



# Developments in vocational education and training policy in 2015–19

## GREECE



Cedefop monitoring of vocational education and training policies and systems

Progress towards the medium-term deliverables  
of the Riga conclusions

**Country chapter**

**GREECE**

Developments in vocational education and training policy  
in 2015-19

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# Introduction

In June 2015, the ministers in charge of vocational education and training in the EU Member States, the candidate countries and the European Economic Area countries, convened in Riga, agreed on objectives for vocational education and training (VET) policies for 2015-20 <sup>(1)</sup>.

Cedefop has been entrusted with monitoring the countries' policies implemented towards reaching these objectives.

This country chapter is part of the monitoring process. It was drafted based on input from the national ReferNet team. It presents an overview of the major policy developments that have taken place in the country in 2015-19, in the areas covered by the Riga medium-term deliverables (MTDs).

The country chapter is structured as follows:

- (a) the introductory section Aspects of vocational education and training context in 2015 briefly sketches the VET context in the country in 2015, highlighting selected figures and major policy initiatives that were just being adopted or started at that time. This introductory section is targeted at setting a baseline to put in perspective the policy choices and developments that have taken place since the beginning of the Riga cycle;
- (b) five thematic chapters then follow, devoted to the five respective MTDs outlined in the Riga conclusions. Each thematic chapter also begins with a 2015 baseline, more specifically addressing the MTD-related topics. The baseline is followed by the presentation of the major policy developments in the MTD since 2015;
- (c) the country chapter ends with a conclusion summarising the main lines of the 2015-19 policy developments and highlighting possible priorities for the future.

This country chapter is part of the information which the European Commission used to prepare the European Semester exercises <sup>(2)</sup> in 2017-19. The chapter also informs the work of Cedefop and the European Training

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<sup>(1)</sup> *Riga conclusions 2015 on a new set of medium-term deliverables in the field of VET for the period 2015-20, as a result of the review of short-term deliverables defined in the 2010 Bruges communiqué:*

[https://www.izm.gov.lv/images/RigaConclusions\\_2015.pdf](https://www.izm.gov.lv/images/RigaConclusions_2015.pdf)

<sup>(2)</sup> European Semester: [https://ec.europa.eu/info/business-economy-euro/economic-and-fiscal-policy-coordination/eu-economic-governance-monitoring-prevention-correction/european-semester\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/business-economy-euro/economic-and-fiscal-policy-coordination/eu-economic-governance-monitoring-prevention-correction/european-semester_en)

Foundation (ETF) in preparing a joint monitoring report on the implementation of the Riga conclusions. Both the joint report and the country chapter are aimed at informing the work of EU Member States' Directors General for Vocational Training (DGVTS) and Advisory Committee for Vocational Training (ACVT) on taking stock of the outcomes of the Riga conclusions and preparing the next steps for the EU VET policy for the next few years.

## Aspects of vocational education and training context in 2015

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

VET in the country was faced with a lack of attractiveness (Cedefop, 2014, pp. 17-20) and the challenges of increasing participation, involving employers, increasing the labour market relevance of programmes, developing quality assurance and setting up information systems to guide the development of provision. Steps were being taken to address the issues. The 2013 Secondary Education Act <sup>(3)</sup> introduced an optional final apprenticeship year for learners in formal upper secondary VET schools (EPAL), leading to a higher level of qualifications (European qualifications framework – EQF level 5). A new type of VET school, SEK, had just been introduced outside the formal education system, offering three-year initial VET programmes (including one year of apprenticeship) to people having completed compulsory education. A European Social Fund (ESF) funded internship programme, targeted at supporting internships of graduates from post-secondary non-tertiary VET (IEK institutes), was being carried out. On the adult side, a 2013-15 lifelong learning programme had been adopted in 2013, paving the way for actions to increase the provision of adult education and better address the needs of priority target groups.

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<sup>(3)</sup> Law No 4186/2013.

Table 1. Framework data: score on VET indicators in Greece and in the EU: 2010-15

Indicator label	2010		2015(*)		Trend in 2011-15 (per year)			
	EL <sup>f</sup>	EU <sup>f</sup>	Yr	EL <sup>f</sup>	EU <sup>f</sup>	Range	EL	EU
<b>Access, attractiveness and flexibility</b>								
IVET students as % of all upper secondary students	A	A	'14	31.5 <sup>b</sup>	48.0 <sup>b</sup> <sub>E1</sub>	'13-'14	▫ 2.2	▫ -
IVET work-based students as % of all upper secondary IVET	A	A	'14	10.5 <sup>b</sup>	34.0 <sup>b</sup> <sub>E2</sub>	'13-'14	▫ 1.3	▫ 0.1
IVET students with direct access to tertiary education as % of all upper secondary IVET			'14	81.2	69.2 <sup>E3</sup>			
Employees participating in CVT courses (%)	16.0	38.0 <sup>e</sup>	'10	16.0	38.0 <sup>e</sup>			
Employees participating in on-the-job training (%)	6.0	20.0 <sup>e</sup>	'10	6.0	20.0 <sup>e</sup>			
Adults in lifelong learning (%)	3.3		'15	3.3	10.7 <sup>b</sup>	'13-'15	↗ 0.1	→ 0.0
Enterprises providing training (%)	28.0	66.0 <sup>e</sup>	'10	28.0	66.0 <sup>e</sup>			
Female IVET students as % of all female upper secondary students	A	A	'14	23.0 <sup>b</sup>	42.7 <sup>b</sup> <sub>E1</sub>	'13-'14	▫ 4.1	▫ -
Employees of small firms participating in CVT courses (%)	7.0	25.0 <sup>e</sup>	'10	7.0	25.0 <sup>e</sup>			
Young VET graduates in further education and training (%)			'15		33.0 <sup>b</sup>			
Older adults in lifelong learning (%)	0.8	5.3	'15	0.8	6.9	'10-'15	→ 0.0	↗ 0.4
Low-educated adults in lifelong learning (%)	0.5		'15	0.4 <sup>c</sup>	4.3 <sup>b,c</sup>	'13-'15	→ 0.0	↘ 0.1
Unemployed adults in lifelong learning (%)	3.7		'15	2.7	9.5 <sup>b</sup>	'13-'15	↘ 0.2	↘ 0.4
Individuals who wanted to participate in training but did not (%)	17.3 <sup>B</sup>	9.5 <sup>e</sup> <sub>B</sub>	'11	17.3	9.5 <sup>e</sup>			
Job-related non-formal education and training (%)	71.2 <sup>B</sup>	80.2 <sup>e</sup> <sub>B</sub>	'11	71.2	80.2 <sup>e</sup>			
<b>Skill development and labour market relevance</b>								
IVET public expenditure (% of GDP)			'13		0.56 <sup>b</sup> <sub>E4</sub>			
IVET public expenditure per student (1 000 PPS units)			'13		6.4 <sup>b</sup> <sub>E5</sub>			
Enterprise expenditure on CVT courses as % of total labour cost	0.5	0.8 <sup>e</sup>	'10	0.5	0.8 <sup>e</sup>			
Average number of foreign languages learned in IVET			'14	0.6 <sup>b</sup>	1.0 <sup>b</sup> <sub>E6</sub>	'13-'14	▫ 0.0	▫ 0.0
STEM graduates from upper secondary IVET (% of total)	A	A	'14	46.4 <sup>b</sup>	30.0 <sup>b</sup> <sub>E7</sub>	'13-'14	▫ 2.3	▫ -
Short-cycle VET graduates as % of first time tertiary education graduates			'14	0.0 <sup>z</sup>	9.3 <sup>E8</sup>	'13-'14	▫ 0.0	▫ 0.4
Innovative enterprises with supportive training practices (%)		41.5 <sup>E9</sup>	'12	42.5	41.6 <sup>E9</sup>			
Employment rate for IVET graduates (20- to 34-year-olds)			'15	58.2 <sup>b</sup>	77.2 <sup>b</sup>	'14-'15	▫ 5.2	▫ 0.3
Employment premium for IVET graduates (over general stream)			'15	0.2 <sup>b</sup>	5.3 <sup>b</sup>	'14-'15	▫ 2.2	▫ -
Employment premium for IVET graduates (over			'15	6.7 <sup>b</sup>	23.7 <sup>b</sup>	'14-'15	▫ 4.1	▫ -

Indicator label	2010		2015(*)		Trend in 2011-15 (per year)			
	EL <sup>f</sup>	EU <sup>f</sup>	Yr	EL <sup>f</sup>	EU <sup>f</sup>	Range	EL	EU
low-educated)								0.1
Workers helped to improve their work by training (%)			'15	87.4 <sup>u</sup>	83.7			
Workers with skills matched to their duties (%)	44.6	55.2	'15	57.2	57.3	'10-'15	▪ 2.5	▪ 0.4
<b>Overall transitions and labour market trends</b>								
Early leavers from education and training (%)	13.5	13.9	'15	7.9 <sup>c</sup>	11.0 <sup>c</sup>	'10-'15	↘ 1.2	↘ 0.6
30- to 34-year-olds with tertiary attainment (%)	28.6	33.8	'15	40.4 <sup>c</sup>	38.7 <sup>c</sup>	'10-'15	↗ 2.5	↗ 1.0
NEET rate for 18- to 24-year-olds (%)	20.3	16.6	'15	23.7	15.8	'10-'15	↗ 0.7	↘ 0.1
Unemployment rate for 20- to 34-year-olds (%)	19.5	13.1	'15	34.8	12.9	'10-'15	↗ 3.1	↗ 0.1
Employment rate of recent graduates (%)	58.6	77.4	'15	45.2 <sup>c</sup>	76.9 <sup>c</sup>	'10-'15	↘ 2.5	↘ 0.2
Adults with lower level of educational attainment (%)	37.3	27.3	'15	29.6 <sup>c</sup>	23.5 <sup>c</sup>	'10-'15	↘ 1.5	↘ 0.8
Employment rate for 20- to 64-year-olds (%)	63.8	68.6	'15	54.9	70.0	'10-'15	↘ 1.9	↗ 0.3
Employment rate for 20- to 64-year-olds with lower level of educational attainment (%)	57.8	53.4	'15	48.1 <sup>c</sup>	52.6 <sup>c</sup>	'10-'15	↘ 2.0	↘ 0.2
Medium/high-qualified employment in 2020 (% of total)			'16	73.8 <sup>d</sup>	82.8 <sup>d</sup>			

(\*) The data in this column are the data available in 2016. Where 2015 data were not available, data from previous years were used.

(<sup>A</sup>) UOE (UNESCO OECD Eurostat) back reconstruction of 2010 values based on ISCED (international standard classification of education) 2011 not yet available.

(<sup>B</sup>) AES (adult education survey) 2011, used as proxy for 2010 baseline.

(<sup>C</sup>) 2014 b flags in Eurostat online tables ignored on the basis of other relevant Eurostat metadata.

(<sup>D</sup>) Forecast made in 2016.

(<sup>E1</sup>) Based on 28 countries; partial information for NL.

(<sup>E2</sup>) Based on 25 countries (missing: ES, PL, RO); partial information for NL.

(<sup>E3</sup>) Based on 27 countries (missing: NL); partial information for EL, IT.

(<sup>E4</sup>) Based on 19 countries (missing: BE, DK, IE, EL, FR, HR, IT, PT, SK).

(<sup>E5</sup>) Based on 21 countries (missing: DK, IE, EL, FR, HR, IT, PT).

(<sup>E6</sup>) Partial information for NL.

(<sup>E7</sup>) Based on 25 countries (missing: HR, IT, UK).

(<sup>E8</sup>) Based on 23 countries (missing: BE, IE, FR, CY, UK).

(<sup>E9</sup>) Based on 22 countries (missing: DE, IE, EL, NL, SI, UK).

(<sup>b</sup>) Break after 2010, therefore baseline data not included.

(<sup>u</sup>) Eurostat: 'low reliability'.

(<sup>z</sup>) Eurostat: 'not applicable'.

(<sup>e</sup>) Eurostat: 'estimated'.

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

Source: Cedefop, 2017a, p. 57.

## CHAPTER 1.

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

### 1.1. Baseline 2015

Already before the reporting period, work-based learning was in place in initial VET in Greece, both at secondary and post-secondary levels.

In secondary VET, forms of work-based training were offered in secondary vocational education schools (SEK), in EPAL programmes, and in EPAS schools.

SEK schools, established on the ground of the 2010 Lifelong Learning Act, offered programmes combining school-based training (first two years) and work-based training (third year).

In EPAL (the formal upper secondary VET system under the jurisdiction of the Education Ministry), the possibility of offering apprenticeship schemes was introduced in 2013 by the Secondary Education Act <sup>(4)</sup>. EPAL apprenticeships were meant to operate with the support of the national employment service (OAED), which was mandated to assist in establishing partnerships with enterprises and finding apprenticeship places.

Much older were the apprenticeship programmes offered in the framework of EPAS schools, i.e. apprenticeship schools. These programmes were part of upper secondary education <sup>(5)</sup>, and were accessible to those that had completed compulsory education. They were two-year long, and delivered four days per week at the workplace. The school would deliver the theoretical training and would find placements at companies. As of 2010, regional career offices and a central web platform were also established to assist learners in finding training places. Apprentices received remuneration for the time spent in the workplace (70% of the minimum wage) and enjoyed social security and other benefits. Training enterprises would receive a subsidy. EPAS qualifications did not lead to higher education. EPAS programmes were under the supervision of specialised ministries, i.e. mostly the Labour Ministry (through the OAED), but also the Ministry of Tourism and the Ministry of Health. The Education Ministry was involved in updating the curricula and in the certification process. However, the

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<sup>(4)</sup> Law 4186/2013.

<sup>(5)</sup> Law 3475/2006.

2013 Secondary Education Act had decided the gradual termination of the EPAS apprenticeship scheme.

In post-secondary initial VET, vocational training schools (IEK) offered two and a half-year programmes including optional internships (e.g. one of the five semesters). The 2013 Secondary Education Act introduced the possibility to also offer apprenticeships. In 2015, the workplace component (internship or apprenticeship) became mandatory part of IEK programmes. IEK were accessible to all types of upper secondary graduates (whether from general education, EPAL, EPAS, or SEK). IEKs were labelled as part of the non-formal system in the national context, but did lead to officially recognised qualifications.

Social partners were involved in the design and operation of EPAS apprenticeship training. They took part in the OAED Board and in the Board of Directors of EOPPEP (the National Organisation for the Certification of Qualifications and Vocational Guidance) <sup>(6)</sup>. Also, the 2013 Secondary Education Act set the legal basis for reinforcing cooperation between VET schools and enterprises, in particular through involving employers in funding part of apprentices' remuneration.

The entire legal framework for EPAL apprenticeship was redesigned in 2015. At the time of reporting, EPAS schools are still operating following the same lines.

## 1.2. Policy priorities for 2016-20

For 2016-20, the country's priorities in this area <sup>(7)</sup>, as set by the Ministry of Education, are to:

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

Within this framework, the reform of apprenticeship is expected to offer an equitable education choice for VET learners according to their skills and interests; help alleviate social inequalities by providing graduates with work experience; and thus reduce high youth unemployment rates.

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<sup>(6)</sup> TUC; CES (2016). *A European quality framework for apprenticeships: a European trade union proposal*. <https://www.etuc.org/publications/european-quality-framework-apprenticeships#.WrTS9IIUmpo>

<sup>(7)</sup> According to a survey by Cedefop among Directors General for VET in early 2016.

### 1.3. Main actions taken in 2015-19

#### 1.3.1. 2015 Law on modernising and expanding VET

A law on modernising and expanding VET was approved in August 2015 <sup>(8)</sup>. It increases private sector participation in VET. As a result, apprenticeship has since then been carried out at:

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

SEK programmes were discontinued in 2016 <sup>(9)</sup> and are to be phased out in 2019.

Implementation of the reform proved to be a challenge as the establishing of the regulatory basis demanded four laws/amendments, one presidential decree, eleven joint ministerial decisions and eighteen ministerial decisions. Law 4610/2019 integrated all the amendments related to apprenticeship and addressed the issue of access to tertiary education. At this point, the legislative framework regulating upper secondary VET and apprenticeship is considered complete.

#### 1.3.2. The national strategic framework to improve VET and apprenticeship

Following the 2016 *National Strategic Framework to upgrade VET and Apprenticeship*, the above-mentioned laws <sup>(10)</sup> and implementing provisions <sup>(11)</sup>

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<sup>(8)</sup> Law No 4336/2015. For more details see: <http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/news-and-press/news/greece-apprenticeships-essential-part-national-vet-strategy>

<sup>(9)</sup> Law No 4386/2016 (caters for the students/learners already enrolled into these schools).

<sup>(10)</sup> Law No 4386/2016 (Government Gazette (GG) 83B/8.5.2016) with provisions regarding the implementation of the post-lyceum (apprenticeship class) and Law No 4452/2017 (GG 17A/15.2.2017) (with mostly administrative provisions).

<sup>(11)</sup> Common Ministerial Act No 20405/373 (GG 1371B/17.5.2016) on the implementation of the pilot apprenticeship class (post-lyceum-apprenticeship class); Common

were published in 2016 and 2017. They regulated the EPAL apprenticeship year, the key element of the reform; set the quality framework for VET curricula and the quality framework for apprenticeships; and introduced pilot apprenticeship curricula.

The national strategic framework also provided for the governance of the new VET system, instituting:

- (a) the National Committee for VET, responsible for the overall coordination of governance of the Greek VET system, monitoring the implementation of the reform and evaluating its results. The committee is supported in its work by a Technical Committee for VET <sup>(12)</sup>. Both committees became operational in November 2017. In its first meeting (March 2018), the national committee discussed the mapping of labour market skills needs and related policy actions; the development of a VET graduate tracking system; and the monitoring and evaluation of the reform;
- (b) regional PES-based apprenticeship support teams <sup>(13)</sup>, to assist the search for training places. In each public employment service centre, an apprenticeship support team, composed of teachers and trainers, was

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

<sup>(12)</sup> Law 4485-07-08-2017 (GG 114 A-7.8.2017, see especially article 79, no English translation available). Also see and Ministerial Decisions 1608/y2/FEK 566/8.11.2017 and 188975/Y2/FEK 567/8.11.2017.

<sup>(13)</sup> See Common Ministerial Act 26385-GG491B-20.2.2017-especially Article 3.

established. The team has various duties: building bridges between schools, employers, sectoral organisations and chambers; maintaining a database of apprenticeship offers and distributing the offers on demand; following up the implementation of apprenticeship contracts and mediating if necessary; reporting on an annual basis to the National Committee for VET on the implementation of apprenticeship schemes.

In 2017, the National Council of Education (ESYP) was reformed into the National Council for Education and Human Resources Development (ESEKAAD) <sup>(14)</sup>. ESEKAAD now includes many representatives closely involved with VET issues. Its mandate has been extended to the overall link between education (the cognitive demands of society) and the labour market (Section 1.3.3). Within this framework, ESEKAAD has a major say on policies regarding skills mismatches.

A National Apprenticeship Coordination Body (ESOM) was established in February 2018 <sup>(15)</sup>. ESOM is an advisory body on apprenticeship issues (Section 1.3.3.).

Implementation of the new scheme is steadily scaling up. This includes:

- (a) piloting apprenticeship <sup>(16)</sup> in electrological installations and agricultural trade (Koropi, Athens, since 1.8.2016; Central Macedonia since 1/9/2016; and Prefecture of Crete since 20.2.2017) <sup>(17)</sup>;
- (b) implementing the EPAL apprenticeship scheme <sup>(18)</sup>. The first phase covered seven specialties for 1044 apprentices in 179 school units. The accreditation of the first phase graduates took place in July 2018 with 400 graduates participating. In the second phase (autumn 2017 to February 2019), nine more specialties were added; 3 450 apprentices in

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<sup>(14)</sup> Article 18 of Law 4452/2017.

<sup>(15)</sup> Law approved by Parliament on 26 February 2018.

<sup>(16)</sup> During the first year, learners completed their practical training both at the workplace and at schools. The next step is the attendance (for those who wish to participate in the certification exams) of a preparatory course (35 hours duration). According to the provisions of Law 4386/2016 (see Article 66, Paragraph 3, Law 4386-11.5.2016 (GG 83A-11.5.2016) no English translation available) the duration of the preparatory course was 70 hours, however the Law 4473/30.5.2017 reduced the duration by half (i.e. 35 hours, see Article 4, Paragraph 2, Law 4473/2017 (GG 78 A-30.5.2017 – no English translation available). The preparatory course's duration has been reduced.

<sup>(17)</sup> In Heraklion of Crete, in cooperation with Germany, the local chamber and the Greek-German Assembly.

<sup>(18)</sup> [http://iep.edu.gr/images/IEP/GENERAL/Deltia\\_Typou/2019/2019-02-25\\_dt\\_prosklisi\\_etairoi\\_mathiteia.pdf](http://iep.edu.gr/images/IEP/GENERAL/Deltia_Typou/2019/2019-02-25_dt_prosklisi_etairoi_mathiteia.pdf)

406 school units were involved <sup>(19)</sup>. The 3rd phase of implementation is currently under way, involving 21 specialties and 3 700 apprentices. 48% of the placements are in the private sector. Apprentice wages have increased (daily remuneration was raised from EUR 17 to EUR 21.50);

- (c) the initiation by EOPPEP of a programme for the formal certification of VET graduates at EQF level 5 <sup>(20)</sup>;
- (d) the initiation by the General Secretariat for Lifelong Learning and Youth of a curriculum for the work-based learning (WBL), part of IEK's apprenticeships.

### **1.3.3. Involving social partners**

Social partners contribute to the Technical Committee for VET. Their input is deemed of high importance due to their significant role in various VET sub-systems (including skills forecasting and facilitation for apprenticeship positions), not to mention that social partners also raise members' awareness of the added value of apprenticeships for economic development and of the issue of training quality. Social partners also take part in the new National Apprenticeship Coordination Body (ESOM). ESOM's purpose is to provide the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Labour with suggestions on improving the institutional framework for apprenticeship and designing, implementing and evaluating apprenticeship programmes.

The social partners, together with representatives of relevant ministries, the central Association of Chambers, and the National Institute for Labour and Human Capital, also participate in ESEKAAD, the National Council for Education and Human Resources Development. The council's scope is to provide advice and scientific guidance on major issues related to the design of educational policy in the context of the promotion of knowledge, sustainable development, the use of human resources capacities, the promotion of inclusive employment and, in general, the link between education and the labour market and employment.

On a regional level, the apprenticeship support teams include representatives of chambers and employer and employee organisations.

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<sup>(19)</sup> As noted in data by Ministry of Education, Directory of Vocational Education.  
<https://www.minedu.gov.gr/news/39499-07-02-19-enisxysi-tou-metalykeiakoy-etous-taksis-mathiteias-ton-epal-eksetaseis-pistopoiisis-2>

<sup>(20)</sup> Formal certification opens way to receiving professional rights at higher level. Professional rights are not issued for every specialty, but they are a necessary precondition in order to obtain licences of practice for a number of specialties. More information at: [www.edulll.gr/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/prosklisi\\_EDBM62\\_ada.pdf](http://www.edulll.gr/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/prosklisi_EDBM62_ada.pdf)

The Institute for Educational Policy has launched an open invitation to all scientific and labour market bodies, calling for their proposals and views on the new VET and apprenticeship curricula. A more focused invitation will be addressed to social partners, involving them for the first time in EPAL curricula development.

#### **1.3.4. Participation in European partnerships on apprenticeship**

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

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

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

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

The project was terminated in 2017.

#### **1.3.5. Cooperation with Cedefop on apprenticeship**

In 2015-17, the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Labour cooperated with Cedefop on a joint comprehensive review of the apprenticeship system in Greece. The objective of the review was to pave the way for future reforms of the apprenticeship system in line with EU policies. The review focused on the following areas:

- (a) governance structures;
- (b) training content and learning outcomes in relation to the requirements for teachers and mentors;
- (c) support to companies including financing;
- (d) labour market responsiveness.

The review included in-depth interviews with all partners involved (apprentices, VET providers and companies offering apprenticeship placements)

and workshops/forums to present and discuss findings. The final findings and suggestions were published in 2018 <sup>(21)</sup>.

The main challenges still to be tackled are:

- (a) the respective roles and cooperation and coordination of stakeholders;
- (b) the responsiveness of training content to labour market needs.

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<sup>(21)</sup> Cedefop (2018). *Apprenticeship review: Greece. Modernising and expanding apprenticeships in Greece*. Luxembourg: Publication Office. Thematic country reviews. <http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/publications-and-resources/publications/4160>

## CHAPTER 2.

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

### 2.1. Baseline 2015

At the beginning of the reporting period, EOPPEP was the quality assurance national reference point (QANRP) since 2011. A national quality assurance framework aligned to the EQAVET <sup>(22)</sup> recommendation had been devised and officially presented in July 2011. It had been partially implemented over a pilot phase covering post-secondary IVET.

IVET providers had been required since 2010 to draw up action plans at the beginning of the year and prepare an annual evaluation report. Since 2013, they had to perform self-assessment. Accreditation and monitoring of continuing VET (CVET) providers was also in place. It was carried out by EOPPEP and would take into account providers' financial solvency and physical infrastructure.

At the beginning of the reporting period, the country did not have a structural approach to VET graduate tracking. In 2014, the ENDEAVOR 2014 study examined the transition from school to work and what kind of prospects young people had. A one-off tracking study of apprenticeship graduates was carried out in 2015 as part of the reengineering of the public employment service (European Commission et al, 2017).

A number of initiatives to collect and analyse information on labour market and skills trends were in place (EEPO, 2015). The NILHR <sup>(23)</sup> used to carry out analyses on the structure of employment and unemployment, labour relations, trickle-down effects, supply and demand by occupational categories, training needs on national and local levels, employment and vocational training, and the institutional framework of the labour market. The Recruitment Confidence Index would record trends in recruitment difficulties. The Hellenic Federation of Enterprises (SEV) had established a systematic mechanism for forecasting the

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<sup>(22)</sup> European quality assurance in vocational education and training.

<sup>(23)</sup> The National Institute of Labour and Human Resources, the main governmental body for labour market forecasting, established in 2011 to support the Ministry of Labour, Social Security and Welfare.

needs of enterprises in occupations and skills. Social partners also joined forces in 2015 to run an employer survey. At the same time, they were cooperating with the Ministry of Labour and the Ministry of Education to develop a skill needs anticipation mechanism to inform VET provision. The public employment service used data on job vacancies to inform the apprenticeships provision.

## 2.2. Quality assurance in line with EQAVET

For 2016-20, the country's priority in this matter is to finalise the implementation of the quality assurance framework, as refocused towards apprenticeship and VET curricula, based on 2017 legislation.

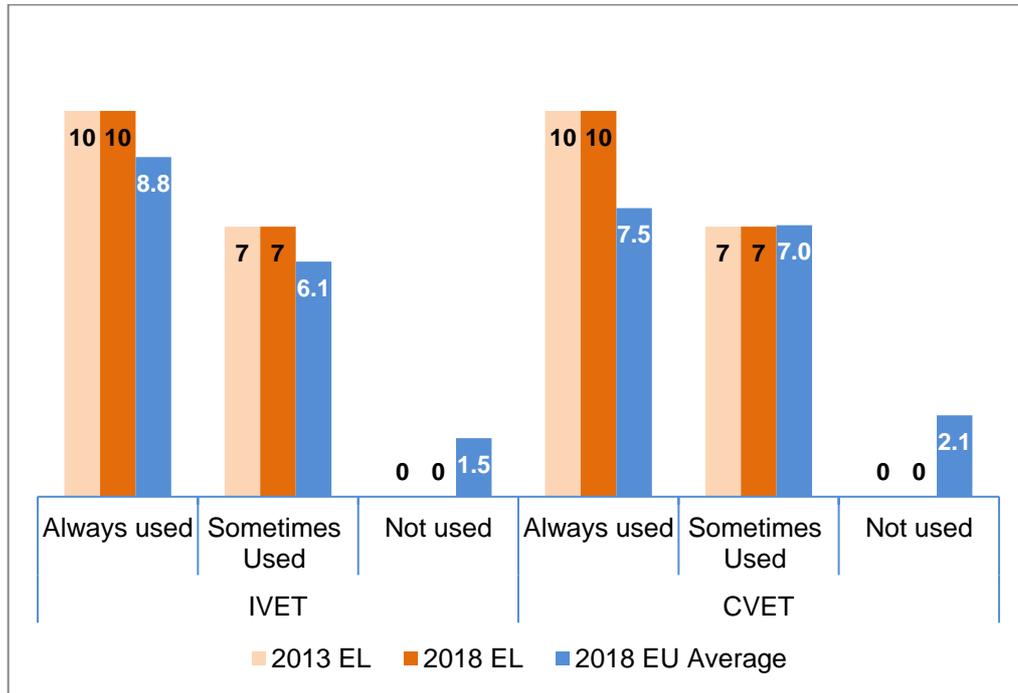
During the reporting period, *Erasmus+* funding is being used to develop quality assurance mechanisms linked to the implementation of the Hellenic qualifications framework and, more specifically, to ensuring the quality of the certification process based on learning outcomes. A handbook was produced in consultation with policy-makers, education institutes and social partners on the key quality assurance features and arrangements for apprenticeship. It was piloted in the tourism sector by developing assessment standards based on learning outcomes. *Erasmus+* funding was renewed for the period 2017-19 to use information on graduate tracking to improve VET provision and review VET qualifications <sup>(24)</sup>.

The systematic use of EQAVET indicators to monitor the VET system in 2018 ('always used' item in Figure 1) has remained unchanged compared to 2013. Greece was above the EU average in IVET and CVET in 2018. All EQAVET indicators are used, including those on the destination of VET learners upon completion of their training, the use of acquired skills at the workplace, and mechanisms to identify training needs at the workplace (EQAVET, 2014, 2018).

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<sup>(24)</sup> 2017 Compendium of EQAVET NRP Erasmus+ funding:  
[https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/erasmus-plus/library/compendium-eqavet-2017\\_en](https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/erasmus-plus/library/compendium-eqavet-2017_en)

Figure 1. Use of EQAVET indicators



NB: Of the 17 indicators suggested by the 2009 EQAVET recommendation, 10 were 'always used' in IVET in 2013 and 2018 in Greece compared to 8.8 in the EU on average in 2018.

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

Source: Cedefop calculations based on EQAVET Secretariat surveys for 2013 and 2018 data.

### 2.3. Continuous information and feedback loops in initial VET and continuing VET

The country's priorities in this matter for 2016-20, as set by the Ministry of Education, are to:

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

The legal framework for a skill needs forecasting system was established in 2016 <sup>(25)</sup>. EIEAD (the National Institute for Labour and Human Capital) has the mandate to coordinate the development of the mechanism of labour market diagnosis. A coordination committee was put in place, consisting of representatives from the ministries of labour, education, and economy, EOPPEP, regions, OAED and social partners. The mechanism was established in 2016. In 2017, its methodological framework (data collection and processing, procedures

<sup>(25)</sup> Law No 4368/2016.

for mapping professional qualifications) was refined. The information system database has been completed and is fully operational. EIEAD has been publishing reports every six months and the results of the forecasting system inform the development of new occupational profiles and curricula. The reports have also been used to inform the selection of new apprenticeship specialities that were implemented in the school year 2017/18.

In 2017-19, Cedefop has been providing technical advice to Greece to improve its governance of skills anticipation and matching. The aim is to improve the management and coordination of skills anticipation efforts, making existing skills anticipation initiatives more useful for policy, and better linking skills intelligence to education and training <sup>(26)</sup>.

In addition, the legal and institutional framework to improve links between education and the labour market was reinforced with the introduction of the National Committee for VET (Section 1.3.2) and the change of ESYF into ESEKAAD (Section 1.3.2); this allows better focus on the mismatch between the knowledge, skills and competences relevant to the labour market and those offered by the education and training system (Cedefop ReferNet, 2018). For example, establishing centres of vocational education (KEE) offering two-year programmes in universities for EPAL graduates (Section 3.3.2.2), was a proposal of ESEKAAD that was adopted by the Ministry of Education.

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<sup>(26)</sup> <http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/events-and-projects/projects/assisting-eu-countries-skills-matching>

## CHAPTER 3.

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

### 3.1. Baseline 2015

At the beginning of the reporting period, the overall intentions and objectives of policies in the MTD at large were to raise the attractiveness of VET, upgrade the vocational education and training sector and improve access for all to qualifications, in particular through permeability measures. VET in the country was faced with the challenges of increasing participation, involving employers and ensuring a better matching of VET provision with labour market needs. A Memorandum of Understanding <sup>(27)</sup> concluded in August 2015 was calling for the OECD to review the education system and propose recommendations which would serve as a basis for a new education action plan for 2016-18.

In 2013, a Lifelong Learning Programme (2013-15) had been adopted, paving the way for actions to increase the provision of adult education and better address the needs of priority target groups. However, the 2015 National Reform Programme <sup>(28)</sup> recognised that Greece was still in need of a long-term strategic vision for improving access to lifelong learning.

Building on the 2010 Act on Lifelong Learning <sup>(29)</sup>, a comprehensive national qualifications framework for lifelong learning (the Hellenic qualifications framework – HQF) has been developed <sup>(30)</sup>. An objective for 2014-15 was to consolidate the HQF as the main lever for reforming the Greek education system. The HQF was referenced to the EQF in 2015.

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<sup>(27)</sup> European Commission (2015b), Memorandum of Understanding with Greece signed on 19 August 2015. [https://ec.europa.eu/info/business-economy-euro/economic-and-fiscal-policy-coordination/eu-financial-assistance\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/business-economy-euro/economic-and-fiscal-policy-coordination/eu-financial-assistance_en)

<sup>(28)</sup> Hellenic Government (2015), National reform programme (NRP) for 2015. [http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/pdf/csr2015/nrp2015\\_greece\\_el.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/pdf/csr2015/nrp2015_greece_el.pdf)

<sup>(29)</sup> Law 3879/2010 on the development of lifelong learning and other provision. [http://www.edulll.gr/wp-content/uploads/2010/06/nomos\\_-3879\\_2010.pdf](http://www.edulll.gr/wp-content/uploads/2010/06/nomos_-3879_2010.pdf)

<sup>(30)</sup> European inventory on NQF 2016: <http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/publications-and-resources/country-reports/greece-european-inventory-nqf-2016>

No national comprehensive strategy for the validation of non-formal and informal learning was in place <sup>(31)</sup>.

Actions to address the education issues of migrants were being designed. For young children (four to seven years old), the Ministry of Education intended to establish specialised services within the reception centres. Regarding older children (7-15 years old), the country would integrate them in reception classes where they would learn Greek as a second language <sup>(32)</sup>.

Reflections were also being initiated to prepare future actions in terms of support to guidance, upskilling diversified target groups and providing those in need with training opportunities. Opening more pathways from upper-secondary VET to tertiary education and ensuring that VET graduates make use of those pathways was an emerging challenge.

### 3.2. Policy priorities for 2016-20

For 2016-20, the country's priorities in this area, as set by the Ministry of Education, are:

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

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<sup>(31)</sup> European inventory on Validation 2016:  
[https://cumulus.cedefop.europa.eu/files/vetelib/2016/2016\\_validate\\_EL.pdf](https://cumulus.cedefop.europa.eu/files/vetelib/2016/2016_validate_EL.pdf)

<sup>(32)</sup> *Education and Training Monitor*, 2016, page 5.

### 3.3. Main actions taken in 2015-19

#### 3.3.1. Updating the regulations for non-formal VET

In non-formal VET, and particularly CVET, Law 4547/2018, supplementing Law 4186/2013, set new qualitative features for the operation of lifelong learning centres (KDVM), organised around four axes:

- (a) upgrading the procedure for the licensing of KDVM;
- (b) certification of all training programmes (both CVET and general adult education) by EOPPEP;
- (c) certification of graduates by EOPPEP;
- (d) determination of violations of the KDVM and related sanctions.

An Operating Regulation for KDVM was prepared defining, among other:

- (a) the administrative structure of KDVM (director, deputy director, administrative and training staff);
- (b) procedures and criteria for evaluating programmes and learners;
- (c) necessary records kept in the KDVM.

The respective Common Ministerial Acts to establish the certification system and the Operating Regulations are yet to be issued.

#### 3.3.2. Permeability and flexibility

##### 3.3.2.1. *Transition from upper secondary general education to upper secondary VET*

Following the 2016 national strategic framework, the A class (first of three school levels) of EPAL (upper-secondary VET) became common to all learners. Second level (B class) is where sectoral division takes place from then on, while in C class (third level) learners opt for a speciality. A class focuses on development of key skills. As a consequence, it becomes easier for learners from the first year of upper secondary general education to switch and join EPAL through enrolling in the second class of upper secondary vocational education. This reform allows for more permeability between upper secondary general education and EPAL.

Since October 2017, following the Education Ministry's initiative *A new beginning for EPAL*, basic skills-enhancing measures, socio-psychological support and integration actions were piloted in A classes as further support to EPAL freshman learners. The initiative aims at strengthening the social role of school, combating early dropout and supporting learners in their transition in

vocational education, while raising the profile of secondary VET to society and the learners themselves. The policy has been developed as follows:

- (a) legalisation of professional rights of EPAL qualification holders <sup>(33)</sup>;
- (b) support actions to EPAL learners of first year (A class) through alternative teaching support (shared teaching) for modern Greek and mathematics courses; presence of psychologists in school units;
- (c) recruitment of Greek literature and mathematics teachers and of psychologists <sup>(34)</sup>;
- (d) collaboration memorandum between the Ministry of Education and the Association of Greek Psychologists, based on which 107 psychologists were employed in 2017-18.

The initiative was piloted in 2017-18 in nine schools <sup>(35)</sup>. Many of the programme's actions were launched by single schools and teachers before they were adopted and augmented by the Ministry of Education. Promotional events were organised in 2018-19 <sup>(36)</sup>.

The *New beginning for EPAL* has now reached the full-scale implementation stage and is being expanded to all 401 EPALs in the country. In its current state, it includes supplementary teaching in Greek and mathematics as well as psychological support. At the same time, schools are funded to develop creative collective projects that promote science, technology and culture and they are being equipped with teleconference and tele-education infrastructure to enable them to network and exchange good practices. Teacher-advisor roles have been created, aimed at establishing bridges between learners and the Teachers' Association, tackling conflicts and improving the overall climate in the school community. A training course for teachers and psychologists participating in the programme is also foreseen.

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<sup>(33)</sup> For specialties of Law 4186/2013: with the Ministerial Act No F12/9691/D4/2017; and for specialties of Law 4386/2016: with the Ministerial Act No F23/35437/D4/2018.

<sup>(34)</sup> Ministerial Act No F25g/137911/D4 –GG 3622 B/2018.

<sup>(35)</sup> - In Attica region: 1st EPAL Dafni, 1st EPAL Kaisariani, 1st EPAL Drapetsona, 3rd EPAL Sivitanidios, 3rd Evening EPAL Agioi Anargyroi;  
- In Central Greece region: 1st EPAL Chalkida, 2nd EPAL Chalkida;  
- In Central Macedonia region: EPAL Lagada;  
- In North Aegean Region: 1st EPAL Lesvos.

[https://mnaepal.wordpress.com/pilotikh\\_efarmogh/](https://mnaepal.wordpress.com/pilotikh_efarmogh/)

<sup>(36)</sup> Two fairs titled 'EPAL creates' were held in Athens (7-10.2.2018 and 27/2.-2/3/2019), with exhibitions of learners' productions.

### 3.3.2.2. *Transition from upper secondary VET to University*

Access by EPAL graduates not only to technological tertiary institutions but also to university departments relevant to their studies, set at 1% of the total number of learners that enter these university departments, was originally reinforced in 2016 and 2017 <sup>(37)</sup>. The Law of 26 February 2018 <sup>(38)</sup> increased the quota from 1% to 5%. The percentage was raised to 10% for the academic year 2018/19 for the newly established University of Western Attica. Law 4610/2019 raised the quota to 10% for most university faculties, while maintaining it at 5% for certain departments: polytechnic, medical, dental, pharmaceutical, veterinary, physics, biology and geology.

The 1% percentage for graduates of evening EPAL schools was maintained and extended to all university faculties.

Also, graduates have access to a joint team of faculties (universities and military schools) a year after graduation, regardless of their graduation field, by sitting the same examinations as the general education graduates.

A radical development is the creation of centres of vocational education (KEE), two-year university programmes for EPAL graduates. KEE programmes include 1 200 hours theoretical and laboratory training, and 960 hours of practical training in a company. Successful course completion will lead to the acquisition of a level 5 certificate. Sixty programme proposals have been submitted by 11 universities from the 13 regions of the country. Around 1 500 learners are expected to enrol. Implementation is planned to start in the academic year 2019-20.

### **3.3.3. Transparency, recognition, validation**

#### 3.3.3.1. *National qualifications framework* <sup>(39)</sup>

A Hellenic qualifications framework (HQF), with eight levels based on learning outcomes, has been developed. It is defined in terms of knowledge, skills and competences. First stage development has focused on qualifications awarded within the formal system but, in a long-term perspective, the plan is to accommodate non-formal and informal learning. A qualifications framework for higher education is part of the overarching HQF. EOPPEP is in charge of developing and putting the HQF into practice. A draft presidential decree on the

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<sup>(37)</sup> Law 4386/2016 and law 4452/2017.

<sup>(38)</sup> Implementation was provided for by the joint ministerial decision (JMD) published in March 2018 ([FEK No 983/B/20-3-2018](#)).

<sup>(39)</sup> Cedefop, 2017b.

HQF has been prepared and is currently under review. The HQF was referenced to the EQF in 2015 but self-certification against the qualifications framework for the European higher education area (EHEA) remains a challenge.

#### 3.3.3.2. *Validation* <sup>(40)</sup>

EOPPEP is responsible for the certification of non-formal and informal learning and the accreditation of other awarding bodies. Although a national system for the certification of outputs is under development <sup>(41)</sup>, it is yet to be finalised; an overall national comprehensive strategy for validation remains a challenge. Validation is in place in private security services and, to a lesser extent, for licensing specific technical occupations, such as plumbers, technical works machinery operators, liquid and gas/fuel installation and welding. For those qualifications (certificates) that can be acquired through validation, the standards are defined by the existing accredited occupational profiles. For occupations such as hairdressers and beauty professionals (not holding a 'recognised' qualification, therefore belonging to the field of informal learning), undergoing 'exams' is necessary to acquire a professional licence. Validation procedures are also discussed for 'occupational activities' (those that can be carried out by a number of occupations but are not limited to a specific occupational group or education/training specialty). The discussions mostly have to do with occupational activities related to specific environmental EU directives or regulations. A regional voucher scheme is being introduced to cover validation expenses for individuals in a wide range of qualifications. Law No 4386/2016 opened certification procedures to all interested parties meeting prescribed eligibility criteria <sup>(42)</sup>. For example, it provides for the possibility for adults to obtain qualifications through certification of CVET or forms of non-formal VET different from IEK. Presidential decrees to put in place a national system for the certification of outputs have been drafted and are currently being reviewed.

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<sup>(40)</sup> Cedefop, 2017b; Manoudi (2016).

<sup>(41)</sup> Certification of outputs refers to the certification of graduates from initial vocational training and continuing vocational training, certification of qualifications; it falls under the responsibility of EOPPEP – Paragraph 2 of Article 17 of Law 4186/2013 on restructuring of secondary education and other provisions:  
<http://www.ilo.org/dyn/natlex/docs/ELECTRONIC/100472/120536/F1637832161/GR C100472%20Grk.pdf>

<sup>(42)</sup> The updated system foresees three pathways:

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

The Ministry of Education, in cooperation with competent ministries, social partners and EOPPEP, has started working towards developing a certification system for adults who take part in general education courses carried out by lifelong learning centres (KDVM).

## CHAPTER 4.

# MTD 4 – Key competences in both IVET and CVET

### 4.1. Baseline 2015

As described in Law 4186/2013 <sup>(43)</sup>, the main objectives of the programme of upper secondary VET schools (EPAL) were related to key competences. EPAL programme promoted critical thinking; sense of initiative; creativity and innovation; social and civic competence; and digital competence. The following key competences were mainly taught as separate subjects: communication in the mother tongue; communication in foreign languages; mathematical competence and basic competences in science and technology; digital competence; and social and civic competences. Apart from civic competence, which was taught only during the first year, all the above-mentioned key competences were taught throughout the three-year duration of the EPAL programme. Progress in key competences was an important element of learner evaluation.

A recent survey <sup>(44)</sup> showed that, compared with general education graduates, those who completed VET programmes felt they had:

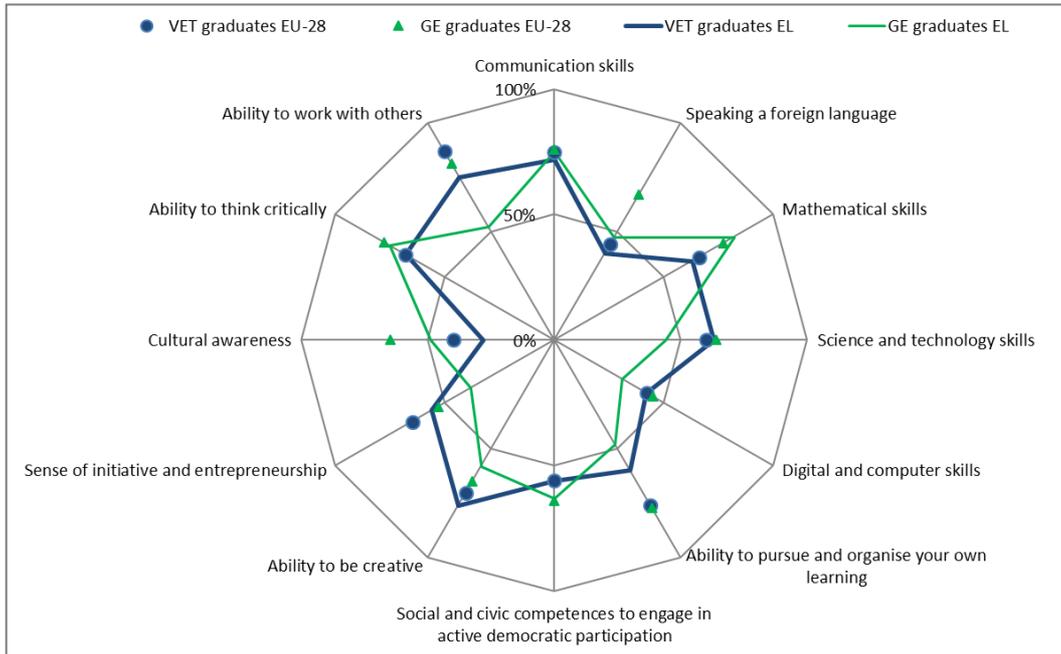
- (a) stronger (ranged by priority):
  - (i) ability to work with others;
  - (ii) science and technology skills;
  - (iii) ability to be creative;
- (b) weaker:
  - (i) cultural awareness;
  - (ii) mathematical skills;
  - (iii) foreign language speaking (Figure 2).

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<sup>(43)</sup> Click [here](#).

<sup>(44)</sup> Cedefop (2017). *Cedefop European public opinion survey on vocational education and training*. Luxembourg: Publications Office. Cedefop research paper; No 62. [https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/files/5562\\_en.pdf](https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/files/5562_en.pdf)

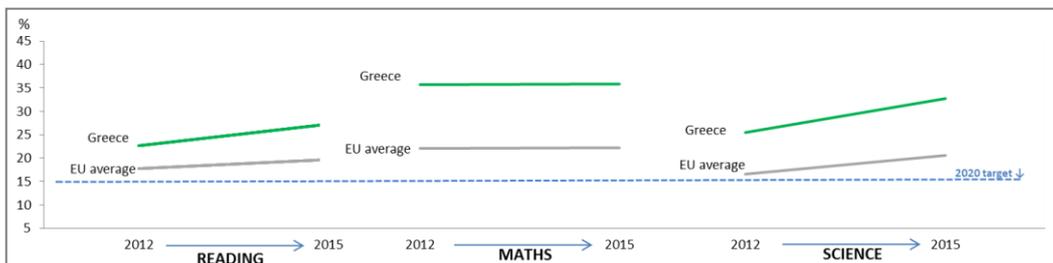
Figure 2. **Self-evaluation of acquired skills in general education and VET (2016)**



NB: Definitions in the indicators table differ from those used in national legislation.  
 GE stands for general education.  
 Respondents who attended upper secondary education. Interviewees were asked in summer 2016 about their overall experience in upper secondary education. Aggregated data do not take account of different types and sectors of VET and age groups of respondents.  
 Source: Cedefop, 2017c.

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

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



NB: Low achievement means failing level 2 on the PISA (programme for international learner assessment) scale.  
 Source: OECD, 2014; OECD, 2016.

As VET enrolled 31.5 % of all upper secondary learners in the country <sup>(45)</sup>, this trend was likely to be reflected in the key competences trained for in VET programmes.

As was mentioned by the European Commission (2015), Greek VET required further modernisation in terms of its performance and its ways of working, in particular with regard to providing basic skills, and its capacity to ensure the successful transition of young people to the labour market. Significant work was also required to improve digital education and training, as the lack of digital skills could slow down progress in developing the Greek digital economy and hinder economic growth in general.

## 4.2. Key competences addressed in the reporting period

Table 2 outlines the key competences in initial and continuing VET that were addressed in the reporting period. A description of policies is provided in the following sections.

Table 2. **Key competences addressed in 2015-19**

	IVET	CVET
Country language(s) and literacy	YES	
Foreign languages		
Digital competence		
Maths	YES	
Science		
Technology		
Social and civic competences		
Learning to learn		
Financial literacy		
Entrepreneurship competence		
Cultural awareness and expression		
Key competences as a package		YES

NB: The list derives from the 2006 EU key competences framework for lifelong learning; it has been restructured and expanded with additional competences that can be considered key.

Source: Cedefop based on ReferNet input

<sup>(45)</sup> 2014 data.

### 4.3. Key competences in initial VET

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

The 2016 National strategic framework to upgrade VET and Apprenticeship (Section 1.3.2) highlighted the need for integrating key competences for lifelong learning in VET curricula. The 2016-17 EPAL reform (Section 3.2.2.1) put emphasis on key competences at A class level (the first of three levels at EPAL schools). The *New beginning for EPAL* initiative put emphasis on reinforcing the teaching of Modern Greek Language and maths at EPAL first grade level. The approach is based on shared teaching, i.e. two teachers sharing the design, preparatory and assessment phases of the course, and present at the same time in the classroom <sup>(46)</sup>. Since 2017, an ESF programme has supported the adjustment of VET curricula to this new setting. This process was also supported by OMNIA who helped developing a guidebook for integrating key competences in VET curricula (Section 1.3.4).

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<sup>(46)</sup> For more information:

- Ministerial Decision (No Φ25α/216503/Δ4, FEK 4361/11 December 2017).
- Ministerial Decision (No Φ25α/216519/Δ4, FEK 4361/11 December 2017).
- ESF Authority (<http://www.edulll.gr/?p=33080> and <http://www.edulll.gr/?p=33784>)

## CHAPTER 5.

# MTD 5 – Systematic initial and continuing professional development of VET teachers and trainers

## 5.1. Baseline 2015

In 2015, the following main categories of teachers and trainers were at play in VET programmes:

- (a) general subject teachers;
- (b) vocational subject teachers;
- (c) teachers of practical training;
- (d) post-secondary VET teachers (in-school trainers);
- (e) in-company trainers.

### 5.1.1. Access to VET school teaching: entry requirements and initial training

Entry requirements for general and vocational subject teachers were the same. Entrants had to hold a higher education degree and pass an entry examination based on subject-specialisation, pedagogical and didactical components. Candidates that also held a degree from the Higher School of Pedagogical and Technological Education (ASPAITE) preceded other candidates. There was a special quota for holders of teaching experience to get hired without sitting this examination.

However, from 2010 till 2015, due to the financial crisis, no teachers had been hired on a permanent contract. Teaching vacancies were covered annually by temporary personnel. Temporary teachers had to have a higher education degree and a pedagogical degree from ASPAITE <sup>(47)</sup>; teaching experience was also an important admission criterion.

Post-secondary VET teachers were mostly hired temporarily on an annual basis. It was common practice to hire professionals from enterprises (or with relevant previous work experience) (Cedefop, 2015). The selection was made by each individual provider, based on centrally predefined criteria: educational

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<sup>(47)</sup> Candidates holding higher education degrees entitling them to become teachers did not have to hold an ASPAITE degree.

qualification; training in adult education; teaching experience; professional experience in a relevant occupational field; knowledge of a foreign language; and use of ICT. For practical courses, professionals without educational qualifications could be hired on the basis of their professional and training experience.

### **5.1.2. In-company trainers: entry requirements and initial training**

Enterprises would appoint experienced employees as apprenticeship in-company trainers. There was no formal training for in-company trainers. However, apprenticeship supervisors <sup>(48)</sup> could offer them some basic initial training.

### **5.1.3. VET school teachers: main lines for CPD**

Specific continuing professional development (CPD) training for VET teachers was in place, targeted at enabling teachers to assist young people in developing career management skills, and operate career guidance offices at EPAS schools <sup>(49)</sup> (Cedefop, 2015).

Retraining programmes for all teachers (including VET) were also available, placing emphasis on:

- (a) designing and implementing new learning practices;
- (b) helping learners develop key competences;
- (c) working with learners facing integration, cultural and learning challenges;
- (d) supporting VET learners at risk of drop out and disadvantaged learners.

On-line courses and additional material for upper secondary VET schools were also available, and teachers would receive supporting material and on-line or classroom training on how to combine them with classroom teaching. VET teacher CPD was also provided through the digital school initiative (21 285 teachers had been successfully trained in the use of ICT technologies in the teaching practice) and through participation in *Erasmus+* mobility programmes.

## **5.2. Initial training for teaching/ training staff in VET schools 2015-19**

For 2016-20, the country's priority in this area, as set by the Ministry of Education, is to strengthen the current legal framework and programmes for teacher training to introduce coherent educational and pedagogical policies and systematically upgrade training staff.

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<sup>(48)</sup> School-based teachers responsible for apprenticeship.

<sup>(49)</sup> Apprenticeship schools run by the Manpower Employment Organisation (OAED).

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

- (a) one comprising holders of the teaching competence certificate, obtained on passing the certification exams;
- (b) a second list with trainers who possess specific qualifications – tertiary education degrees, teaching experience, relevant training – but have not (yet) completed the certification process.

Since December 2015, the mechanism for the certification of trainers from the second list, which was previously funded by the operational programme *Development of human resources*, has become self-funded via certification fees that the candidates have to pay on submission of their application and portfolio. Legislation in 2017 <sup>(50)</sup> reaffirmed that, starting from September 2019, the certification of teaching competences of VET teachers and adult trainers will become a prerequisite for their enrolment in training programmes partly funded by the State. This will affect post-secondary non-formal IVET and CVET teachers.

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

### 5.3. CPD for teaching/training staff in VET schools 2015-19

For 2016-20, the country's priority in this area, as set by the Ministry of Education, is to strengthen the professional development of teachers and trainers in VET schools.

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

Several sensitisation seminars (of short duration) on apprenticeship have also been carried out in 2016 and 2017, before the first implementation of the post-secondary apprenticeship year. Following the VET reform, approximately EUR 4.1 million was earmarked for the CPD of teaching staff in school-based settings for 2016-19. A EUR 917 000 budget has been allocated to the training of EPAL teachers for 2014-20. The objective is to ensure the proper implementation of the post-secondary apprenticeship year and the new learning-outcomes-based VET curricula, and the reinforcement of links with the labour market. Particular

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<sup>(50)</sup> Law 4485/2017.

attention is paid to the CPD of teaching staff who used to work in school-based programmes and will be (re)allocated to the new apprenticeship programmes (mostly the fourth year of EPAL, but also apprenticeships within the framework of IEKs). A total of 786 staff were trained in 2018 <sup>(51)</sup>. The focus is on developing teachers' knowledge and competences to enable further collaboration with enterprises and apprentices. Also important is peer-learning and capturing the experience of teachers who already piloted work-based learning activities in previous years <sup>(52)</sup>.

Adult education trainers are required to demonstrate either teaching to adults for 150 hours or taking a 50-hour course in adult education to have their certification renewed every 10 years.

#### 5.4. Initial and continuing training for trainers in enterprises 2015-19

For 2016-20, the country's priority in this area, as set by the Director General for Vocational Education and Training, is to improve the quality of in-company trainers and strengthen their professional development.

The 2016 National strategic framework introduces broad provisions on requirements and training of enterprise staff that will become in-company trainers, linked to a future goal of accreditation of companies that participate in apprenticeships. The strategy foresees that in-company trainers (at least one per

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<sup>(51)</sup> Two courses were organised:

(a) 18-hour classroom training addressing:

- institutional framework and procedures for the implementation of the post-graduate year of apprenticeship (thematic unit 1, six hours)
- basic principles of adult education and modern teaching methods in vocational education and training (thematic units 4a and 4b, six hours)
- counselling and vocational guidance (thematic unit 5, six hours)

(b) 21-hour distance training (Moodle BigBlueButton tool) addressing

- apprenticeship training programmes (thematic unit 2, six hours)
- occupational safety and health (thematic unit 3, six hours)
- entrepreneurship (thematic unit 6, six hours)
- good practices and conclusions (thematic unit 7, three hours)

<sup>(52)</sup> IEP

<https://translate.google.com/translate?sl=el&tl=en&u=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.iep.edu.gr%2F%2Fepimorfosi-ekpaideftikon-ekpaidefton-se-themata-mathiteias>  
ESPA Strategic Structure – Education Sector of the Ministry of Education, Research and Religious Affairs  
[https://www.epiteliki.minedu.gov.gr/?page\\_id=128&lang=en](https://www.epiteliki.minedu.gov.gr/?page_id=128&lang=en)

company) will attend a short and flexible training programme, focused on pedagogical knowledge and competences as well as on adult training techniques. Participation of professional associations and chambers is encouraged.

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

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

- (a) a 2015-17 *Erasmus+* project, in cooperation with Germany and Cyprus, resulted in a guidebook for in-company trainer training published by the Institute of Educational Policy (IEP), and a training course held in cooperation with OAED. The guidebook was distributed to all employers that participated in the first large scale phase of the post-secondary apprenticeship year (2017);
- (b) in 2017, one of the deliverables from the cooperation with the Finnish educational organisation OMNIA was an action plan and guidebook on how to train in-company trainers.

Based on the outcomes of these projects and following an extended consultation with relevant stakeholders, the Ministries of Labour and Education and OAED decided to launch a partnership for apprenticeship, involving employer representative bodies and social partners, that would act as an intermediary body between the education system and the labour market. The partnership's main goals are to:

- (a) raise awareness among enterprises (8 000 companies will be targeted);
- (b) ensure that sufficient quality apprenticeships are provided by private sector enterprises (the target is 4 000 apprenticeship places);
- (c) prepare businesses and trainers for smooth reception and quality support for apprentices;
- (d) train in-company trainers and mentors (the target is to train 3 000 trainers and mentors from 2 500 companies selected among the 8 000 initially contacted).

This pilot project is planned to start in 2019 and will have a two-year duration.

## Statistical overview: 2019 update

Table 3 updates the figures that were provided in Table 1. Although Table 1 may contain data for 2015, these are not systematically repeated here. In some cases, not repeating is due to breaks in time series, which prevent comparability. In other cases, values differ due to methodological changes.

Table 3. **Score on VET indicators in Greece and in the EU: 2015, last available year and recent change**

Indicator label	2015				Last available year				Recent change			
	EL	f	EU	f	Yr	EL	f	EU	f	Range	EL	EU
<b>Access, attractiveness and flexibility</b>												
IVET students as % of all upper secondary students	<b>29.9</b>		47.3	ce	'17	<b>28.8</b>		47.8	ce	'15-'17	<b>-1.1</b>	0.5
IVET work-based students as % of all upper secondary IVET		z	28.3	ce	'17		z	27.9	ce	'15-'17		-0.5
IVET students with direct access to tertiary education as % of all upper secondary IVET	<b>87.1</b>		68.1	ce	'17	<b>90</b>		68.6	ce	'15-'17	<b>2.9</b>	0.4
Workers participating in CVT courses (%)	<b>18.5</b>		40.8		'15	<b>18.5</b>		40.8				
Workers participating in on-the-job training (%)	<b>15</b>		34		'15	<b>15</b>		34				
Adults in lifelong learning (%)	<b>3.3</b>		10.7		'18	<b>4.5</b>		11.1		'15-'18	<b>1.2</b>	0.4
Enterprises providing training (%)	<b>21.7</b>		72.6		'15	<b>21.7</b>		72.6				
Female IVET students as % of all female upper secondary students	<b>20.1</b>		42	ce	'17	<b>21</b>		42.7	ce	'15-'17	<b>0.9</b>	0.7
Employees of small firms participating in CVT courses (%)	<b>4.6</b>		30		'15	<b>4.6</b>		30				
Young VET graduates in further education and training (%)	<b>16.5</b>		33		'18	<b>17.9</b>		33		'15-'18	<b>1.4</b>	
Older adults in lifelong learning (%)	<b>0.8</b>		6.9		'18	<b>1.6</b>		7.3		'15-'18	<b>0.8</b>	0.4
Low-educated adults in lifelong learning (%)	<b>0.4</b>		4.3		'18	<b>0.8</b>		4.3		'15-'18	<b>0.4</b>	
Unemployed adults in lifelong learning (%)	<b>2.7</b>		9.5		'18	<b>3.9</b>		10.7		'15-'18	<b>1.2</b>	1.2
Individuals who wanted to participate in training but did not (%)					'16	<b>12.5</b>		11.4				
Job-related non-formal education and training (%)					'16	<b>81.5</b>		79.4				

Indicator label	2015				Last available year				Recent change			
	EL	f	EU	f	Yr	EL	f	EU	f	Range	EL	EU
<b>Skill development and labour market relevance</b>												
IVET public expenditure (% of GDP)	<b>0.3</b>	d	0.5	ce	'16	<b>0.3</b>		0.5	ce	'15-'16		0
IVET public expenditure per student (1000 PPS units)	<b>5.1</b>	d	7.1	ce	'16	<b>3.9</b>		7.4	ce	'15-'16		0.3
Enterprise expenditure on CVT courses as % of total labour cost	<b>0.6</b>		0.9		'15	<b>0.6</b>		0.9				
Average number of foreign languages learned in IVET	<b>0.5</b>		1	ce	'17	<b>0.7</b>		1	ce	'15-'17	<b>0.2</b>	0
STEM graduates from upper secondary IVET (% of total)	<b>62.8</b>		29.2	ce	'17	<b>52.9</b>		29.1	ce	'15-'17	<b>-9.9</b>	0
Short-cycle VET graduates as % of first time tertiary education graduates		z			'17		z	14.3	b ce	'15-'17		
Innovative enterprises with supportive training practices (%)					'16	<b>43</b>		37.7				
Employment rate for IVET graduates (20-34 year-olds)	<b>58.2</b>		77.2		'18	<b>63.1</b>		80.5		'15-'18	<b>4.9</b>	3.3
Employment premium for IVET graduates (over general stream)	<b>0.2</b>		5.4		'18	<b>-0.8</b>		6.6		'15-'18	<b>-0.6</b>	1.2
Employment premium for IVET graduates (over low-educated)	<b>6.7</b>		23.7		'18	<b>10.1</b>		23.3		'15-'18	<b>3.4</b>	-0.4
Workers helped to improve their work by training (%)	<b>87.4</b>	u	83.7		'15	<b>87.4</b>	u	83.7				
Workers with skills matched to their duties (%)	<b>56.4</b>		57		'15	<b>56.4</b>		57				
<b>Overall transitions and labour market trends</b>												
Early leavers from education and training (%)	<b>7.9</b>		11		'18	<b>4.7</b>		10.6		'15-'18	<b>-3.2</b>	-0.4
30-34 year-olds with tertiary attainment (%)	<b>40.4</b>		38.7		'18	<b>44.3</b>		40.7		'15-'18	<b>3.9</b>	2
NEET rate for 18-24 year-olds (%)	<b>23.7</b>		15.8		'18	<b>20</b>		13.7		'15-'18	<b>-3.7</b>	-2.1
Unemployment rate for 20-34 year-olds (%)	<b>34.8</b>		12.9		'18	<b>26.8</b>		9.4		'15-'18	<b>-7.9</b>	-3.5
Employment rate of recent graduates (%)	<b>45</b>		75.9		'18	<b>54.8</b>		80.6		'15-'18	<b>9.8</b>	4.7
Adults with lower level of educational attainment (%)	<b>29.6</b>		23.5		'18	<b>26.4</b>		21.9		'15-'18	<b>-3.2</b>	-1.6
Employment rate for 20-64 year-olds (%)	<b>54.9</b>		70		'18	<b>59.5</b>		73.1		'15-'18	<b>4.6</b>	3.1
Employment rate for 20-64 year-olds with lower level of educational attainment (%)	<b>48.1</b>		52.6		'18	<b>49.9</b>		56.1		'15-'18	<b>1.8</b>	3.5
Medium/high-qualified employment in 2030 (% of total)					'18	76.5	D	85.8	D			

EU refers to EU-28, unless otherwise specified.

(D) Forecast made in 2018.

(ce) Cedefop estimate based on available country data

(b) Eurostat: 'break in time series'.

(u) Eurostat: 'low reliability'.

(z) Eurostat: 'not applicable'.

(e) Eurostat: 'estimated'.

(d) Eurostat: 'definition differs'.

Source: Cedefop, 2020.

In 2017, 28.8% of all upper secondary students in Greece were enrolled in IVET. This percentage is 19 points below the EU average. It appears that the percentage of upper secondary students in IVET is lower by 1.1 points compared to the situation in the country in 2015.

In 2018, 4.5% of adults participated in lifelong learning activities, which is higher (1.2 points more) than in 2015. The EU average is 11.1%.

In 2018, the employment rate for IVET graduates (20-34 years old) was 63.1%. It appears that the employment rate for IVET graduates (20-34 years old) is higher by 4.9 points compared to the situation in the country in 2015. The EU average is 80.5%.

# Conclusion

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

The main changes in 2017 have concerned VET governance and key competences (through the initiative *A new beginning for EPAL*). VET governance has been further reinforced through the introduction of two new bodies: the National Apprenticeship Coordination Body (ESOM) and the National Council for Education and Human Resources Development (ESEKAAD) <sup>(53)</sup>. In MTD 4, elements of modernisation have been introduced at EPALs <sup>(54)</sup>.

Compared to 2015-17, the main changes in 2018-19 have taken place in MTDs 3 and 5. In MTD 3, centres of vocational education (KEE), offering two-year university programmes for formal upper secondary VET (EPAL) graduates, are being created (Section 3.3.2.2). In MTD 5, an initiative to train in-company trainers is being launched in 2019 (Section 5.4).

The actions carried out show that the main lines of the Riga conclusions and the country's policy priorities for 2016-20 are being addressed. However, there is no mention of actions targeted at the country's third policy objective in MTD 3 ('ensure the identification of educational level and qualifications of recently arrived refugees aiming to define educational needs, care and support'). Also, information currently available to Cedefop suggests issues which could benefit from further consideration:

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

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<sup>(53)</sup> See Section 1.3.

<sup>(54)</sup> See Section 4.3.

# Acronyms

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

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