 2009-16, 1st quarter)	16
Table 6.	Unemployment rate and number of unemployed persons by education level (Greece, quarterly data: 2009, 2015-16)	17
Table 7.	Recent unemployed of 15 years and over by age groups and level of education (Greece, quarterly data: 2009, 2015-16, '000s, 1st quarter).....	18
Table 8.	Total and part -time employment before and during the Greek crisis (quarterly data: 2009-16)	19
Table 9.	Europass CVs completed by citizens resident in Greece, 2009-15.....	19
Table 10.	Educational attainment indicators in EU-28 & Greece (2006-15)	21
Table 11.	Net change in job opportunities per occupation (Greece 2015-25).....	40
Table 12.	Job opportunities by sector (Greece & EU-28, 2015-25), in '000s.....	40

Figures

Figure 1.	Breakdown of population by age bracket and gender (2015).....	5
Figure 2.	Population projections in Greece by age group (2007-50, medium scenario).....	6
Figure 3.	Resident population by citizenship group in Greece (2014)	7
Figure 4.	Unemployment rate (Greece, quarterly data, 2001-16).....	14
Figure 5.	Employed and unemployed population in Greece (1st quarter data, 2001-16, 000s')	15
Figure 6.	NEET rates in Greece & EU-28 (2006-15).....	23
Figure 7.	VET in the Greek education and training system	28
Figure 8.	Job opportunities by level of qualifications (Greece 2015-25), in '000s	39

CHAPTER 1.

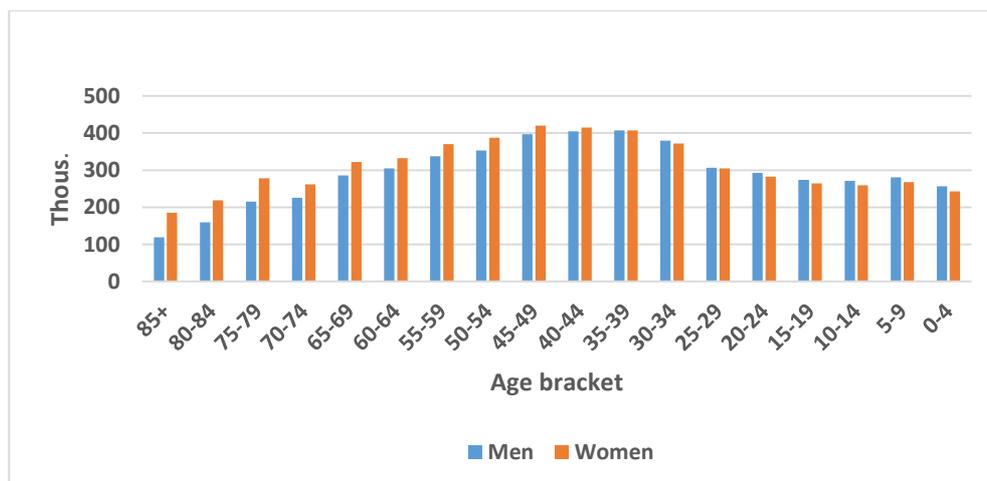
External factors influencing VET

1.1. Demographics

The demographic factor is particularly important in a country like Greece as it is geographically among the small European Union (EU) countries, and also, because it is characterized of uneven population distribution due to scattered islands, as well as remote and isolated parts of the country. Final data according to the most recent census found that Greece had a population of 10.79 million (1 January 2016), this being a decrease of 1.28% (140.6 thousand people) compared to the 2001 census. In terms of the gender composition women were slightly more (51%) than men (49%). The main demographic trends are the gradual ageing of the population, the change in composition brought about by immigration, while a constant emigration flow during recent years causes additional concern in respect to changing patterns required for vocational education and training (VET) operation. In addition, these demographic changes are related to the decrease in the following figures regarding VET ⁽¹⁾:

- (a) student population (from 156 258 in 2001 to 123 989 in 2013);
- (b) schools (from 550 in 2001 to 499 in 2013);
- (c) teachers (from 21 276 in 2001 to 18 199 in 2013).

Figure 1. **Breakdown of population by age bracket and gender (2015)**



Source: Eurostat database.

⁽¹⁾ OIELE, Annual Report on Education, 2015.

In 2015, the largest population group is that aged 30 to 49, while young Greeks comprise the ever-shrinking bottom of a population chart (Figure 1). Greece has a low fertility rate (1.3 in 2014, even lower than in 1.5 in 2010), and an increasing ageing ratio (141.8 in 2014 compared to 130.7 in 2010) (Table 1).

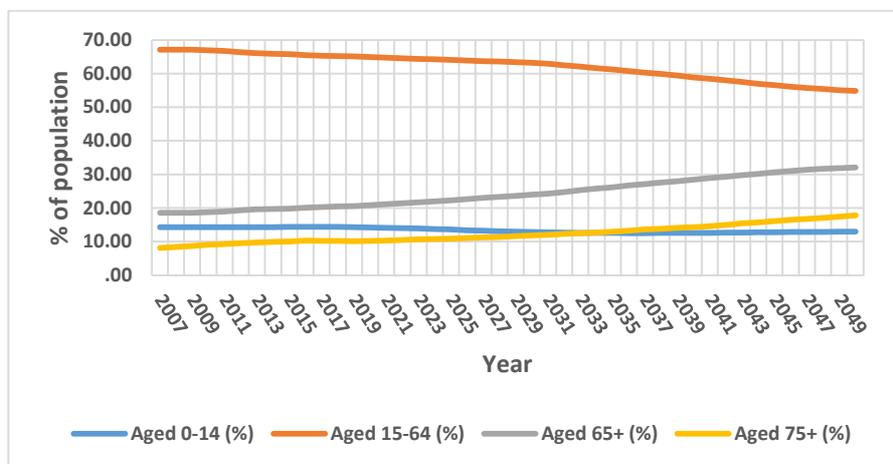
Table 1. Demographic indicators ⁽²⁾ (2010-14)

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Age dependency ratio	51.0	52.8	52.8	53.7	54.5
Ageing ratio	130.7	132.9	135.4	138.3	141.8
Total fertility rate	1.5	1.5	1.4	1.3	1.3

Source: Hellenic Statistical Authority (ELSTAT), Greece in figures, April 2016.

Greece has one of the world's most rapidly ageing populations and by 2050 it is estimated that the number of over 65 will have risen to over 32% of the population from 20% in 2016 (Figure 2.). The Hellenic Statistical Authority (ELSTAT) estimates that the working age population will drop to 54.9% of total population in 2050, against 65.5% in 2016.

Figure 2. Population projections in Greece by age group (2007-50, medium scenario)

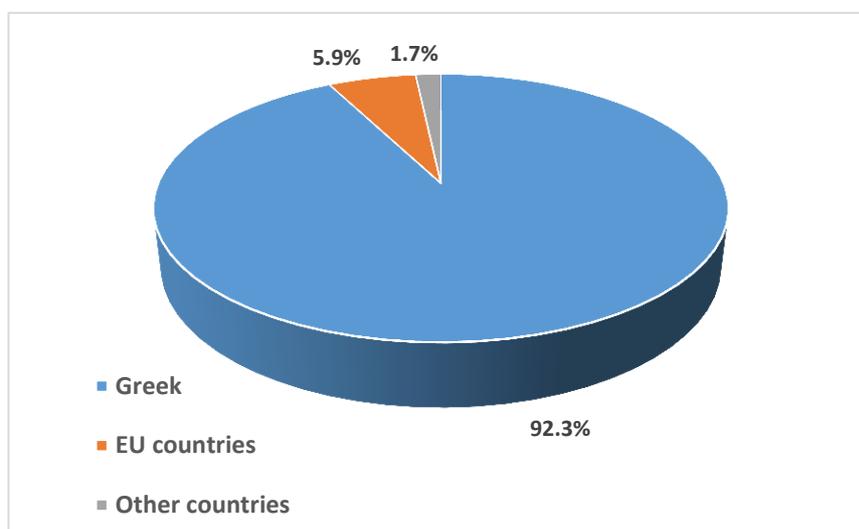


Source: Hellenic Statistical Authority (ELSTAT) data

⁽²⁾ Age dependency ratio: The ratio of the number of economically non-active persons (aged 0 - 14 and 65+) compared with the number of economically active persons (aged 15 - 64). Ageing ratio: The number of persons aged 60 years or over per hundred persons under the age of 15. Total fertility rate: The average number of living children that a woman will give birth to over the course of her lifetime (provided that during her reproductive age, the fertility conditions prevail by age of the reference year). The total fertility rate is used in order to determine the level of replacement of the generations, which, in developed countries is considered to be 2.1. Total mortality rate: The number of deaths per 1,000 people. Infant mortality rate: The number of children dying at less than a year of age divided by the number of live births that year. The ratio is expressed by 1,000 live births.

According to the European Commission’s Ageing Report (2015: 319) ⁽³⁾ population aging is one of the biggest challenges that lie ahead for Greece, as it is estimated that the Greek population will shrink by 2.5 million people to reach 8.6 million by 2060 (while elsewhere in the EU it is expected to grow) and, moreover, about 56% of this difference is attributed to the decrease of the labour force aged 15-64, as it is expected to decline from 4.9 million in 2013 to 3.5 million in 2060. The Ageing Report goes on to forewarn that the old age dependency ratio ⁽⁴⁾ will progressively grow from 31% in 2013 to over 40% before 2030 and then to a rather unmanageable 61% in 2060. This poses pressure on productive population and more specifically a challenge in the next decades for today’s millennium generation in case of a no-policy-change scenario, as it reveals an incredible strain on education and employment. Particularly this could lead to a downward spiral of less economic efficiency, as related current expenses for infrastructure, teacher training, etc. will not be made the most of. Nonetheless, present infrastructure and teachers may well become “obsolete” and furthermore this will reflect on students’ performance.

Figure 3. **Resident population by citizenship group in Greece (2014)**



Source: Eurostat database.

At the same time, the increasing inflow, especially from third countries, creates new issues relating to their integration into education and employment.

⁽³⁾ European Commission-Directorate-General for Economic and Financial Affairs, The 2015 Ageing Report Economic and budgetary projections for the 28 EU Member States (2013-60), *EUROPEAN ECONOMY* 3, 2015.

⁽⁴⁾ Number of people aged over 65 compared to those in the 15-64 economically active age group.

According to the 2014 Eurostat data (Figure 3.), 7.7% of the population of Greece comprises of non-Greek nationals (92.3% Greek nationals, 1.7% nationals of stateless persons or persons of undetermined nationality). Compared to 2001 census data, this pattern has changed mainly in regard to a shift of the share of non EU nationals in favour of EU nationals, possibly reflecting the latest EU expansion wave.

In addition, the ongoing refugee flux is related to unforeseen flows expected to pose strain not only in humanitarian terms, but also in economic and social ones ⁽⁵⁾. Since the start of 2015, authorities have noted a multi-fold increase in the number of migrant arrivals on Greece's shores. In 2015, 847 930 migrants and refugees reached Greece across the Eastern Mediterranean (IOM, June 2016) ⁽⁶⁾, while during the period of January-June 2016 the number of illegal border crossings reached 162 563 (Frontex, 2016) ⁽⁷⁾. On the basis of a joint initiative of the European Commission and the Council of Europe regarding recognition of refugees' academic qualifications, a pilot project ("passport for refugee qualifications") was decided recording of qualifications regarding of 50 refugees who have either concluded or initiated tertiary education in their country of origin ⁽⁸⁾.

Nonetheless, the complexity of Greek demographics is shaped by one additional factor: gradually increasing movements of Greek nationals, mainly young and well educated, to European countries and the USA seeking for further study, jobs or better living conditions (Section 1.4). This includes VET graduates, as Lambrianidis (2015) ⁽⁹⁾ reports that during the 2010-15 period, ISCED 3-4 level (Upper second or a technical non-University) degree holders represented a 30% of the overall emigrating population (against 22% during 2000-09).

1.2. Social developments

Following a long and persistent period of recession since the outbreak of the crisis, the Greek economy and society has demonstrated a remarkable resilience despite higher than expected uncertainties and risks: vulnerability related to

⁽⁵⁾ According to OECD the cost of the refugee crisis for Greece, estimated at 0.4% of GDP for 2015, could be higher in 2016. See OECD, *Economic Outlook*, Volume 2016, Issue 1, June 2016, p. 144.

⁽⁶⁾
http://publications.iom.int/system/files/pdf/gmdac_data_briefing_series_issue3.pdf?language=en

⁽⁷⁾ Frontex EU Border Agency Website <http://frontex.europa.eu/> (viewed 29/07/2016).

⁽⁸⁾ Reply (pr. no 205884/Φ1 ΕΞ 193225 εις, 2-12-2016) by the Minister of Education to a relevant question raised by Member of Greek Parliament.

⁽⁹⁾ See Lambrianidis retrieved on November 11th 2015 from http://www.huffingtonpost.gr/lois-labrianidis/-_2408_b_8520596.html

questioned sustainability of Greece's public debt ⁽¹⁰⁾, serious concerns regarding the refugee crisis, rising geopolitical tensions, weak global environment (slowdown in global trade, international financial turbulence), euro area anxieties and fear of consequences because of UK referendum results.

Table 2. **Poverty, income indicators and NEET rates in Greece, 2008-14**

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
At-risk-of-poverty or exclusion (% of total population)	28.1	27.6	27.7	31.0	34.6	35.7	36.0
Poverty gap (%)	24.7	24.1	23.4	26.1	29.9	32.7	31.3
Severe Material Deprivation (% of total population)	11.2	11.0	11.6	15.2	19.5	20.3	21.5
Share of people living in low work intensity households (% of people aged 0-59)	7.5	6.6	7.6	12.0	14.2	18.2	17.2
Not in education, employment or training (NEET) rates	16.6(*)	17.5(*)	20.4	25.0	29.1	30.8	29.5

(*) Break in time series.

Sources:

a. Poverty, income indicators: European Commission, *Employment and Social Developments in Europe 2015*, Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union, 2016.

b. NEET rates: Eurostat, website database for 2008-14.

As acknowledged by experts and academic researchers ⁽¹¹⁾, austerity measures triggered a recessionary impact, generated a pattern of divergence with the EU, and undermined growth and threatened the socio-spatial cohesion in

⁽¹⁰⁾ According to Spring 2016 forecasts for the Greek economy (p. 81), the European Commission notes that “*The debt-to-GDP ratio is expected to increase from 176.9% in 2015 to 182.8% in 2016 due to the clearance of arrears which was postponed from 2015 to 2016 and to programme disbursements taking place in 2016 instead of 2015 given past delays in completing reviews. The debt-to-GDP ratio is expected to start declining in 2017*”.

See http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/eu/forecasts/2016_spring/el_en.pdf

⁽¹¹⁾ For example see: Gechert S., Rannerberg A., *The costs of Greece's fiscal consolidation*, Macroeconomic Policy Institute Policy Brief, March 2015 (Revised version of June 18, 2015), Monokroussos P., “The Challenge of Restoring Debt Sustainability in a Deep Economic Recession: The case of Greece”, LSE, Hellenic Observatory Papers on Greece and Southeast Europe, GreeSE Paper No.87 | October 2014, Monastiriotis, V. The Greek crisis in focus: Austerity, Recession and paths to Recovery, LSE, Special Issue, Hellenic Observatory Papers on Greece and Southeast Europe, July 2011. Also, the INE GSEE Observatory comments about the latest data of the Survey on Income and Living Conditions (EU-SILC) 2014 (Eurostat, 26.06.2015) that:

- These figures reveal that the worsening economic crisis and especially the fiscal adjustment and internal devaluation promoted consistently since 2010 have devastating effects on people's living conditions, especially at the expense of middle and low income groups and families with children.
- As the impact of austerity policies and deregulation of labour relations in household income exacerbated the period 2014-15, current poverty levels are significantly higher and household living conditions worse than the picture reflected in these figures.

the country. To some extent Table 2 reflects the above in terms of poverty, income and, especially, loss of opportunities for Greek youth as this is pointed out by high increases in NEET (not in education, employment or training) rates throughout the crisis (see section 1.5 for more details on NEETs).

In terms of greater inequality and increased poverty, the crisis impact has been extremely serious, even increasing the risk of asymmetric effects across different social groups. Having studied income, employment and inequality during the crisis period, Giannitsis and Zografakis (2015) showed that new inequalities, divides and balances emerged in Greek society during these years ⁽¹²⁾. In 2014 over 1 million households reported at least one unemployed member, against 320 thousand in 2008. According to the *index of despair* ⁽¹³⁾ in 2014 the profile of the head of most vulnerable households is of an up to 44 years old immigrant, with up to secondary education, working part-time or being unemployed/non-economically active, while during the crisis (2009-14) vulnerability increased significantly more to include households whose head has a higher educational level and/ or is a Greek national (Giannitsis & Zografakis, 2015: 112, 116).

Nonetheless, despite some improvements in selected poverty indices especially during 2014 ⁽¹⁴⁾ and while bearing in mind the fact that even before the crisis Greece had one of the highest poverty rates in the EU, social stakes remain high due to penetrating poverty, soaring social exclusion and continuous losses in disposable income (Table 2.):

- (a) In just four years, the share of people at-risk-of-poverty or exclusion increased dramatically up to 36.0% (2014) from 27.7% (2010);
- (b) The severe material deprivation index amounted to 21.5% in 2014 (4th highest rate among EU countries) compared to 11.6% in 2010;
- (c) Particularly revealing of the deterioration of the living conditions data shows that the share of people living in low work intensity households (% of people aged 0-59) increased to 17.2% in 2014 from 7.6% in 2010.

Also, indicative of the complexity of existing risks is the fact that beside lower rates compared to peak year 2012 (Table 3.), the least well educated remain at greater risk of poverty than those with a higher level of education (25.4% in 2015

⁽¹²⁾ Giannitsis T., Zografakis S., Greece: Solidarity and Adjustment in Time of Crisis, *Macroeconomic Policy Institute*, Study 38, March 2015.

⁽¹³⁾ This reflects the degree of pressure felt by households with employed and unemployed members when their income from salaried employment declines or, when their members lose their jobs, stops completely. As noted it “*reflects the dual effects of fiscal adjustment, labour market policies and the recession, which have led to wage cuts and job losses*” (Giannitsis & Zografakis, 2015: 112, 115).

⁽¹⁴⁾ Such as % of total population persistent at risk of poverty (12,4% in 2013, 13,8% in 2012) and % of total population at risk of poverty before social transfers excl. pensions (26% in 2014 against 28% in 2013).

for those with basic education or less, 21.3% for those with secondary or post-secondary education and 9.3% for those with university degrees).

Table 3. **Risk of poverty by education level in Greece and EU-27 (2005-15)**

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Pre-primary, primary and lower secondary education (levels 0-2)											
EU-27	22.7	23.1	23.5	23.4	23.2	23.0	24.0	23.8	23.8	24.9	n.a.
Greece	27.0	27.1	26.2	27.2	27.2	27.0	29.6	28.7	27.4	27.2	25.4
Upper secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary education (levels 3 and 4)											
EU-27	12.5	12.7	13.3	13.0	13.0	13.4	14.1	14.5	14.5	15.0	n.a.
Greece	14.2	15.6	15.5	15.5	16.4	18.5	19.7	24.2	23.2	22.6	21.3
First and second stage of tertiary education (levels 5 and 6)											
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	12.5	8.8	8.7	9.3

Source: Eurostat, website database for 2005-15 data (levels 0-2, levels 3 & 4), Hellenic Statistical Authority (ELSTAT) for 2012-15 data for Greece (levels 5&6)

As for further developments, the implementation of planned social solidarity policies (i.e. the Guaranteed Minimum Income, school meals, housing programmes, access to health for non-secured) are expected to have an impact on alleviating poverty and to help deal with the high social costs of the crisis. Modernization of OAED (public employment service) and implementation of EU co-financed active labour market policies could contribute to reducing unemployment. Moreover, as pointed out by the Ministry of Finance ⁽¹⁵⁾, relevant policies could lead to encouraging (and sustainable) results upon conditions depending on labour market performance, economic recovery and the macro-economic situation.

1.3. Economic background

Following a deep recessionary period since autumn 2009 and an unprecedented macroeconomic adjustment since May 2010, Greece has achieved a significant reduction of its sizeable twin deficits and a considerable cumulative improvement in the general government primary balance.

Nonetheless, fiscal tightening has caused dramatic costs for the domestic economy in terms of output losses and labour shedding. Austerity measures of 58.6 billion Euro (24.6% of Greek 2009 GDP) caused a negative cumulative effect of -25.7% on the GDP, as well as an increase in unemployment of 16.9

⁽¹⁵⁾ Greek Government, Hellenic National Reform Plan, 2015

points between 2009 and 2014 ⁽¹⁶⁾. The structure of unemployment in 2016 (1st quarter) is also indicative of the high costs of adjustment: 50.9% of young people (aged up to 24) and 46.2% of those who did not complete primary education were unemployed. The share of the “long term” unemployed (that is the percentage of persons that have been looking for a job for 1 year or more) in total unemployment was 70.3%.

Table 4. **Greek and Euro Area GDP (¹⁷) as % of EU 28 GDP before and during the crisis**

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
EU-28	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Euro area (19 countries)	108	108	108	108	107	107	107	106
Greece	94	94	87	77	74	74	73	71
Points difference with Euro area	14	14	21	31	33	33	34	35

Source: Eurostat, website database

It is noteworthy that divergence with the EU, especially the Euro Area, was extraordinary (Table 4.). As a fraction of the EU-28 GDP, the Greek GDP (per capita in PPS) presented a sharp decrease of 17 points between 2009 and 2011, and continued to decline afterwards representing just 71% of EU-28 (a 35 point difference with the Euro area) in 2015 compared to 94% in 2009 (a 14 point difference with the Euro area).

Still, according to the Forecast Report of spring 2016, the European Commission ⁽¹⁸⁾ comments that in 2015 the Greek economy was “*more resilient than expected*”. The report notes that the real 2015 GDP turned out to be slightly negative (0.2%), still better than expected after the July 2015 imposition of capital controls, and remarks that “*economic activity was backed by the surprising resilience of private consumption, positive net exports and by an acceleration of public investment at the end of the year*”.

Actually, during 2015 the GDP components reveal the notable positive contribution of net exports, due to the significant fall of imports (-6.9%) that outpaced the decline of exports (-3.7%) and another good year for tourism as the sector growth surpassed expectations. Growth in the tourism sector in Greece,

⁽¹⁶⁾ See Gechert & Rannerberg (2015) and Hellenic Republic-Ministry of Finance, *State Budget, 2016 Introductory Report Budget*, Nov. 2015.

⁽¹⁷⁾ GDP per capita in PPS Index (EU28 = 100) Data from 1st of June 2016.

⁽¹⁸⁾ http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/eu/forecasts/2016_spring/el_en.pdf

has also led to an increasing need for skilled personnel as, traditionally this is core to the upscaling of this sector.

On the contrary, investment continued to lag in growth compared to other GDP components while the change in inventories had a substantial negative contribution to GDP by 1.7 pps. Investment shortfalls are an issue of concern for the whole educational system, including VET. Among others, it reflects a loss of opportunities for skilled graduates searching for work and, thus, in the end leads to the outdatedness of their skills. This becomes part of a vicious cycle during which VET becomes even less attractive.

As for 2016, real GDP is forecast to contract by 0.3% in 2016 according to the European Commission. The OECD (2016) notes that the “*economy is recovering gradually from a deep recession*” ⁽¹⁹⁾ and estimates a similar decrease (-0.2%) as “*growth is projected to turn positive in the second half of 2016*”. Yet, both predict a clear GDP increase in 2017 (EU: 2.7%, OECD: 1.9%). Besides reduced uncertainty because of the financing programme agreed with the European Stability Mechanism (August 2015) and gradual softening of capital controls, the conclusion of the first review by institutional creditors is viewed as helping trigger developments such as a restoration of confidence in the country's economic outlook and increase in investments. Regarding developments in 2016, a crucial role in economic recovery is also related to structural reform implementation, recapitalization of banks and debt restructuring discussions.

To conclude, persistent budgetary discipline measures had a negative impact on the level of public investment on education (36% drop in funding for education between 2009 and 2015) ⁽²⁰⁾ causing strain on VET ⁽²¹⁾ in terms of reduced salaries, layoffs, freezing of hiring's and upgrading of equipment and infrastructure. Moreover, reduced public investment does not work in favour of improving the quality of VET, which in turn is crucial for combatting the negative image of VET. In addition to the aforementioned, as part of anticipated growth, investments are awaited in order to revive the job market and, thus, add to stability in the economy and society. The latter becomes a basic prerequisite for the upgraded Greek VET system to succeed in becoming more attractive and noticeable to stakeholders.

⁽¹⁹⁾ OECD, *Economic Outlook*, Volume 2016, Issue 1, June 2016, pp. 142-144

⁽²⁰⁾ http://ec.europa.eu/education/tools/docs/2015/monitor2015-greece_en.pdf

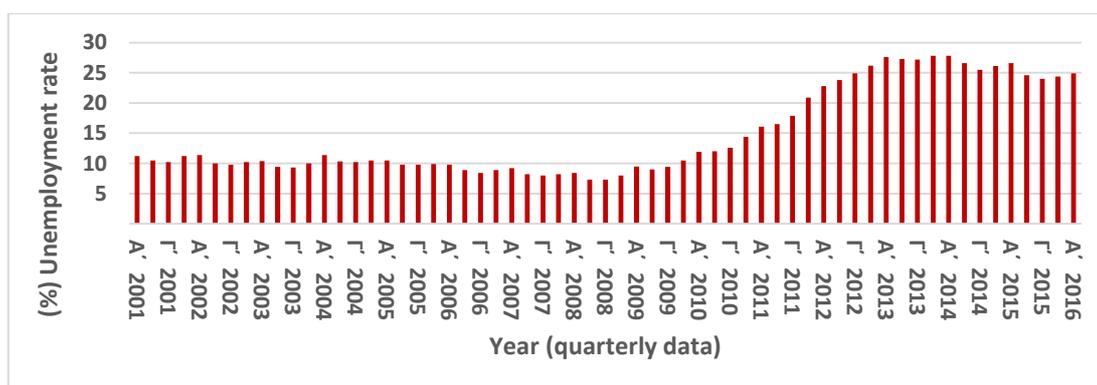
⁽²¹⁾ One must keep in mind that an average annual expenditure per student enrolled in an upper secondary VET programme is significantly higher than the same expenditure per student enrolled in a general programme.

1.4. Labour market

Following the deep recession which brought about a significant decline in labour market conditions, as of 2014 there have been some signs of improvement, yet this is not enough to address the social costs born during the crisis or to assume a firm trend. Positive results are attributed mainly to the increase in economic activity in individual sectors of the economy, especially tourism, to upscaling of Structural Fund implementation, to lower labour costs formed after reductions during previous years and, finally, to some extent to employment restructuring towards more flexible forms.

In particular, labour market conditions continued to moderately improve. The unemployment rate (Figure 4.) declined to 24.9% in the 1st quarter of 2016, from 26.5% in the corresponding quarter of 2015 and 27.8% in 2014, but still remains far from the rate of 9.5% in 2009 (before the crisis). However, the slight descending trend in the unemployment rate came to standstill during the 4th quarter of 2015 standing at 24.4% while it had shown marginal decrease to 24.0% in the 3rd quarter of 2015.

Figure 4. Unemployment rate (Greece, quarterly data, 2001-16)

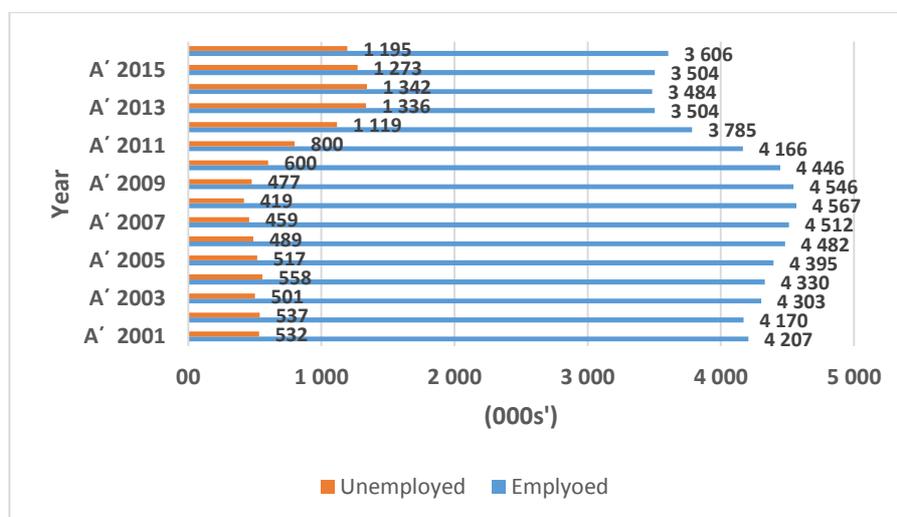


Source: Hellenic Statistical Authority (ELSTAT), labour force survey, 2016.

Note: A' represents 1st quarter of the year and F' the 3rd quarter

Between the 1st quarter of 2014 and the 1st quarter of 2016, the decrease in the number of unemployed persons was 147.2 thousands, while the number of employed persons increased by 122.6 thousands (Figure 5.). However, during the crisis, headcount unemployment increased by 718.4 thousands (between 1st quarter 2009 and 1st quarter 2016). In the 1st quarter of 2016, the number of employed stood at 3606.3 thousand, the non-economically active population at 4,424.9 thousand, and the unemployed at 1,195.1 thousand. For the first time since the 3rd quarter of 2012, the working population exceeded the threshold of 3600 thousand as of the 2nd quarter of 2015. However, this remains below pre-crisis levels.

Figure 5. **Employed and unemployed population in Greece (1st quarter data, 2001-16, 000s')**



Source: Hellenic Statistical Authority (ELSTAT), labour force survey

Note: A' represents 1st quarter of the year

Also, according to Ergani information system ⁽²²⁾, during the 1st semester of 2016 the balance of flows in private sector dependent employment was positive, standing at 234.6 thousand new jobs. In fact, new hires in the private sector increased by 162.8 thousands (January – June 2016: 1,063.6 thousands) compared to the corresponding period of the previous year (January – June 2015: 900.8 thousands), while dismissals increased by 131.2 thousands against the respective period of the previous year. Thus, the net cumulative employment flow in the 1st semester of 2016 was higher by 30 thousands against the corresponding period of 2015. It is interesting to mention that June 2016 marked the best positive balance for month June since 2001, while also being the 5th consecutive month during which there is a positive balance in private sector employment flows. Still, as the magnitude and duration of the crisis and underinvestment restrained the ability of the economy to preserve and -even more- to create new jobs, positive developments remain fragile unless labour market conditions improve in line with a firm reverse of the recessionary phase.

Consequently, despite ongoing moderate improvements, the unemployment rate remains alarming not only in terms of the overall level ⁽²³⁾, but also because of its composition and the structural issues related to this. In particular:

⁽²²⁾ ERGANI, Ministry of Employment, June 2016.

⁽²³⁾ According to the General Confederation of Greek Workers (GSEE) real unemployment appears to be much higher than the official figures show, due to 'hidden unemployment'.

Differences in unemployment rates are significant between women (29.5%, during 1st quarter of 2016) and men (21.2%, 1st quarter of 2016), while this is the case in all working age groups.

Between different age groups, people aged up to 29 remain among the most affected by unemployment, despite a very small improvement. Particularly, the unemployment rate for the 25-29 age group was 35.9% in the 1st quarter 2016, despite the fact that it declined compared to the 39.7% in 1st quarter 2015 and 42.4% in 1st quarter 2014 (Table 5.). The group of people aged 30-44 represents an important share (40.9%) of unemployed people: they amount up to 489.2 thousand people (Table 5.). Long-term unemployment (as youth unemployment) stands at persistently high, by historical standards, levels. Long-term unemployed still account for over 70% of total unemployed (70.3% in 1st quarter 2016).

Table 5. **Unemployment by age group before and during the Greek crisis (quarterly data: 2009-16, 1st quarter)**

Age	Unemployment rate					Unemployed ('000s)	
	2009 (Q1)	2010 (Q1)	2014 (Q1)	2015 (Q1)	2016 (Q1)	2009 (Q1)	2016 (Q1)
15-19	33.7	33.5	71.6	59.7	62.4	16.8	16.3
20-24	24.0	30.2	54.6	51.0	49.6	78.6	113.7
25-29	14.8	17.8	42.4	39.7	35.9	99.3	186.7
30-44	8.6	11.1	26.7	25.7	23.4	186.9	489.2
45-64	5.5	7.4	20.3	20.4	20.4	94.3	380.5
65+	0.9	1.1	12.6	9.3	12.3	0.8	8.8
Total	9.5	11.9	27.8	26.6	24.9	476.7	1195.1

Source: Hellenic Statistical Authority (ELSTAT), labour force survey (various years).

The unemployment rate for post-secondary technical vocational education graduates remains high (25.6% 1st quarter of 2016, against 11.1% in 2009) (Table 6, also see chapter 2. beyond for EPAS transitions to the labour market). Still, the bulk of unemployed are those holding the most an upper secondary school certificates (they amount to 768.1 thousand people, thus representing 64.3% of all unemployed).

Table 6. **Unemployment rate and number of unemployed persons by education level (Greece, quarterly data: 2009, 2015-16)**

Education level	Unemployment rate	Unemployed ('000s)	Unemployment rate	Population ('000s)	Unemployed ('000s)	Unemployment rate
	2009 (1 st quarter)		2015 (1st quarter)		2016 (1 st quarter)	
PhD doctorate or MSc master's degree	5.8%	18.6	12.9%	203.1	20.4	11,3%
Tertiary education (university or higher VET)	6.0%	172.8	19.8%	1 215.9	163.2	18,4%
Completed post-secondary technical vocational education	11.1%	255.0	27.2%	1 218.0	243.6	25,6%
Upper secondary school certificate	10.7%	489.3	29.3%	2 972.2	462.9	27,1%
Lower secondary school certificate	11.1%	155.5	31.0%	1 121.0	146.7	30,8%
Primary school certificate	8.5%	164.8	25.8%	2 120.0	145.9	25,6%
A number of years in primary school	7.5%	6.8	26.5%	221.5	6.5	46,2%
Never attended education/school	14.8%	9.6	41.7%	154.6	6.1	43,9%
Total	9.5%	1 272.5	26.6%	9 226.3	1195.1	24,9%

Source: Hellenic Statistical Authority (ELSTAT), labour force survey (various years)

Recent unemployment (²⁴) is fuelled by upper secondary school and tertiary educated graduates: together they represented 69.3% of the total 251.8 thousand “new” unemployed during the 1st quarter of 2016, quite similar to the corresponding period of 2009 and 2015 (Table 7.). In absolute figures there was a decrease compared to 2015: 174.6 thousand in 1st quarter of 2016 against 204.5 thousand in 1st quarter of 2015. Also, according to breakdown of data by age groups, the difficult transition from education to work becomes clearly evident.

(²⁴) New entrants (of those above 15 years old) in unemployment.

Table 7. **Recent unemployed of 15 years and over by age groups and level of education (Greece, quarterly data: 2009, 2015-16, '000s, 1st quarter)**

Level of Education	Total 2009 (Q1)	Total 2015 (Q1)	Total	Age groups					
				15– 19	20-24	25-29	30-44	45-64	65 or more
				2016 (Q1)					
PhD doctorate or MSc master's degree	2.7	4.8	6.2	0.0	0.1	3.6	2.4	0.0	0.0
Tertiary education (university or higher VET)	40.5	84.5	66.6	0.0	15.5	33.6	16.0	1.4	0.2
Completed post- secondary technical vocational education	17.3	32.6	27.5	0.6	10.6	8.9	7.0	0.4	0.0
Upper secondary school certificate	54.5	120.0	108.0	10.5	38.5	22.7	24.8	11.0	0.3
Lower secondary school certificate	14.1	24.4	21.2	2.6	3.8	4.1	6.1	4.6	0.0
Primary school certificate	9.7	23.8	18.8	1.7	3.1	2.7	4.8	6.5	0.1
A number of years in primary school	0.5	1.0	1.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.5	0.1	0.0
Never attended education/school	0.5	4.2	2.3	0.0	0.6	0.2	1.2	0.3	0.0
Total	139.7	295.3	251.8	15.6	72.4	76.0	62.8	24.4	0.6

Source: Hellenic Statistical Authority (ELSTAT), labour force survey (various years)

Since the outset of the crisis, changes in the economy and the labour market resulted to the expansion of more flexible forms of employment. The latter is evident in the share of part-time jobs which rose by 24.5%, thus reaching 9.8% of all employment during the 1st quarter of 2016 (351.7 thousand jobs), compared to 6.2% during the corresponding quarter of 2009 (Table 6.). Additionally, Ergani data ⁽²⁵⁾ confirms the magnitude of flexible forms of employment for job creation: during the 1st semester of 2016, 48.4% of hires in the private sector referred to full employment places, while part-time accounted for 37.5% places and job rotation for the remaining 14.0%. Also, according to ELSTAT, during the 1st quarter of 2016 the majority (69.1%) of part timers choose to work part time because they cannot find a full time job, while 7.6% choose a part time job for other personal or family reasons, 4.2% because they are in education, 2.5%

⁽²⁵⁾ ERGANI, Ministry of Employment, June 2016.

because they are looking after children or incapacitated adults and 16.6% for other reasons.

Table 8. **Total and part –time employment before and during the Greek crisis (quarterly data: 2009-16)**

	2009 (1 st quarter)	2010 (1 st quarter)	2014 (1 st quarter)	2015 (1 st quarter)	2016 (1 st quarter)
Total employment (No)	4545.6	4 446.0	3 483.7	3504.4	3606.3
Part-Time employment (No)	282.4	289.2	320.2	350.9	351.7
Part-Time employment (%)	6.2%	6.5%	9.2%	10.0%	9.8%

Source: Hellenic Statistical Authority (ELSTAT), labour force survey (various years).

It is worth noting that the size and persistence of recession, as well as consequent rise in unemployment since the beginning of the crisis, has led to increased emigration of working-age Greeks to other countries, particularly of highly qualified young people, thus implying 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 steadily increased from 128,179 visits in 2009 to 366,405 visits in 2015, and the number of Europass CVs completed by residents of Greece during the years 2014-15 amounts to 604,152 cases, that is about 48.9% of ECVs completed overall during the 2007-15 period (see Table 9).

Table 9. **Europass CVs completed by citizens resident in Greece, 2009-15**

	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	Total
Europass CVs	32267	46432	98008	159830	257082	239254	364898	1235666

Source: Europass, website activity report, State of play: December 2015

In regard with brain drain, Lazaretou (2016: 34-35) ⁽²⁶⁾ notes that during 2008-13 about 427 thousand Greek residences have permanently left the country, while as in just one year (2013) the rate exceeded 100 thousand and accelerated further in 2014 and 2015. Among the aforementioned, almost 223 thousand young (aged 25-39) educated professionals and graduates left the country permanently seeking for better work and social perspectives. Kimourtzis

⁽²⁶⁾ Lazaretou Sofia (2016), Human Capital Escape: The modern trend of migration in Greek years of crisis, Economic Bulletin, Bank of Greece, Issue No 43,

(2015) ⁽²⁷⁾ based upon OECD data for the 2000-11 period points out that approximately 670-690 thousand Greeks have emigrated to OECD counties, while as there is a steady “accumulation” of highly qualified Greek people mainly in Europe and the USA ⁽²⁸⁾ as the relevant outflow is gradually growing (from 15.7% in 2000/1 reached 21.5% in 2010/1). He also mentions that, indicative of the persisting brain drain is the fact that among 210 countries with students studying in OECD countries (other than their home country or the country where they are nationals), Greece ranks in 23rd place with the largest number of students abroad (35,217 in OECD countries according to 2012 OECD data). Based upon empirical evidence for population emigrating from Greece during 2010-15, Lambrianidis (2015) reveals that in terms of the level of education the majority concerns well educated people ⁽²⁹⁾. Well evidenced bibliography ⁽³⁰⁾, shows that the brain drain of educated youth does not produce returns on previous investments, thus causing a chain of effects which lead to a downward spiral for further investments in education.

Apparently, persistent high youth unemployment, along with unemployment of those in a productive age and soaring long-term unemployment, together with continuing skilled outflows threaten the production capacity of the economy at the same time as undermining social cohesion. Thus, the consistent confrontation of harmful economic and social consequences, as well as the sound exit from recession is high in public agenda.

1.5. Educational attainment

In anticipation of the needs for a well-functioning economy and society, the crucial challenge for more and better effort regarding attainment in education and

⁽²⁷⁾ Kimourtzis Panagiotis (2015), Key highlights about student mobility abroad and growth in Greece, unpublished, December 2015.

⁽²⁸⁾ Kimourtzis (2015) remarks that Greeks holding PhDs in S&T fields from US Universities constitute a crucial critical mass, even compared to larger European countries.

⁽²⁹⁾More specifically: 63% are holders of Bachelor, Master or Ph.D. 30% are holders of an Upper second degree or a post-secondary non-University degree and the remaining of up to a lower second degree. See Lambrianidis retrieved on November 11th .2015 from http://www.huffingtonpost.gr/lois-labrianidis/_2408_b_8520596.html

⁽³⁰⁾ Docquier, F., Machado, J., Sekkat, K.. Efficiency gains from liberalizing labor mobility. *Scandinavian Journal of Economics*, 117 (2), 2015, 303-346. King, R., Findlay, A., Ahrens J.. *International Student Mobility Literature Review*, Sussex, University of Sussex/HEFCE, 2010. About the Greek case see Lazaretou (2016), as well as Lambrianidis, L. *Investing in going abroad: the outflow of scientists from Greece in the globalisation era*, Kritiki, Athens, 2011.

-even more- in training remains obvious. Nonetheless, even with reduced spending on education, Greece has made significant improvements in terms of educational attainment, while the financing programme concluded in August 2015 with the European Stability Mechanism places education as part of a new national growth strategy. Furthermore, as regards to improved access to lifelong learning, policies implemented in accordance to the European Structural and Investment Funds programme for 2014-20, focus in particular on the most vulnerable groups, while including measures to recognize previously acquired skills. Moreover, tackling of youth unemployment is addressed within the Action Plan elaborated by the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Employment, whereas strengthening of VET holds a promising position (see chapter 4.).

Table 10. **Educational attainment indicators in EU-28 & Greece (2006-15)**

Early school leaving rates (31)										
	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
EU-28	15.3 (*)	14.9	14.7	14.2	13.9	13.4	12.7	11.9	11.2 (*)	11.0
EL	15.1 (*)	14.3	14.4 (*)	14.2 (*)	13.5	12.9	11.3	10.1	9.0 (*)	7.9
Tertiary educational attainment rates (32)										
	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
EU-28	29.0	30.1	31.1	32.3	33.8	34.8	36.0	37.1	37.9 (*)	38.7
EL	26.9	26.3	25.7	26.6 (*)	28.6	29.1	31.2	34.9	37.2 (*)	40.4
Participation in LLL (33)										
	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
EU-28	9.6 (*)	9.4	9.5	9.5	9.3	9.1	9.2	10.7 (*)	10.8	10.7
EL	2.1 (*)	2.4	3.2 (*)	3.5 (*)	3.3	2.8	3.3	3.2	3.2	3.3
NEET rates (34)										
	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
EU-28	15.2 (*)	14.4	14.2	15.9	16.4	16.6	17.1	17.1	16.6	16.1
EL	17.2 (*)	17.1	16.6 (*)	17.5 (*)	20.4	25.0	29.1	30.8	29.5	27.1

(*) Break in time series.

Source: Eurostat, website database for 2006-15.

It is interesting to note that the level of participation in education is generally high in Greece, while the country has already achieved the relevant 2020 twofold

(31) % of the population aged 18 to 24 with at most lower secondary education and not in further education or training

(32) % of the population aged 30 to 34 with completed tertiary education

(33) % of population aged 25-64 in LLL

(34) Young people neither in employment nor in education and training (% of population aged 18-24)

target (Table 10.). Actually, Greece is among the 13 EU countries that in 2015 had already achieved their:

- (a) early school leaving goals, as the country experienced a strong fall in early leaving from education and training between 2008 and 2015 (from 14.4 % to 7.9 %) and Eurostat figures show that the early leaving rate ⁽³⁵⁾ in Greece is well below the European average. Yet, the national average masks significant variation between geographical regions, types of schools / programmes, gender and social groups (i.e. native, migrant students, 1st and 2nd generation students of migration origin) ⁽³⁶⁾;
- (b) national targets for tertiary educational attainment, as the country experienced pronounced changes between 2008 and 2015 (from 25.7 % to 40.4 %). Yet, in addition to significant gender differences, tertiary education attainment remains very low for those born outside Greece (only 8.4% in 2014 against an EU average of 28.6%).

However, within a socioeconomic landscape in need of updated skills, participation in LLL and NEET rates reflect enduring deficiencies in adapting to change and more specifically in equipping people in Greece with the necessary job specific skills that fit the needs of employers, as well as ones that improve employment and well-being prospects.

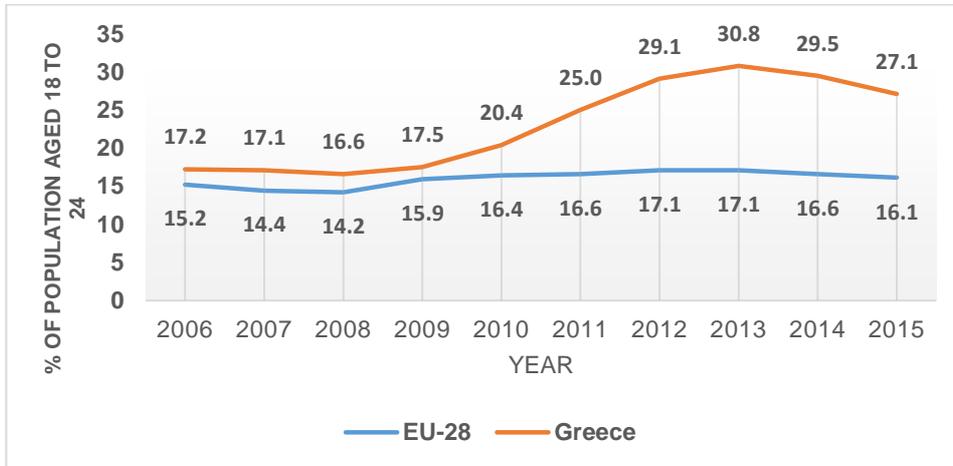
As regards lifelong learning (Table 10.), which is crucial for providing a highly qualified labour force, relevant participation in Greece has tended to stagnate at very low levels (significantly lower than the EU-28). The results of the labour force survey show a 3.3% participation rate for 2015, with the European average at 10.7% and, therefore, much lower than the European benchmark of 15% for 2020.

A key issue for Greece regards the very high levels of 18 to 24 year olds that were not in education or training (NEET status) (27.1% in 2015), putting them at risk of being excluded from the labour market. Although this represents a decrease from 2013 when the NEET rate peaked at 30.8 %, it is still much higher than the pre-crisis period, when the NEET rate stood at lower than 17.5 %. Moreover the gap between relevant Greek and EU-28 rates remains at 11 points, although reduced from a persistent 13 point gap during 2013-14 (Figure 6.).

⁽³⁵⁾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.

⁽³⁶⁾ http://ec.europa.eu/education/tools/docs/2015/monitor2015-greece_en.pdf

Figure 6. **NEET rates in Greece & EU-28 (2006-15)**



Source: Eurostat, website database for 2006-15.

In 2014, 15% of 15-19 year-olds in Greece were enrolled in vocational programmes, compared to an OECD average of 25%. Furthermore, in Greece just 2% of 15-19 year-olds were enrolled in combined school and work-based programmes compared to 7% for OECD member countries as a whole. In Greece, 31% of students in upper secondary education were enrolled in vocational programmes and 69% in general programmes, compared to an OECD average of 44% of students in vocational programmes and 56% in general programmes ⁽³⁷⁾. This implies that “*vocational education and training can provide more direct pathways into the labour market*”, even more when there is a strong work-based learning component incorporated into the VET programme

Evidently, while confronting the need for a sustainable and inclusive environment which requires adjustment to socio-economic and structural changes, the future course of development in Greece relies on the education and training systems as primary instruments to provide and update necessary skills contributing to change.

⁽³⁷⁾ See OECD, Greece - Country Note - *Education at a Glance 2016: OECD Indicators*, OECD, 2016.

CHAPTER 2.

Provision of VET from the lifelong learning perspective

Greek society has always been characterised by a strong demand for general education and university studies. This trend reflects sociological stereotypes, developed after World War II and has affected the overall attractiveness of VET in Greek society in combination with a fragmentary approach with regards to VET related policies. Other major weaknesses and challenges can be summarized as follows: a) Higher dropout rates in comparison with General Education, b) multiplicity and complexity of legal framework, c) lack of continuity and focus in the design and implementation of VET related policies and d) problematic linkage with the labour market.

However there are points which may prove vital for the reforming and enhancement of VET role in Greece, such as: a) 'infrastructure of finest quality', b) the 'dedication' of VET teachers combined with the fact that they are extremely qualified ⁽³⁸⁾.

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 people with technical and vocational qualifications have fewer difficulties in finding jobs than those with general education.

Vocational education remains the second choice for most parents and children. It attracts low performers, who mostly 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).

Since 2013 the Greek State has started a systematic effort to change the abovementioned trend. In 2015, law 4336 has set specific VET related goals which can be summarised as follows: a) creation of a common Quality framework for VET and apprenticeships, b) creation of a skills forecasting mechanism and procedures for the reforming of VET curricula and certification, c) facilitation of partnerships with the private sector and regional and local authorities, d) development of an implementation plan (by the Ministries of Employment, Education and OAED aiming to offer apprenticeship positions to all IEK and EPAS students and for at least the 33% ⁽³⁹⁾ of the upper secondary VET students

⁽³⁸⁾) According to a study by KANEP GSEE.

⁽³⁹⁾ The goal (d) target is under negotiations (as it's not feasible to achieve)

(EPAL) (see 2.2.), e) facilitation of greater involvement by private companies (financing) in order to ensure the sustainability of the apprenticeships schemes.

All provisions stated in Law 4336/2015 are either further elaborated through various legislative or administrative actions or are in the phase of preparation. In the following chapters a more detailed depiction of developments will be presented.

Though it is obvious that the reforming of the Greek VET system is high on the educational agenda, it must be said that legislative actions cannot by themselves solve persisting problems such as: problematic linkage with the job market and economy, problematic social dialogue with the relevant stakeholders, low attractiveness of VET, etc. The National Strategic Framework for the upgrade of VET and Apprenticeships ⁽⁴⁰⁾ acknowledges these problems and sets out a plan of gradual reforms. The strategic goals according to the Framework are the following:

1. Promote and enhance the social role of VET
2. Upgrade and expand apprenticeships
3. Strengthen the linkage between VET & Labour market
4. Increase quality in VET
5. Increase efficiency of VET
6. Increase the mobility of VET graduates
7. Promote VET attractiveness
8. Promote excellence in VET
9. Improve governance and monitoring of the VET system

The National Strategic Framework also introduces a new governance structure for VET (including apprenticeships), that is based on reinforced collaboration of stakeholders. A National Committee, comprising General Secretaries of key Ministries, is foreseen to assist decisions of Ministries of Education and Labour that retain overall responsibility over VET. A Technical Committee, comprising Directors and Head of Units of Ministries and key institutions will assist the National Committee, through dealing with operational aspects and involving social partners and chambers in selected topics (working groups). Regional VET Committees are already foreseen since 2013 but have not been established apart from a few cases.

⁽⁴⁰⁾ The National Strategic Framework was published in April 2016 and adopted in May 2017.

2.1. Government-regulated VET within the 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. Students enter upper secondary school at the age of 15 and graduate at 18. 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 (four years). 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 department of Vocational Orientation of the Ministry of Research, Education and Religious Affairs (hereinafter – Ministry of Education) (see Section 4.2). Those who graduate from a general upper secondary school receive a school leaving certificate (qualifications at EQF/NQF level 4) and can sit the national examinations for admission to a higher education programme.

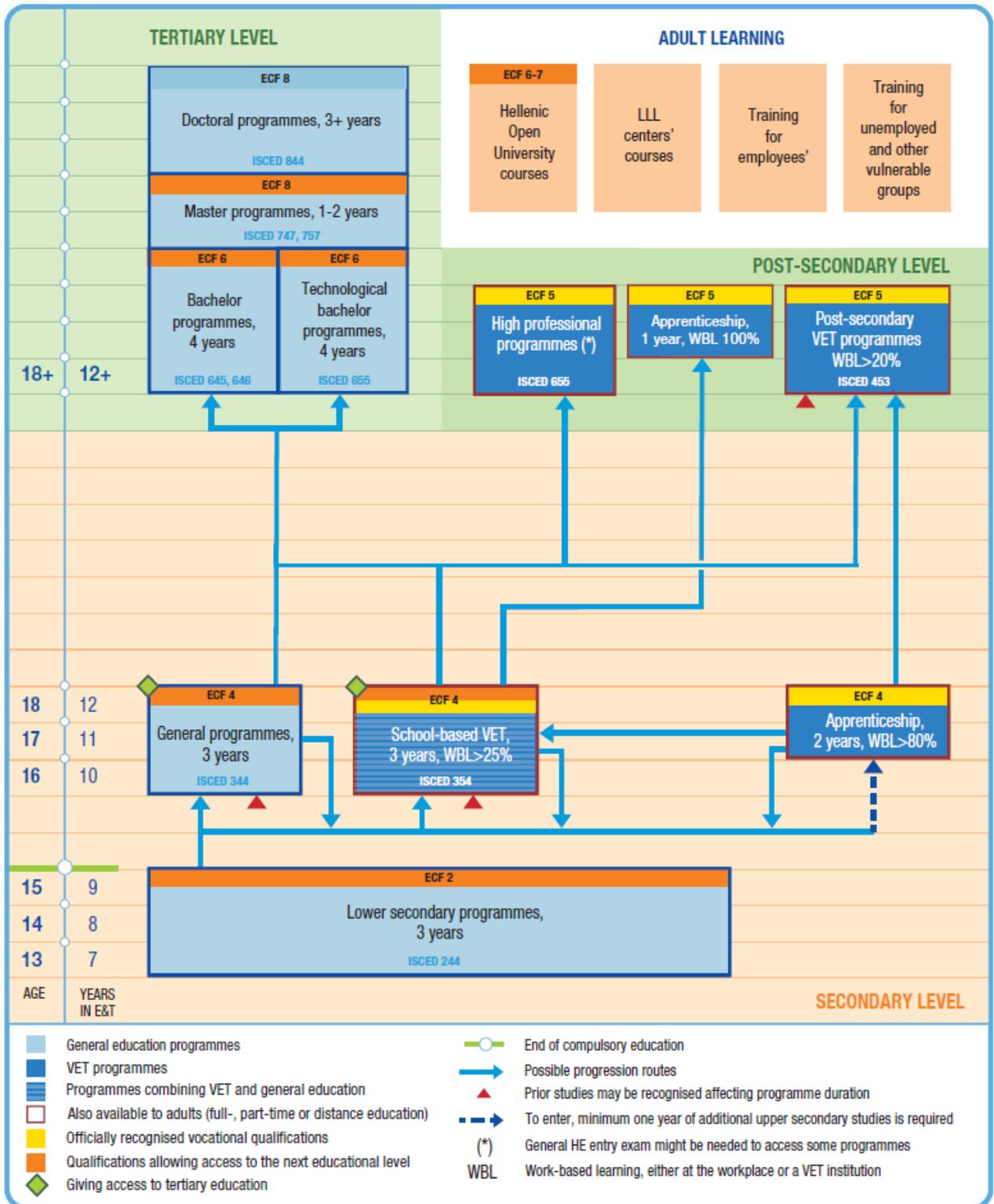
According to the new law regulating -amongst others- upper secondary VET (Law 4386/2016), students have the following options in addition to the general upper secondary school:

- (a) initial vocational education within the formal education system in the second cycle of secondary education at a vocational upper secondary school (EPAL, see 2.2.1, day or evening school);
- (b) initial vocational education at an apprenticeship school (EPAS) at upper secondary level (see 2.2.2). The function of EPAS schools supervised by OAED (regulated by law 3475/2006) has been prolonged till the academic year 2020- 2021 (those enrolled into the first class in 2021 may finish their studies in 2022) ⁽⁴¹⁾;
- (c) initial vocational training (outside the formal education system, referred to as non-formal) in post-secondary vocational training institutes (IEK, 2.2.4), centres for lifelong learning and colleges, and also the post-secondary apprenticeship year (or apprenticeship class) for EPAL graduates (see 2.2.3).

⁴¹ See Law 4386/2016, article 66, paragraph 17.

The new law (4386/2016) has abolished Vocational Training Schools (SEK) (which were founded by Law 4186/2013 and briefly operated catering for those studying at the time at these schools.

Figure 7. VET in the Greek education and training system



NB: ISCED-P 2011

Source: Cedefop and ReferNet Greece.

2.1.1. Upper secondary vocational education programmes (EPAL)

Upper secondary vocational education programmes are part of 'formal VET' according to the national context. 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, through evening EPAL schools.

According to the law on secondary education (Law 4186/2013) and its amendments, upper secondary vocational education programmes are provided by the vocational upper secondary schools. These schools (public or private) ⁽⁴²⁾ are founded exclusively by the Ministry Education and may be day or evening schools. The minimum age for enrolment in a vocational evening school is 15.

The programmes are organised by sector and specialty, with most sectors offering two or more specialties. Before the latest Law which regulates VET issues (Law 4386/2016) programmes were organized by sector, group and specialties. The development is that the level of groups is now abolished to reduce early overspecialisation and allow for better allocation of the teaching staff. The second cycle of studies (i.e. the three year programme which is part of the formal education system) consists of:

- (a) A' class (common);
- (b) B' class (structured in sectors);
- (c) C' class (structured in specialties).

The sectors currently offered are information science, mechanical engineering, electrical engineering / electronics / automation, construction, environment and natural resources, administration and economics, agronomy-food technology and environment, applied arts, health and social care, and occupations in the merchant marine (captain, mechanic). It is worth noting that some of the specialties removed in 2013, such as the ones in Health and Applied Arts sectors are now functioning again under the provisions of Law 4327/2015 and under the EPAL structure⁽⁴³⁾.

⁽⁴²⁾ In order for a private vocational upper secondary school to be founded a request must be submitted to the Ministry of Education and EOPPEP will provide opinion that the school has the appropriate building infrastructure in order to receive a licence (according to the provisions of Law 4093/2013, article 1). The private Vocational Upper secondary school is founded by Ministerial decision and after the process of a positive evaluation by EOPPEP.

⁽⁴³⁾ The specialties which are reinstated by Law 4327/2015 are listed in the 6th article of the Law and are related to the Health and Applied Arts sectors. The only one not functioning is that of "Assistant of Chemical Laboratories and Qualitative control". The criteria that specify conditions for the functioning of a specialty are elaborated in two circulars issued by the Department of Upper Secondary VET (Ministry of Education). If the criteria are met (e.g. infrastructure, existence of relevant permanent staff, prospective

The public vocational upper secondary programmes are offered in specialties that are listed in the legislation. According to the provisions of law 4368/2016 and Law 4386/2016 the new specialties should be tailored to national and regional economic needs, following the recommendations of the ministries, regional administrations and social partners and the data provided by the skills forecasting mechanism ⁽⁴⁴⁾. Curricula can be developed in line with the European credit system for VET (ECVET), and take into account, where these exist, related occupational profiles, accredited by the National Organisation for the Certification of Qualifications and Vocational Guidance (EOPPEP).

EPAL upper secondary programmes offered in day schools last 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 and vice versa: this means that the system allows for horizontal mobility.

According to the latest data (2015) by the Ministry of Education there are 396 public EPAL (322 day and 74 evening) (there is no reduction to the number of schools since 2014) and only 2 private EPAL with very few students. The total number of students is 88,209 (68% male and 32% female students).

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 ⁽⁴⁵⁾, following school examinations administered by EPAL.

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

numbers of students etc.) regional Directorates of Secondary Education can “propose” to the Ministry the functioning of a specialty.

⁽⁴⁴⁾ Following the provisions of Law 4336/2015, Law 4368/2016 explicitly establishes this mechanism and regulates its functioning, data collection, involvement of relevant stakeholders etc. The Law defines as relevant competent authority National Labour and Human Resources Institute (EIEAD).

⁽⁴⁵⁾ 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 referencing report of the Hellenic Qualifications Framework.

school. Law 4386/2016 expands the quota for TEI admissions for EPAL graduates, reinstates their right to enrol in the Fire department school (via special examinations) and facilitates their entrance to Universities (through special examinations, EPAL graduates can claim 1% of the positions of University Departments relevant to their studies) ⁽⁴⁶⁾.

2.1.2. Upper secondary apprenticeship programmes (mostly offered by OAED)

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

Apprenticeship programmes are mostly run by OAED, the Greek public employment service (Ministries of Health, Agriculture and Tourism operate up to 5 programmes each). OAED operates a total of 51 EPAS ⁽⁴⁷⁾ apprenticeship schools, which have an average annual intake of 4,500-5,000 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. As of 2013, the subsidy amount for enterprises is EUR 11 for each day of learning at the workplace. The subsidy may be paid to the employer or directly to the apprentice. The school is responsible for finding work placements for its students.

The amount paid to the trainee student is 75% of the minimum wage set by the national general collective labour agreement (EGSSE), for all four semesters and amounts to EUR 17.12 per day. A contract between the apprentice and the employer is signed and social security for the apprentice is fully covered during the duration of workplace learning ⁽⁴⁸⁾.

On completion of their studies EPAS graduates obtain an EPAS specialisation diploma corresponding to EQF level 4, work experience, and accumulate pension rights. If the specialty is related to a professional license, the graduate receives professional rights and afterwards gets the professional license from the relevant regional authority. These rights are regulated by

⁽⁴⁶⁾ The relevance of EPAL graduates with University Departments is to be determined by Ministerial Act.

⁽⁴⁷⁾ According to the provisions of Law 4386/2016 (and more precisely article 66, paragraph 17) the functioning of EPAS supervised by OAED is extended until the academic year 2020-2021.

⁽⁴⁸⁾ Details about the form and content of the contract will be finalised in the near future.

Ministerial Act which is issued by the Minister of Education following a recommendation by the Governing Board of EOPPEP ⁽⁴⁹⁾. EPAS graduates have limited permeability options as they can only continue their studies in IEKs or enrol to the second year of a relevant EPAL (school-based) programme again at upper-secondary level.

Improvements to the EPAS apprenticeship scheme are promoted by OAED's own reengineering programme and through the VET Strategy and subsequent legislation. Among other developments, learning agreements will be introduced to EPAS apprenticeships describing the learning outcomes intended to be developed in the workplace, alongside the appointment of a qualified in-company trainer.

EPAS were traditionally aimed at learners at risk of dropping-out from school-based programmes, thus the entry requirements was for a student to have completed the first year of the GEL or EPAL upper secondary programmes. Recently it has been noticed that in practice the majority of EPAS learners are already EPAL or GEL graduates (even IEK), meaning that holders of qualifications at NQF/EQF4 enrol for a two-year programme at the same level. This shows a preference to apprenticeship and its features and partly compensates for the dead-end (as Gel and EPAL graduates can in any case proceed to HE), but raises questions on learners own criteria in selecting educational programmes and on the effectiveness of vocational guidance and counselling provided across educational levels.

Between 2001-02 and 2015 enrolment in OAED's EPAS schools dropped by 44%. Over that period the number of girls in EPAS schools rose from 25% of the student population to 36.5%. It is worth mentioning however that the last years the number of students remains at the level of 10,500 (both years).

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

Apprenticeships have been strengthened across the country by the establishment of 30 vocational education career offices (GDDE) within the framework of the EPAS. These aim to systematically link vocational education to the world of work 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 apprentices entering employment on completion of their studies. 47% of EPAS graduates are

⁽⁴⁹⁾ Not all specialties need professional rights. This means that those who don't can practice the profession just with their diploma. For further info (only in Greek) see: <http://www.eoppep.gr/index.php/el/qualification-certificate/professional-rights>

employed, 50% entered the labour market 6 months after the completion of their studies and 70% are employed for more than a year ⁽⁵⁰⁾.

2.1.3. Post-secondary apprenticeship programmes (EPAL apprenticeship class)

The EPAL 'apprenticeship class' is an option for those who have completed the three-year upper secondary education programmes at EPAL schools. EPAL apprenticeship programmes are based on OAED's dual learning principle (see 2.2.5) and follow the same quality framework for apprenticeships. They belong to the non- formal system. They include learning at the workplace (four days a week), school-based learning aiming at specialisation course, a flexible zone allowing adjustment to local labour market needs and preparatory courses for certification at the school. The Apprenticeship Class as a post-secondary year option helps avoiding early specialization of students by helping them choose field and profession at a more mature stage and allows a possible professional redefinition for school-based EPAL graduates.

A contract is signed between the two parties. The apprentice receives the 75% of the minimum wage of an unqualified employee and has every right that a normal employee enjoys under employment legal framework. Companies will assume clear responsibility over the workplace learning by signing a learning agreement that will complement the overall contract and appointing an in-company trainer for the apprentice (procedures for future training and accreditation of trainers are also foreseen).

The vocational upper secondary schools (EPAL) and OAED share responsibility for implementing the apprenticeship class, assigning the students to work placements, and all that this entails. According to Law 4386/2016 (i.e. the most recent development regulating VET), the duration of apprenticeship class is one school year. The 'apprenticeship class' is at the time of reporting at a pilot stage since May 2016 for two specialties, i.e. electrical installations and agriculture business. The evaluation of the pilots will inform the final legal and operational aspects of the "apprenticeship class".

Graduates of the 'apprenticeship class' will receive a diploma at EQF level 5 ⁽⁵¹⁾ after procedures for certification of their qualifications by the national agency (EOPPEP) have been completed. Graduates of a vocational upper secondary evening school do not have to enrol in the 'apprenticeship class' but can apply for

⁽⁵⁰⁾ For more information about the Apprenticeship programmes of OAED see "EEO GROUP 2015. 'OAED's apprenticeship system: trends, developments, opportunities, the reformation of Apprenticeship'.

⁽⁵¹⁾ See preceding note.

certification of their qualifications if they have worked for at least 600 days in the specialty with which they graduated from the third year.

EOPPEP is the body responsible for certification of qualifications and for awarding specialisation diplomas to graduates of 'apprenticeship class', either alone or jointly with OAED. Those who pass certification examinations receive both the related specialisation diploma and a licence to practise their trade (when a license is necessary by relevant legislation). As appropriate, other ministries that issue corresponding occupational licences may take part in conducting examinations.

'Apprenticeship class' programmes are to be financed in their initial phase from national, private and/or EU funds. Participating enterprises will contribute by 45%.

2.1.4. Post-secondary VET programmes

The Lifelong Learning Act (Law 3879/2010) defines as 'non-formal' certain programmes of education although they are provided in an organised framework (outside the 'formal education system', see 2.2) and can lead to nationally recognised qualifications. This type of non-formal VET includes initial vocational training, continuing 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 and Youth (GSLLY) of the Ministry of Education. 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 and are also depended on the results of the skills forecasting mechanism. Curricula for each specialty should take into account related occupational profiles or required occupational qualifications. Curricula for initial vocational training are developed and overseen by the GSLLY and certified by EOPPEP (see Section 3.2). They can be defined in terms of learning outcomes and linked to credits, following ECVET.

2.1.4.1. Programmes in post-secondary VET schools (IEK)

These initial vocational training programmes are offered by public and private institutions, with a view to integrating learners into the labour market. They are open to EPAL graduates (who may enter the third semester of a related specialty), EPAS OAED graduates, SEK graduates, graduates of general upper

secondary school, graduates of lower secondary school (in a limited number of specialties) ⁽⁵²⁾ and foreign nationals (holding 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 (not offered as an option yet) totalling 960 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 ⁽⁵³⁾.

In 2015 there were 129 public IEKs in 74 cities (of which 2 are for special needs students and 3 in prisons) and 62 private IEK, with respective student populations of 30,699 and 31,161 students. This suggests an increase both in numbers of schools and students comparing to 2012-13. 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 students.

2.1.4.2. *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.).

⁽⁵²⁾ In this case the legal framework provided for a 1 year programme (post-gymnasium) IEKs, which are now abolished. There is a possibility to continue this practice only for socially vulnerable groups.

⁽⁵³⁾ 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 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).

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.

2.1.5. Continuing vocational education and training

In Greece continuing 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).

The municipalities can set up LLCs or mobilise the network of lifelong learning bodies in their region, offering programmes linked to the local labour environment and beyond. Most municipalities have set up LLCs, which provide a variety of general adult education and continuing 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 co-financed 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 (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 are not correlated to levels of the national qualifications framework. Necessary prerequisites for this to happen are the implementation of a national QA system, evaluation of results and feedback.

2.1.6. 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 ⁽⁵⁴⁾ and pilot vocational training and special education schools can be set up, as can public and private special education IEKs. Currently, there are 2 public IEKs for people with special needs and also 3 IEKs in prisons. Also, most lifelong learning providers have general adult education and continuing 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. 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 co-financing from the European Social Fund. The qualifications acquired from this type of training are not recognised by any national authority.

⁽⁵⁴⁾ Although EPAL schools for students with special needs exist their status quo needs further regulation (as they are supervised by the Department of Special Needs with a problematic legal status).

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 learners in 2013. The number of programmes more than doubled between 2011 and 2013 (October), as did the number of learners 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 (Sev Stegi) 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 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.).

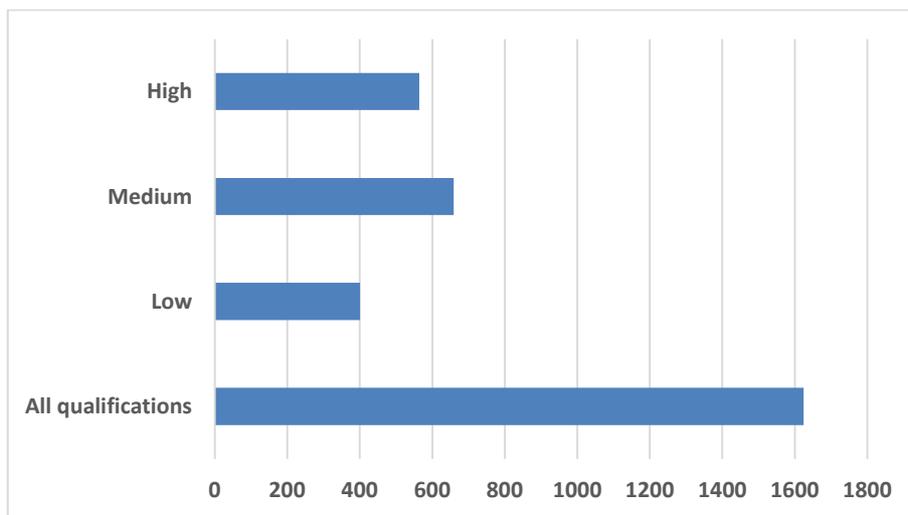
CHAPTER 3.

Shaping VET qualifications

3.1. Identifying skill needs

Cedefop's forecasts providing overall data on job opportunities, occupation and qualification prospects until 2025 present some useful insights about Greece. According to relevant data regarding Greece (Figure 8.), a clear rise is expected in job opportunities ⁽⁵⁵⁾ requiring medium and high level formal qualifications (75% for both levels). Nonetheless, the majority (88.9%) of expected job opportunities refers to replacement needs: 1,445 thousand out of 1,624 thousand jobs.

Figure 8. **Job opportunities by level of qualifications (Greece 2015-25), in '000s**



Source: Cedefop, skills forecast, 2016 ⁽⁵⁶⁾.

According to Cedefop forecasts net change in employment opportunities refers to 179 thousand out of 1,624 thousand jobs. What is more interesting about the latter is the fact that this figure is the accumulation of the loss of 104 thousand jobs requiring low level formal qualifications and another 24 thousand

⁽⁵⁵⁾ This is the sum of net employment change and replacement demand

⁽⁵⁶⁾ <http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/publications-and-resources/data-visualisations/job-opportunities?locale=EN&dataSource=SFMJ&media=png&width=740&entitle=false&question=01.+JobOpportunities&plot=inCountry&countryGroup=linear&subset=03.+Qualification&country=EL&year=20152025&yearTo=20152025>

jobs requiring medium level formal qualifications, with the creation of 307 thousand jobs requiring high level formal qualifications.

Job losses, as recorded by negative net changes in job opportunities, are expected mainly for skilled agricultural and fishery workers, as well in some extent in managerial positions, while the majority of new jobs is related to service workers and shop and market sales workers, technicians and associate professionals and professionals in general (Table 11). The aforementioned are closely related to VET specialities, but often covered by overeducated university graduates.

Table 11. **Net change in job opportunities per occupation (Greece 2015-25)**

Breakdown per occupation	' 000s
TOTAL	179
Managers	-10
Professionals	44
Technicians and associate professionals	74
Clerks	18
Service workers and shop and market sales workers	86
Skilled agricultural and fishery workers	-78
Craft and related trades workers	6
Plant and machine operators and assemblers	8
Elementary occupations	33

Source: Cedefop, skills forecast, 2016.

Between 2015 and 2025 job opportunities in Greece are expected mainly in the distribution & transport sector (499.4 thousand jobs of which 128 thousands newly created jobs), the primary sector (347.7 thousand jobs, despite the loss of 73 thousand jobs) and Business & other services (314.4 thousand jobs of which 87 thousands newly created jobs). This is a different pattern compared to EU-28, whereas the primary sector is much smaller in proportion and the business sector is quite larger (Table 12).

Table 12. **Job opportunities by sector (Greece & EU-28, 2015-25), in '000s**

Breakdown per occupation	GREECE	%	EU-28	%
TOTAL	1615	100%	97029,2	100%
Primary sector and utilities	347,7	22%	6631,8	7%
Manufacturing	104,7	6%	10068,2	10%
Construction	93,3	6%	5309,3	5%
Distribution, transport	499,4	31%	23404,6	24%
Business, other services	314,4	19%	29011,3	30%
Non-marketed services	255,5	16%	22604	23%

Source: Cedefop, skills forecast, 2016.

Apparently, Cedefop forecasts for 2015-25, are a useful tool in understanding opportunities and trends in comparison with the rest of Europe.

Nonetheless, updated and concrete information of skills supply and demand trends has been a challenge for Greece, especially as an input for designing VET and employment policies.

As a major step to cover the gap between VET and labour market needs, a new skills forecasting mechanism has been established (based upon Law 4368/2016, February 2016 and Ministerial Decree 24013/410/26.05.2016 on the introduction and operation of a relevant network and the supportive information system). The establishment of this mechanism:

- (a) Addresses the necessity for early identification of medium-term trends in labour market needs;
- (b) Rationalises the design of employment policies in accordance with training and education programmes to be implemented;
- (c) Enabled the withdrawal of a relevant conditionality regarding EC funding;
- (d) Allows the implementation of the Youth Guarantee scheme in Greece;
- (e) Fulfils provisions planned in law 4336/2015;
- (f) Supports the state to increase the impact of VET (i.e. development of required VET curricula), most importantly via providing necessary LMI that will inform evidence based policy making in the field of VET.

In terms of governance of the new mechanism:

- (a) The Ministry of Employment coordinates the development and operation of the forecasting mechanism;
- (b) The National Labour and Human Resources Institute / EIEAD (former Employment Observatory Institute/PAEP SA) is the competent scientific authority responsible for the mechanism, the coordination of the relevant network of stakeholders, the development of the methodology, as well as the synthesis and production of results and the annual Report skills forecasting.

Though at an early operational stage, the mechanism has already produced a first set of concrete policy results (57) through the production of first outputs, and thus facilitating the exploitation of outputs in regard with the development of training programmes and active employment policies. Also a first set of deliverables were produced, the most important of which was the 1st Annual Report (July 15th 2016) of the mechanism, which was based upon a multivariate computation of dynamism of professions for the 2011-15 period. Actually, it presents the dynamism (in terms of employment and unemployment) of professions in each Greek region, e.g. mining workers, salespeople and scientific

(57) Based upon I. Kalavrou's (Head of Employment Policy Department, Ministry of Employment) presentation during June 24th 2016 public event.

professionals seem to be the most dynamic cases in East Macedonia & Thrace, while skilled construction workers, food processors and farmers are declining.

The mechanism and its methodologies were presented to key stakeholders (April 2016), and a wider formal public event also took place (June 2016), following the presentation and discussion of the EIEAD Executive Summary of the Mechanism Deliverables (March 2016).

Being an integral part of the VET Strategy, the mechanism facilitates the link between training programs and envisaged ALM policies, mainly as an evidence based tool for designing demanded specialties for the development of relevant occupational profiles. Furthermore, outcome based occupational profiles are important for well-informed curricula in order to be used for VET training programs. What's more, the new VET strategy clearly links the newly developed Apprenticeship Schemes with the outcomes of the mechanism. Still, the feedback loop is not fully developed and operationalised to the extent that VET stakeholders can largely base their decisions on evidence coming from the mechanism.

The Hellenic Federation of Enterprises (SEV) has developed a mechanism for diagnosing a company's needs as regards occupations and skills. During its 1st phase (2013), across eight sectors (food, ICT, energy, construction products, supply chain, environment, metals and health) of particular interest to the Greek economy, SEV identified 87 key occupations as likely to require significantly different knowledge, skills and abilities up to 2020 ⁽⁵⁸⁾. Within 2015 two crucial occupations (R&D scientist in the food sector, Software engineer developer) were analysed as for their required knowledge base in accordance to linking with the labour market.

To conclude, in a period of accumulated long term recession and remaining high unemployment there is a risk greater than that of a mismatch of skills, which is that skills may lose their value. Unskilled and older workers are at greater risk, as are the long-term unemployed, especially young people without any work experience. There are clear signs that in Greece there is a disharmony

⁽⁵⁸⁾ As mentioned in previous Cedefop Report for Greece, SEV's forecasts coincide to some extent with those of the McKinsey (2012) report on perspectives for growth in certain economic sectors in Greece identifying five major sectors and eight branches that could generate 520 000 new jobs over the next few years. Still, in fact this is questioned, due to anaemic results because of unexpected recession. See McKinsey & Company, (2012), Greece 10 Years Ahead: Defining Greece's new growth model and strategy Report, June 2012 http://www.mckinsey.com/locations/athens/greeceexecutivesummary_new/pdfs/executive_summary_english_new.pdf and Hellenic Federation of Enterprises (2013), Mechanism for Diagnosis of Businesses' Needs in Skills and Occupation – Information Notice <http://www.sev.org.gr/online/viewNews.aspx?id=2322&mid=&lang=gr>

between skills needed and their availability. In addition, though skills development policies are supportive, it should be pointed out that the crucial problem of Greek economy is that of creating growth conditions which will lead to job creation that would in turn contribute to speedy matching between offer and demand.

3.2. Developing curricula and qualifications

3.2.1. Specialties and curricula: Amending the recent legislation

The upper secondary vocational programmes are offered by public EPAL schools in specialties that are listed in law on secondary education (Law 4186/2013) and Law 4327/2015) (see Chapter 2); these specialties and their provision are determined by decision of the Minister for Education.

The specialties offered should reflect the needs of the economy, the proposals of the regional VET boards (not fully established), social partners, chambers and professional associations, and the recommendations of the Labour Ministry and OAED, the Ministry of Development and other competent ministries and will also be informed by the results of the skills forecasting mechanism (see 3.1). A structured procedure for this kind of consultation does not exist.

The detailed curriculum of each specialty has to be designed in accordance with the relevant occupational profile (wherever this exists) and the principles and guidelines laid down by ECVET. The curricula of formal upper secondary VET are developed by IEP and issued by form of Ministerial Acts. The new law also requires that the duration and details of the timetable and curriculum be assessed and, if this is deemed necessary, revised ⁽⁵⁹⁾.

Specialties of apprenticeship programmes will be decided by the National Committee for VET and apprenticeships, based on recommendations by the Technical Committee and taking into account findings by the skills forecasting mechanism. A number of factors, such as demand for existing specialties, regional recommendations will be taken into account. IEP will be responsible for the development of curricula for the EPAL apprenticeship class and EPAS programmes, which should include a clear workplace component (that was missing from existing EPAS programmes).

The curricula in initial vocational training are developed by the GSLLY (which also supervises all the public and private vocational training providers)

⁽⁵⁹⁾ In these terms Law 4386/2016 introduces on going evaluation of curricula in contrast to Law 4186/2013 where revision was programmed for every 6 years.

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, and the equipment.

In April 2016 the Ministry of Education published, following a period of public consultation, a strategic framework for upgrading VET and apprenticeships where there's an explicit reference to the need of upgrading the quality of curricula. A Curriculum Quality Framework is developed and will soon be legislated. Even though the Framework is discussed with EU Authorities the need for the upgrading of VET curricula is identified by EU and new curricula will be funded by ESF.

3.2.2. Occupational profiles

Law 3369/2005 introduced occupational profiles in the Greek legal system. Since 2006 (Ministerial Decree 110998) EKEPIS- National Centre of Accreditation of LLL Infrastructure - the then competent organization in Greece – and its successor organisation EOPPEP later, in collaboration with social partners (i.e. employers and employees' organisations), field experts and educationalists, have developed and certified standards for more than two hundreds occupations. The role of Social partners is critical both in the phase of development but also in the stage of accreditation of occupational profiles. For an occupational profile to qualify for accreditation two social partners (one being the coordinator) must interfere with the development process. Social partners are also members of the Committee that accredits occupational profiles (see law 3369 and Common Ministerial Act- 110998 (GG 566B-2006)

In more detail this process involves the following steps:

- (a) Identification of the key purpose of the occupation;
- (b) Disaggregation of the occupation into main functions and sub-functions, developing the functional map of the occupation;
- (c) Last level of the analysis is called element of competence (in Greek *Epagelmatiki Ergasia* – EE) followed by the relevant performance criteria and range of indicators.

The title of the element-EE, the performance criteria and the range of indicators, together constitute an occupational standard which is not far from what is being described as a Learning Outcome. The methodology which has been used is based on job analysis and in particular functional analysis. Greece has chosen the shift from 'task' (used in the past) to 'function', as it has been argued that function provides a broader perception for the content of an outcome.

A complete occupational profile study also includes:

- (a) A background history of the occupation;
- (b) The current legislative framework regarding practising the occupation;
- (c) The required knowledge, skills and competences to practise it and indicative ways of assessing them;
- (d) The proposed pathways for acquiring the necessary qualifications.

As has been noted above, the occupational profiles project was aiming at the creation of a closer link between vocational education and training and labour market needs, an objective that has not been widely fulfilled, as their use within the Greek educational system remains limited.

In the context of the overall updating of certification the Ministry of Education has initiated a dialogue on reforming the system of Occupational Profiles.

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

3.2.3.1. National qualifications framework

The development of the Hellenic Qualifications Framework (HQF) and its referencing to the EQF is considered as a key element in order to improve the transparency of the Greek qualifications system, to enhance horizontal and vertical mobility, and to promote lifelong learning.

The HQF was instituted with the enactment of the Law 3879/2010. Its aim 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, classified and referenced to the levels of the European Qualifications Framework (EQF).

In this context the establishment of the HQF has brought about two main changes in the Greek education and training system:

- (a) It officially adopts the rationale of learning outcomes as a prerequisite for the awarding and/or the creation of new qualifications; and
- (b) It increases the ability to supervise and ensure the quality of all qualifications obtained in the country.

Already a large number of national and foreign entities in Greece have registered as providers of educational services and have been granted the right to issue awards. With the existence of the NQF, Greece has for the first time undertaken to systematise recognition of the awards granted by these entities and organise them into a unified framework.

The three main stakeholders in the development and governance of HQF by law (3879/2010 & 4115/2013) are:

1. The Ministry of Education, responsible for the overall supervision and the coordination of the bodies involved,
2. The National Organisation for the Certification of Qualifications and Vocational Guidance – EOPPEP mainly responsible for the development of the Framework and its referencing to the European Qualifications Framework,
3. The Advisory Committee (including social partners, higher education representatives and experts), established by decision of the Minister to support EOPPEP in this work.

The structure of the Hellenic Qualifications Framework is rather simple, based on the rationale of Levels, Level Descriptors and Qualification Types.

- (a) The eight levels of HQF, covering the complete range of learning, constitute the foundation on which the whole framework is built;
- (b) Level descriptors are the defining element of the structure providing the mechanism for the referencing of the Hellenic Qualifications Framework to the EQF;
- (c) Qualification types are the instruments that allow the classification of Greek qualifications into the levels of HQF, as well as enabling the comparison between them. The use of Qualification Types facilitates the differentiation of qualifications that are classified into the same level but are, at the same time, significantly different from one another. For example the EPAS certificate (i.e. a vocational qualification) is at the same level with the general upper secondary school certificate (Apolytirio Likeiou).

Together, Level Descriptors and Qualification Types provide a flexible mechanism for the recognition/referencing of any learning achievement and also facilitate decisively one of the basic principles of the Framework, the ability of learners to access, transfer and progress within the educational system ⁽⁶⁰⁾.

A most important recent development, is related to the final approval of the referencing of the Hellenic Qualifications Framework (HQF), developed by EOPPEP, to the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) during the 33rd EQF Advisory Group (December 2nd 2015), as the Greek delegation presented the state of play regarding quality issues in the Greek educational system and the important steps accomplished towards the improvement of quality assurance in all education sectors.

Having already developed Qualification Types for all qualifications awarded within the formal education system plus the qualification of IEK which is a non-

⁽⁶⁰⁾ For more information about HQF, qualifications, awarding bodies and types of Qualifications see: <http://proson.eoppep.gr/en/>

formal qualification (level 5 in HQF), Greece is now on a process of placing in each one of them the individual (named) qualifications expressed in learning outcomes. At present, EOPPEP has placed a total of 674 individual (named) qualifications. The whole process has been developed after consultation with all relevant awarding bodies, being in this case, Universities (AEI), Technological Institutes (TEI), Ministry of Education and EOPPEP.

As part of the further development process, EOPPEP has already developed a Database, aiming to include all qualifications classified in HQF. This database is called Greek Qualifications Register and takes into account all information based on the fields and descriptions of the EQF data base in order to be linked to it, as well as to the European portal “Learning Opportunities and Qualifications in Europe”.

As for the final phase of the development of HQF, once it is fully established and completed, the plan is to explore specific policies and procedures –if necessary - for the operation of new certification entities, and for defining the proper relationship between the NQF and the international sectoral certification bodies.

3.2.3.2. *Learning outcomes*

A major difficulty faced during the implementation process of HQF was associated with the extent of application of the Learning Outcomes (LOs’) approach. As in many other countries, Greece’s traditional educational practice connects the grant of an award with the ‘inputs’ of the system, (namely the study program, the teaching methods, teachers/trainers qualifications), and/or the time needed for the completion of the program. The shift to learning outcomes represents a major change within the Greek educational matters. EOPPEP, using the definitions given by the EQF, has developed a methodology for the identification and the design of Learning Outcomes based on knowledge, skills and competence. The methodology takes also into account the latest Cedefop work as has been discussed in relevant forums (i.e. Cedefop - September 2015), as well as work developed within relevant EU funded projects.

It is worth mentioning that samples of the LOs’ approach already exist in earlier efforts to upgrade and modularise VET curricula (e.g. occupational profiles) as more or less similar methodologies were employed to describe occupational standards. However, learning outcomes have yet long to be generally applied into the Greek VET system. It is expected that through various interventions under the Programming Period (2014-20) and on the basis of the overall Curriculum Quality Framework, the approach will be systematised. Already the development of some curricula for the apprenticeship class or IEK

curricula developed by the GSLLY take into account the LOs approach. EOPPEP is in the process of submitting a coherent proposal for further development of the HQF and this is expected to create a uniformed approach.

3.2.4. Comparability, recognition and transfer of qualifications

ECVET, the European Credit system for Vocational Education & Training, 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 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. Two IEK specialties, namely the international trade strain and the SMEs strain were developed during a pilot program using the ECVET principle whilst OEEK was still running public IEKs (before 2010).

In 2013, 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). It must be said however that ECVET implementation in Greece is questioned as many stakeholders (e.g. Ministries, VET providers etc.) find its technical specifications extremely complex and some even doubt it in policy terms.

3.3. Quality assurance

Assurance of the quality of VET is a prerequisite for the recognition of qualifications obtained (especially in the case of non-formal and informal learning), for enhancing the transparency of qualifications and the reputation of VET. The development 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) learners 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) educational process, especially at times of economic crisis and fiscal austerity, has to be productive and effective.

The law on lifelong learning (Law 3879/2010) 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 objectives 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.

Greece has incorporated the basic principles and quality criteria laid down in the recommendation for quality assurance in VET in the National quality assurance framework, titled as 'π3', which defines quality as the outcome produced when quality criteria are applied to all the components of the education process:

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

More specifically, the 'π3' framework lays down eight quality principles for lifelong learning, 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.

Therefore the National quality assurance framework 'π3', is the methodological tool, intending to support VET providers in further improving the provision of their educational services as well as to set quality objectives in a field that was until recently poorly controlled. The implementation of 'π3' will apply to all organisations involved in the non-formal education system, and operate under the supervision of the Ministry of Education. These bodies are expected to fall in line with the 'π3' National quality assurance framework, further refine the quality indicators and apply measurement, evaluation and revision procedures to their systems and processes. The 'π3' quality framework was implemented on a pilot basis by IEKs in 2011. The results of this first pilot approach were taken into account for the revision of the framework in 2012. Unfortunately due to the unprecedented economic restraints in Greece no significant further work on its enactment and implementation was carried out until since.

However, recently, the procedure of updating and legally establishing the National quality assurance framework 'π3' has been reactivated. A steering committee was established in 2015 with the main responsibility to monitor the implementation of the above mentioned procedure.

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;
- (c) Law 4336/2015 (quality framework for curricula and quality framework apprenticeships).

CHAPTER 4.

Promoting VET participation

4.1. Incentives

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 ⁽⁶¹⁾. 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 individuals

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. Under the VET strategy and the common Quality framework for apprenticeship, all apprenticeships schemes (EPAS, EPAL, and IEK) should include a contract, wage and social security rights/benefits to apprentices.

With the establishment of the 12-month EPAL apprenticeship, the introduction of apprenticeships as an option at post-secondary IEK, and the re-establishment of several popular specialties at school-based VET, more options for learners are available to participate in VET.

EPAL graduates who follow the programme and pass their certification examinations receive a level 5 qualification. Similarly, IEK graduates (regardless if they take internships or apprenticeships as part of their studies) receive qualifications that have been upgraded to level 5 of HQF/EQF.

⁽⁶¹⁾ 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.

Progression to higher education is possible for EPAL graduates through the main examination process (see 2.2.1). Law 4386/2016 expands the opportunities for progression to higher education for EPAL graduates (see 2.2.1). Progression opportunities are significantly limited for graduates of EPAS apprenticeships programmes. Both EPAL and EPAS graduates can also enrol to post-secondary VET (IEK programmes).

The Lifelong learning law (Law 3879/2010) covering CVET provision also foresees incentives for updating the knowledge, skills and competence of the count human resources in Greece (Article 18). These may 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) the recognition and referencing of learning outcomes from all forms of formal, non-formal and informal learning and their link to levels of the national qualifications framework;
- (c) the development and implementation of a credit transfer system for VET.

Apart from such regulatory incentives, there are also financial incentives for workers and jobless to take part in continuing training programmes, aimed at upgrading their knowledge, skills and competences. In practice, participation of learners in CVET is promoted through financial incentives that combine a voucher for classroom training with remuneration foreseen for workplace training / work placements in many key ALMP programmes offered. Continuing training is subsidised primarily from ESF, but also from the Greek training fund (LAEK, see 2.3). In other cases, participation in adult education and continuing training programmes is a prerequisite for accessing an occupation (such as energy

inspectors, mediators, fluoride gas handlers) or for career advancement and qualification for positions of responsibility (such as teachers, public administration).

In an effort to tackle the huge youth unemployment the Ministry of Labour, in collaboration with the Ministries of Education, Culture and Development, has elaborated 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' ⁽⁶²⁾ (2012). In the framework of this action plan, vocational training-related initiatives are being implemented to foster employment and entrepreneurship of persons aged 15 to 24 and 25 to 35 ⁽⁶³⁾. The budget is 620,000,000 EUR (total) and the potential beneficiaries are estimated to 380,000 people for the programming period 2014-20.

The goals expressed in the Plan can be summarised as follows:

- 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) introducing 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) increasing provision of 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) introducing measures aimed at reducing early school leaving.

Also in 2015 the Ministry of Labour (national coordinator of Youth Guarantee) has submitted a proposal for the EaSI-PROGRESS project (the partners are Ministry of Education and the Municipality of Egaleo) which has

⁽⁶²⁾ Ministry of Labour, Social Security and Welfare (2013).

⁽⁶³⁾ The first Youth Guarantee implementation plan was submitted to the European Commission in 31.12.2013. An updated plan was submitted and approved in May 2014.

been positively evaluated. The implementation of the above mentioned actions will accelerate the implementation of Youth Guarantee.

4.1.2. Incentives for enterprises and VET 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. 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 should be funded on the basis of their effectiveness and productiveness. This provision has not yet been implemented, but overall work on this topic was recently reassumed (see 3.3).

In addition, companies are entitled to receive back their contributions to the LAEK training fund if they carry out training programmes for their personnel ⁽⁶⁴⁾. The revenues of this account, which is managed by OAED, come from employers' contributions to the Social Security Organisation (IKA), with each company contributing 0.24% 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 learners, as for example in the EPAS apprenticeship schemes. Companies participating in the recently introduced EPAL and IEK apprenticeship programmes will also receive subsidies for their share of the cost. 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). CVET providers benefit from the training voucher schemes that largely form the basis of ALPM policies.

4.2. Guidance and counselling

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 the Department of Vocational Orientation. 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

⁽⁶⁴⁾ <http://laek.oaed.gr/> [18.1.2016].

centres for meetings bringing together children or young people (up to age 25) and their teachers and guardians (KESYP).

OAED has established 30 vocational education career offices (GDEE) within the framework of the EPAS schools, aiming at linking vocational education to the world of work by placing students in appropriate jobs in private and public sector enterprises.

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

The agency responsible for lifelong counselling and vocational guidance is EOPPEP ⁽⁶⁵⁾, which is a member of the corresponding European network (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.) ⁽⁶⁶⁾.

Teenagers in particular can use a designated vocational guidance portal ⁽⁶⁷⁾ 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 (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 ⁽⁶⁸⁾.

The National strategic framework for upgrading VET and apprenticeships (2016) explicitly refers to the need for an expansion of the guidance services. EOPPEP has developed occupational standards for career counsellors and a certification legislative framework has been prepared and is expected to come

⁽⁶⁵⁾ <http://www.eoppep.gr/index.php/el/work-guidance-and-consulting/eoppep-syep/eoppep-part> [3.2.2013].

⁽⁶⁶⁾ <http://ploigos.eoppep.gr/ekep/external/index.html> [3.2.2014].

⁽⁶⁷⁾ <http://www.EOPPEP.gr/teens/> [7.7.2016].

⁽⁶⁸⁾ <http://guidanceforum.EOPPEP.gr/> [7.7.2016].

into force in the last quarter of 2016. Certification procedures for counsellors are also part of EOPPEP's operational planning.

OAED also offers counselling services aimed at mobilising the unemployed and helping them enter the labour market. These services include ⁽⁶⁹⁾:

- (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;
- (c) Entrepreneurship counselling, to encourage the development of entrepreneurial skills and help unemployed persons start businesses with enhanced feasibility 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 ⁽⁷⁰⁾.

⁽⁶⁹⁾ http://www.oaed.gr/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=451&Itemid=606&lang=el [7.7.2016].

⁽⁷⁰⁾ http://www.oaed.gr/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=534&Itemid=189&lang=el [7.7.2016].

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European Commission, Spring 2016 forecasts for the Greek economy	http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/eu/forecasts/2016_spring/el_en.pdf
EOPPEP, list of occupational profiles 1-50	http://www.eoppep.gr/index.php/el/structure-and-program-certification/workings/list-ep
Eurostat, adult education survey (AES) database	http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/microrodata/adult_education_survey
Eurostat, general government deficit/surplus	http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/tgm/refreshTableAction.do?tab=table&plugin=1&pcode=tec00127&language=en
Eurostat, income and living conditions (ILC) database	http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/income_social_inclusion_living_conditions/data/database
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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.
- Law 4336/2015 (GG I/94 of 14.8.2015) concerning the axes of VET reformation
- Law 4327/2015 (GG I/50 of 14.5.2015) concerning modifications of Law 4186/2013
- Law 4368/2016 (GG I/21 of 21.2.2016) concerning the establishment of a skills forecasting mechanism
- Law 4386/2016 (GG I/83 of 11.5.2016) concerning Research and VET provisions

List of abbreviations

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

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

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 a 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, continuing 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.

Continuing 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.