



# Structures of Education and Training Systems in Europe

Greece

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European Commission





# STRUCTURES OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING SYSTEMS IN EUROPE

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with the support of

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If you wish to obtain more details on education systems in Europe, please consult the EURYBASE database (<http://www.eurydice.org>), the Cedefop database ([http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/etv/Information\\_resources/NationalVet/Thematic/](http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/etv/Information_resources/NationalVet/Thematic/)) and the website of the European Training Foundation (<http://www.etf.europa.eu/>)



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## INTRODUCTION: GENERAL POLICY CONTEXT

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Greece is a Presidential Parliamentary Republic. The Hellenic Constitution currently in force was passed by the Hellenic Parliament in June 1975 and has been revised twice, in 1986 and in 2001 respectively. Greece's current constitutional and institutional framework is the outcome of a social and political evolution that reaches back to the commencement of the Third Hellenic Republic in 1974, and bears the traces of a process of stabilisation of democratic institutions, social and economic development and eventual integration into the European family of nations.

Greece's Act of Accession to the European Union (then EC) was signed on 28 June 1979. On 1st January 2002 Greece joined the European Monetary Union (EMU).

Greece was among the 51 founding members of the UN in 1945. Greece is also a member of NATO, the Council of Europe, the OSCE (Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe), the OECD (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development), and the WEU (Western European Union). Greece has concluded a large number of bilateral and multilateral agreements and as a member of the European Union participates in all Union cooperation fora.

As regards the legislative function, it is exercised by the Parliament and the President of the Republic as defined in the Constitution (Part C, Section A, Article 26), while the executive function is exercised by the President of the Republic and the government. More specifically, the legislative initiative is exercised either by the Cabinet (through Bills) or by the Parliament itself (with law proposals). There are, however, special cases (e.g. retirement issues) in which the initiative is assumed exclusively by the Cabinet.

As regards the division of administrative responsibilities, state administration branches out into Central and Regional Services. The central services (i.e., Ministries etc.) are responsible for the general orientation along with the coordination and the control of the legality of the regional bodies' actions. Management of local issues forms the responsibility of the local authorities. Municipalities comprise the first tier of local administration authorities and regional authorities the second and more inclusive tier at prefectural level.

With respect to the country's demographic situation, the country's permanent population numbered 10 934 080 in 2001 according to the census data of the National Statistical Service of Greece with the gender breakdown giving 5.41 million (49.51 %) men and 5.52 million (50.49 %) women.

At the beginning of 2007, the population of Greece was estimated at 11 171 740 inhabitants. The demographic trend exhibits a negative dynamic, however, and according to forecasts, the country's demographic make-up will be quite different in the coming decades due to adverse demographic pressures, that is, a decreasing number of births and an expanding ageing population.

With regard to languages spoken in the country, Greek is the official language; it is used throughout the Greek territory and is the language of instruction at all levels of education.

The Greek citizens of Muslim religious persuasion (the Muslim minority which resides in Thrace) number about 100 000 members of Turkish, Pomak and Roma origin. Providing for these Muslim communities, special minority schools have been set up in which the teaching of courses takes place in both the Turkish and the Greek language on the basis of specialised study programmes offered by specially trained teaching staff.

Education policy in the Hellenic Republic is designed by the Ministry of Education Lifelong Learning and Religious Affairs. At the implementation level, the Ministry is assisted in its work by several supervised agencies / bodies bearing specific missions, jurisdictions and responsibilities. Wherever it

is necessary, and especially in the vocational training and lifelong learning fields, there is inter-ministerial cooperation.

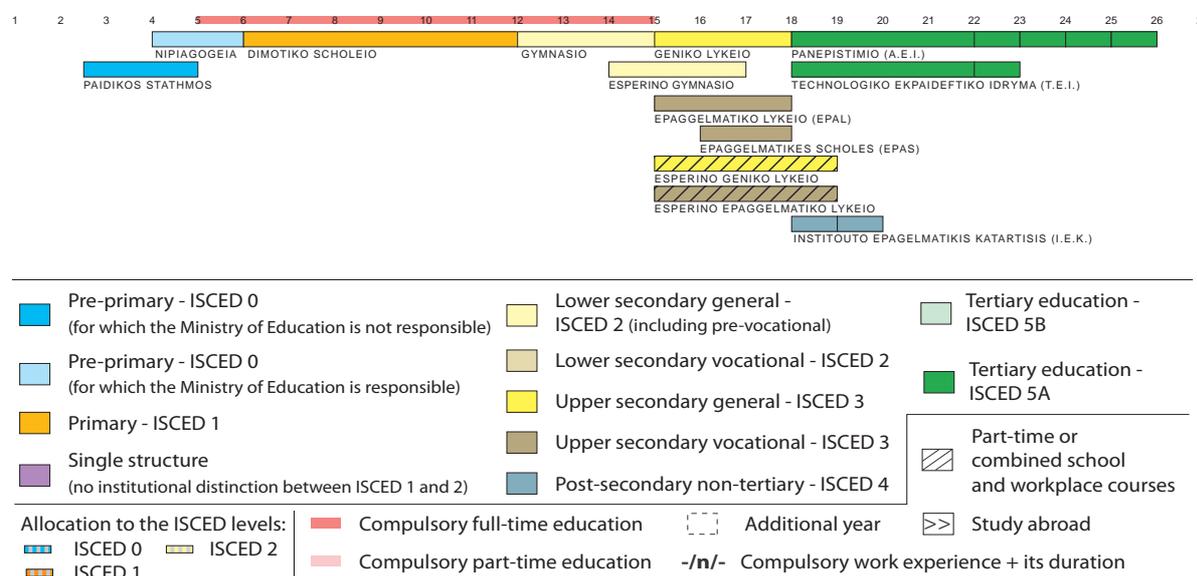
The basic legislation regulating education affairs is as follows:

- Constitution 2001 (Art.16).
- Law 1566/1985: 'Structure and Operation of Primary and Secondary Education and other Provisions'.
- Law 2817/2000: 'Regional Directorates of Education'.
- Law 2916/2001: 'Structure of Higher Education and regulation of issues in the Technological Sector'.
- Law 2986/2002: 'Organisation of Regional Services of Primary and Secondary Education, assessment of teaching task and staff, teachers' in -service training and other provisions'.
- Law 3027/2002: 'Regulations concerning the Organisation of School Buildings for Higher Education and other provisions'.
- Ministerial Decisions 21072α/Γ2/ Official Journal 303 v.B'/13-3-2003 and 21072β/Γ2/ Official Journal 304v.B'/13-3-2003, 'Cross-Curricular Thematic Framework and Curricula of Primary and Secondary Education'.
- Law 3255/2004: 'Regulation of Issues of all Educational Levels'.
- Law 3369/2005: 'Systematisation of Lifelong Learning and other provisions'.
- Law 3467/2005: 'Selection of primary and secondary education teachers, regulations for Administration and Education issues and other provisions'.
- Law 3475/2006: 'Organisation of secondary vocational education and other provisions'.
- Law 3549/2007 'Reform of the institutional framework as regards the structure and the operation of HEIs'.
- Law 3653/2008: 'Institutional framework for research and technology and other provisions'
- Law 3699/2008 'Special Education for persons with disabilities or with special education needs'

An ambitious and comprehensive reform effort has been under way in the past few years. Particular emphasis has been laid so far in the modernisation and expansion of lifelong learning platforms and the modernisation of tertiary education, always in accordance with EU trends and mutually agreed priorities. Cornerstones in this on-going effort have been the coordination and enhancement of LLL providers, the upgrading of vocational training with the establishment of special vocationally oriented secondary education units and the facilitation of inter-level mobility (easier access to post-secondary non-tertiary and tertiary education for their graduates), the substantial regulatory and institutional reform of higher education, and the expansion of mandatory education by one year (pre-school education).

# 1. INITIAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING: ORGANISATION, FUNDING AND QUALITY ASSURANCE

## 1.1 Organisation of the initial education and training system



Pre-primary education in Greece begins at the age of 6 months old in child and Infant Centres run by the Municipal Authorities (*Organismoi Topikis Autodioikisis*). At the age of 4 children are allowed to enrol in *Nipiagogeia* (pre-primary schools), while attendance in them is compulsory for all 5 year old children. The operation of *Nipiagogeia* falls under the authority of the Ministry of Education Lifelong Learning and Religious Affairs. The next stage comprises the compulsory attendance of primary school which belongs to primary education and lasts for 6 years. The 3 year attendance in *Gymnasio* (lower secondary school) constitutes the last period of compulsory education and includes pre-vocational education. In parallel with day *Gymnasio* operate Evening Schools (*Esperino Gymnasio*) in which attendance starts at the age of 14 years old. The second tier of secondary education lasts also for 3 years, constitutes the non-compulsory upper secondary education and comprises general secondary education (including *Geniko Lykeio*/General Lyceum) and vocational secondary education (including *Epaggelmatiko Lykeio*/Vocational Lykeio and *Epaggelmatiki Scholi*/Vocational School). In General and Vocational *Lykeio* pupils enrol at the age of 15 years old while in Vocational School at the age of 16. Parallel to day General and Vocational *Lykeia* operate evening schools with the same conditions concerning pupils' age for admission. Their timetable allows pupils to be in regular full time attendance and acquire work experience at the same time.

Between secondary and higher education operates post-secondary non-tertiary education. It is provided by Vocational Training Institutes (IEK) offering formal initial and further vocational education and training and private Colleges classified as belonging in the informal post-secondary education and training. Study or other certificates that Colleges provide are not academically equal to those granted within the framework of the Greek post-secondary system of formal education (e.g. Universities, Technological Education Institutes and the above mentioned IEKs).

Tertiary education constitutes the higher level of education and comprises the University and Technological sectors. The University sector includes Universities, Technical Universities, and the School of Fine Arts. The Technological sector includes the Technological Education Institutions (TEIs), and the School of Pedagogical and Technological Education (ASPETE).

## 1.2 Distribution of responsibilities

The Greek education system is governed by national laws and legislative acts (decrees, ministerial decisions). The general responsibility for education lies with the Ministry of Education Lifelong Learning and Religious Affairs.

The administration of primary and secondary education is conducted hierarchically by:

1. The Ministry of Education Lifelong Learning and Religious Affairs;
2. The Regional Education Directorates;
3. The Directorates of Education (Prefecture);
4. The Education Offices (Province) and
5. The School.

A principal, assistant-principal and a teachers' association direct every school.

The head of the Directorate of Education administers schools of all types (public/private) in each prefecture, and at all levels. In prefectures with many provinces or many schools there are education offices in the districts. The heads of these education offices are responsible for their administration.

The Prefect is in charge of the administrative units in the competent prefecture, and performs the duties he/she is assigned by the Minister of Education Lifelong Learning and Religious Affairs.

The Minister of Education Lifelong Learning and Religious Affairs is responsible for the administration of all schools in the country. This administration takes place through the Ministry services (central and regional) and through Councils of a consultative and scientific nature that have been created and function in the Ministry's central and regional services (Directorates of Education).

In higher education, the Universities (AEI) and Technological Education Institutes (TEI) are self-administered legal entities of public law (NPDD) and the Minister exercises supervision and monitors the legality of their actions and decisions through the Services of the Ministry's Central Service.

### Administration at national level

The **Ministry of Education Lifelong Learning and Religious Affairs**: Holds the responsibility for the national policy on education. The basic task and responsibility of the Ministry lies in defining, evaluating and creating the conditions to respond to the educational needs. More specifically the Ministry draws up the bills regarding the field of education and is in charge of applying the law and the administrative laws they entail. It co-ordinates and evaluates the regional services and schools and provides financial support of educational activities.

Certain competencies and duties have been assigned to public organisations and other bodies that report directly to the Ministry. These are the following:

- The **National Education Council** (ESYP) constitutes a consultative body to the Minister of Education Lifelong Learning and Religious Affairs for educational planning issues and for educational policy issues of major importance. ESYP comprises the following three councils: a) the Higher University Education Council (SAPE), b) the Higher Technological Education Council (SATE) and c) the Primary and Secondary Education Council (SPDE).
- The **Pedagogical Institute**: It is a self-administered state organisation operating under the supervision of the Ministry of Education Lifelong Learning and Religious Affairs. Its duty is to formulate the guidelines, draft the timetable and the curricula, approve and order textbooks,

apply vocational guidance, introduce issues and innovations, apply new teaching methods, promote in-service training of teachers, etc.

- The **General Secretariat for Lifelong Learning (GSLLL)**: (and the Institute for the Continuous Education of Adults – IDEKE).
- The **School Buildings Organisation (OSK)**: It is a self-administered organisation of the Public Sector responsible for building and equipping school buildings in the prefecture of Attica and undertakes projects of Prefectural Governments upon a Minister's Act.
- The **School Book Publishing Organisation (OEDB)**: It is a self-administered organisation in charge of publishing school and other educational books and distributing them free of charge to schools.
- The **Organisation for Vocational Education and Training (OEEK)**: It is a self-administered organisation established under Law 2009/1992 having as objective the organisation and management of public Vocational Education Institutes (IEK) falling under the Ministry of Education Lifelong Learning and Religious Affairs, which also supervises the private IEKs. The Organisation's competencies also include: a) observation and evaluation of the requirements in specialised personnel for each sector of the economy, in co-operation with other agencies; b) certification and accreditation of education and training provided by IEKs; c) recognition of certificates awarded by other Greek vocational education and training agencies; rendering of equivalence to corresponding certificates awarded abroad; d) definition of vocational rights at all vocational education and training levels in co-operation with the competent Ministries and social partners; e) management of all E.U. funds related to technical and vocational education and training falling under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Education Lifelong Learning and Religious Affairs; f) the keeping of statistical information and the documentation of issues related to vocational education and training.
- The **State Scholarships Foundation (IKY)**: It is a self-administered scholarship body, which also manages the Socrates Programme. Its objective is to provide scholarships, loans and awards to Greek expatriates and foreign citizens, to provide scholarships and financial support to Greek students in the context of European co-operation programmes, to collect and disseminate information concerning all scholarships and financial support provided to Greek citizens.
- The **Hellenic National Academic Recognition and Information Center (DOATAP / HELLENIC NARIC)**: It is a self-administered legal entity of Public Law responsible for the academic recognition of qualifications awarded by equal higher education institutes, universities as well as technological educational institutes abroad and the provision of information concerning higher education studies domestically and abroad.
- The **National Youth Foundation (EIN)**: It is a self-administered legal entity of Public Law of the broader Public Sector operating under the supervision of the Ministry of Education Lifelong Learning and Religious Affairs. It establishes residences/facilities for higher and secondary education students, promotes cultural activities, excursions, camping programmes, and applies special programmes of the General Secretariat for Youth.
- The **Education Research Centre of Greece (KEE)**: It is a self-administered legal entity of Public Law which promotes research on issues related to education and especially organisational issues, teaching methods and continuing education and training. Moreover, it conducts surveys and documentation on these issues.
- The **National Library** which collects, organizes and makes available to the public all possible

forms of written products of science and culture related to Greece.

- The **Academic Computer Technology Research Institute** (EAITY) which conducts basic and applied research, assimilates international know-how to the highest degree, and ensures the scientific and research improvement of human resources.
- The **Organisation for the Further Education of Teachers** (OEPEK): It is a legal entity of Private Law, supervised by the Minister of Education Lifelong Learning and Religious Affairs. Its task is to plan, apply and certify the various forms and types of Primary and Secondary Teacher Further Education.
- The **National Resource Centre for Vocational Guidance** (EKEP): This private law legal entity is the Euroguidance Centre of Greece and is responsible for the coordination, support, certification and enhancement of the actions taken by those offering counselling and vocational guidance services in education, training and employment.

Also to the Ministry of Education report directly the following: the General Secretariat for Youth, the General Secretariat for Lifelong Learning, the Hellenic Language Centre, the Institute for Continuing Adult Education and the Technological Research Centre.

### **Regional level administration**

In the context of educational decentralisation policy, administration is exercised at a Regional Level by the Regional Education Directorates whose jurisdiction covers primary and Secondary Education. The Regional Education Directorates come directly under the Minister of Education Lifelong Learning and Religious Affairs. Each Regional Education Directorate includes the a) Administration and b) Scientific – Pedagogic Guidance Departments.

Under each Regional Education Directorate headed by the Regional Education Director come: Prefectural Directorates of Primary and Secondary Education; Regional Training Centres; Diagnostic, Evaluation and Support Centres; Regional Support and Educational Planning Centres; Environmental Education Centres; Youth Consulting Centres; Pre-School, Primary, Secondary and Special Education School Advisors.

At the headquarters of each Regional Education Directorate operate a Higher Regional Primary and Secondary Education Service Councils.

As far as higher education institutions are concerned (Universities and TEIs) a corresponding administrative structure does not exist as they are self-governing legal entities of public law under the supervision of the Ministry of Education Lifelong Learning and Religious Affairs.

### **Administration at a prefectural level**

- Administration at a Prefectural Level is exercised by the Directorates and the Offices of Primary and Secondary Education and the Education Committees.
- For the Administration and monitoring of pre-school, primary and secondary education Directorates of Primary and Secondary Education operate in each Prefecture, having their offices in the capital of the Prefecture. In addition to the Directorates, there is also one Education Office and one Physical Education Office in each prefecture.
- Directorates and Education Offices operate under the responsibility of their heads.

The heads of the Directorates and Offices administer and monitor the operation of the schools in their region; they are also the administrative and disciplinary superiors of the teachers and administrative staff serving in these offices, along with the school principals. At the prefectural level, we also have the

Regional Service Councils for Primary and for Secondary Education (PYSPE and PYSDE), that are responsible for matters related to the service status of teachers. Among their competencies is the selection of principals and assistant principals of schools. These councils consist of three (3) representatives from the Administration and two (2) elected representatives of the teachers.

Regarding higher education institutions there is no similar administration structure.

### **Administration of schools**

Heads of Kindergartens are kindergarten teachers.

Administrative bodies of each primary and secondary school are the principal, the assistant-principal and the teachers' association. The principal is responsible for the proper operation of the school, for co-ordinating school life, ensuring conformity with laws, circulars and service instructions, and implementing decisions of the teachers' association. The principal participates in the evaluation of school's teachers and co-operates with school counsellors. The assistant-principal acts as deputy for the principal when there is no principal, or when the principal is absent or prevented from carrying out his/her duties. The teachers' association, president of which is the principal of the school, comprises all its teachers and is the collective body for charting directions, for the better application of educational policy, and the better operation of the school.

### **Administration of Higher Education**

Higher education comprises two sectors: University including Universities, Technical Universities and the Higher School of Fine Arts, and the Technological, including Technological Education Institutes (TEIs) and the School of Pedagogical and Technological Education (ASPATE).

Universities are fully self-administered legal entities of public law. Collective bodies that are established and act in compliance with special legislation administer each university. These bodies are the Senate, the Rector's Council and the Rector. Members of these bodies are exclusively members of the academic community of each university. A Presidential Decree or a Ministerial Act upon proposal of the university bodies and advice of the University Education Council (SAP) determines the organisation of universities. Each University comprises several Faculties. Faculties are divided into Departments and Departments into Sections. The General Assembly of the Department of each university Faculty is responsible for the drawing up of the Department's curriculum. The Department also grants degrees that are the same for the entire department. Each Department's Sections applies the guidelines of the former.

TEIs fall under higher education and are fully self-governing legal entities of public law. State supervision is exercised by the Minister of Education Lifelong Learning and Religious Affairs. The Higher Technological Education Council delivers its opinion to the Minister of Education on issues related to the Technological Sector of Higher Education. Each TEI is composed of Schools and each School of specialisation related Departments. A Department is the basic academic unit. Studies in each Department lead to a degree that allows the practice of a profession.

The basic organisational features of TEIs, along with those of Universities, are their democratic structure and operation, with the participation of representatives of all components of the academic community in decision taking, university asylum, academic liberties, and freedom in scientific research and the exchange of ideas.

The compositions of Administrative Bodies of TEIs have an advisory character. The Participatory Bodies accordingly are:

of TEI departments: General Assembly; Council, Head;

of TEI schools: Council and Director;

of TEI as a unit: Assembly, Council, President and Vice-President.

TEI Presidents, Vice-Presidents, School Directors Heads of Departments come from the TEI's educational staff and are elected by the members of the academic community of each institute. The curriculum of each Department is drawn by the General Assembly of the Department and assessed by the Institute of Technological Education (ITE).

### 1.3 Financing

Education financing is the responsibility of the state through the regular budget and the public investments budget, and to a lesser degree by non-state sources (public agencies, individuals etc.).

The regular budget covers teachers' salaries, operational costs of school units, books, pupil transportation, provision of meals and accommodation of pupils-students where applicable, scholarships and purchase of teaching equipment. The Public Investment Programme covers first of all fixed asset expenditures, i.e. the purchase of land, the construction, repair and maintenance of buildings and facilities, the provision and maintenance of equipment and laboratories. Furthermore, it covers the expenses incurred by drafting and creating new educational programmes, the enhancement of scientific research and moreover the support of the overall educational policy.

In the context of the National Strategic Reference Framework (ESPA) 2007-2013, innovative and development projects are organized and implemented, which are 75 % financed by the European Union funds and 25 % by national funds. These projects include the Sectoral Operational Programme 'Education and Lifelong Learning' co-financed by the European Social Fund (ESF) as well as Regional Operational Programmes co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) on an infrastructure and equipment level for all educational grades covering both the initial vocational training and lifelong learning. The main aim is to organize education and lifelong learning in such a way as to lead to active participation in society, a smooth transition into the labour market, and to curb school dropout rates, especially among members of vulnerable groups.

Private expenditure provided to education covers the provision of educational services by private schools, operating in parallel with state schools. It further covers the services of *frontistiria* (private tutorial centres), offering tutorials on school subjects, private foreign language courses and other types of training, as well as private tutors employed by families and students to provide supplementary teaching.

### 1.4 Quality assurance

The responsibility for the administrative supervision and monitoring of pre-school, primary and secondary schools falls under the heads of the local Primary and Secondary Directorates and Offices accordingly. The responsibility of educational operation falls under the School Counsellors. The Minister of Education Lifelong Learning and Religious Affairs monitors higher education institutions and compliance to legal issues.

Principals and school advisers are responsible for the evaluation of the work of teachers. Principals are responsible for evaluating the organizational and administrative efficiency at school unit level (teachers' rate of absence, consistency and respect of the schedule on the part of the teachers and, school leaving rate among students, relations between parents and teachers mainly on administrative issues etc). Usually principals keep a journal of school activities. They are responsible for the school being adequately equipped and for the maintenance of the equipment as well as for the quality of the teaching work. Principals summon the school advisor in case of educational problems. At the end of each academic year they compile a report on the educational work accomplished which they submit to

the school adviser and the head of the Office to duly use in their own reports. School advisers assess each school independently and then draw up a comprehensive report on the operation of schools in the region of their jurisdiction (local evaluation) which they submit to the competent service of the Ministry of Education Lifelong Learning and Religious Affairs. In their reports, school advisors evaluate in great detail the degree of sufficiency of scientific and pedagogical skills of the teachers working in these schools including the principal. In secondary education, school advisors are selected on the basis of individual subjects e.g. a school adviser for language and literature, another one for maths etc.

Another evaluator of the principals is the head of Office or Director of Education (in case no Office is operating). Heads of Directorates or heads of Education Offices write a report on the evaluation of schools and teachers in the region of their jurisdiction. They assess teaching and learning at school level compared to their administrative duties. They assess teachers on issues such as consistency in their duties and punctuality on time of arrival at the school, participation in school activities, relations between teachers and parents, teachers' level of cooperation with their colleagues within and outside the school unit at local, national or international level, the annual meetings held by the teachers' association of the schools etc. The administrative duties have an impact on the framework within which the educational work is carried out (teaching and learning functions). Reports are communicated to the competent Education Ministry service which undertakes to carry out a study, examination and further assessment of the information contained in it.

There is no assessment system yet of the Teaching Faculty (TF) of Universities and TEIs, but a relative regulation is foreseen in the framework of the general system of assessment of the total work offered by the Institutions of higher education (National System of Assessment of Higher Education / ESAP) which is now being prepared. Under the legal system now in force, assessment of Teaching Faculty is effected in the following cases: a) if the TF member requests to advance to a higher level; and b) during the process of giving TF members tenure, since TF members in the levels of Laboratory Instructor and Associate Professor are appointed with a three-year tentative term of office at the end of which they are assessed in order to receive tenure.

Some of the bodies evaluating institutions in primary and secondary education are the following: Ministry of Education Lifelong Learning and Religious Affairs, Pedagogical Institute, Regional Centres to Support Educational Planning, heads of Scientific and Pedagogical Guidance, Regional Education Directors, heads of Directorates and heads of Education Offices. Evaluation of institutions takes place at the school, regional and national level.

The issue of the evaluation of higher educational institutions is clarified by L. 3374/2005, which defines the whole issue of quality assurance in higher education, by establishing specific evaluation procedures. The evaluation procedures of the higher educational institutions are coordinated and supported on a national level by an independent administrative authority under the name 'Quality Assurance Agency in Higher Education' (ADIP), which has administrative autonomy and is supervised by the Minister of Education. At the same time, in every institute of higher education a 'Unit of Quality Assurance' is set up (with the participation of the teaching, scientific and administrative staff, as well as of the students) in order to coordinate and support the evaluation procedures. Based on internal reports of the individual academic units, draws up every two years the corresponding internal report of the institute to which it refers. The evaluation of the academic institutions is determined on the basis of four central priorities: a) regarding the quality of the teaching work, b) regarding the quality of the research work, c) regarding the quality of the programmes of studies and d) regarding the quality of the rest of the services.

Greece participates in international projects involving tests intended for students of various ages and on a variety of examined parameters (IEA, PISA, TIMMS). These tests are organised and carried out by national agencies which undertake the task to analyse the results related to them with the aim of

informing the bodies responsible for decision making. For instance, the Centre for Education Research is the national agency participating in PISA. At the same time, Greece provides the required data to international organisations maintaining educational data bases (e.g. OECD).

## 2. PRE-PRIMARY EDUCATION

Pre-primary education in Greece is offered in *Nipiagogeia* under the authority of the Ministry of Education Lifelong Learning and Religious Affairs, in Child and Infant Centres run by the Municipal Authorities, as well as in private *Nipiagogeia* and pre-school education centres. In the framework of primary education, operate the all-day *Nipiagogeia* which provide an extended daily programme compared to that of the regular *Nipiagogeio*. Attendance in Child and Infant Centres is optional while, since 2007, it has been compulsory in *Nipiagogeia* for 5 year old children. *Nipiagogeia* may receive children of 4 years of age.

In the school year 1997/98 for the first time 160 all-day *Nipiagogeia* operated (Law 2525/1997). Since then this institution has been extended and as a result in the school year 2008-2009 the total number of all day *Nipiagogeia* has been 2.898. *Nipiagogeia* are part of primary education and either they are housed independently or together with primary schools.

The majority of pre-primary schools as well as child and infant centres are under state control. Nevertheless, there are also private ones. In public *Nipiagogeia* attendance is free of charge. In public Child and Infant Centres as a rule there are monthly fees. The private Child and Infant Centres function under the auspices of the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare.

As stated in the law regarding the structure and operation of the primary and secondary education (Law 1566/1985), the aim of pre-primary schools is to assist the children to develop physically, emotionally, mentally and socially not only on an individual but also on a group level. Special attention should be given to the development of motor and cognitive abilities. The operation of all-day *Nipiagogeia* aims at enhancing the pre-primary education, providing children with a well rounded preparation for primary School as well as the reinforcement of the role of state care with the purpose of decreasing educational-social discriminations and helping working parents. Regarding the provision of education to pupils with disabilities or special educational needs there are special education *Nipiagogeia* or sections which are included in the usual *Nipiagogeia* that have special scientifically trained staff.

The Child and Infant Centres facilitate especially working parents providing pupils with safe accommodation and the appropriate education. In these places pupils develop physically, mentally, emotionally and socially in order for them to proceed gradually from the family to the educational environment. Child Centres admit children ranging from 2.5 to 4 years old. Infant Centres admit infants ranging from 6 months to 4 years old.

All the above mentioned schools are mixed-sex schools.

Statistical data:

### Public and Private *Nipiagogeia*, School Year 2007/08

	Public	Private
School Units <sup>a</sup>	5 832	130
Pupils <sup>a</sup>	143 770	5 342
Average Number of Pupils per School	24.7	41.1
Teachers <sup>a</sup>	12 172	277
Pupil to Teacher Ratio	11.8	19.3
Average Number of Pupils per Classroom	16.0	21.4
Number of Pupils Graduating <sup>a</sup>	84 365	3 217

Source: <sup>a</sup>YPEPTH, Operational Research and Statistics Section, 2008.

**Child Centres and Infant Centres run by Local Authorities, School Year 2005/06**

	Number	Percentage
Units	1 792	
Pupils (6 m. – 2.5 y.)	6 641	8.5 %
Pupils (2.5 – 6 y)	71 631	91.5 %
Total	78 272	100 %

Source: Ministry of the Interior, Directorate of Organization and Operation of Local Government Authorities, Section of Legal Entities, Foundations, and Corporations.

**2.1 Admission**

Attendance in pre-primary schools lasts for two years. The typical conditions for a child to enrol are to have completed the fourth year of age, to reside in the area near the pre-primary School and to have had the required vaccinations and dental examination. Attendance at *Nipiagogeio* is optional for 4 year old children and compulsory for children of 5 years of age. Children that enrol in municipal Child and Infant Centres mainly come from the local area, whereas priority is given to children of working parents, families in financial distress and other special need cases.

**2.2 Organisation of time, groups and venue**

The Ministry of Education is responsible for allocation of time in *Nipiagogeia*. The daily schedule for *Nipiagogeia* is defined by Ministerial Decisions. Similarly, municipal and community Child and Infant Centres fall under the authority of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, though they have the flexibility to adapt the daily schedule stipulated in the standard operational regulation of 2002 (Joint Ministerial Decision 16065/22-4-2002) to their own local conditions and needs.

The teaching year for *Nipiagogeia* starts on 1st September and ends on 21st June of the following year, while educational activities start on 11th September and end on 15th June of the following year. Child and Infant Centres operate 11 months per year as defined in the standard operation regulation. They suspend operation mainly in August, but they may choose to temporarily suspend operations for a month between June and July according to local needs.

*Nipiagogeia* can be 'one teacher' schools (single classroom) or 'two teacher' schools (two classrooms). The first have from 7 to 25 children and the latter 26 to 50 children. The number of children per pre-primary school teacher is specified at up to 25 children. In *Nipiagogeia* operating with one pre-primary school teacher (*Nipiagogos*), all children of both age groups necessarily co-exist in one single class. The pre-primary school teacher works with the same class for at least one school-year. All-day *Nipiagogeio* are staffed by at least two pre-primary school teachers. Child and Infant Centres enrol children from 6 months to 4 years old. In particular, Child Centres enrol youngsters from 2.5 year of age up to 4 years of age, whereas Infant Centres from 6 months to 2.5 years. Each Infant Centre is formed in classes according to age: a) from 6 months to 1.5 years and b) from 1.5 to 2.5 years. Respectively, classes in Child Centres are formed as follows: a) from 2.5 up to 3.5 year and b) from 3.5 to 4.5 years. Infant sections are attended by 12 infants with 2 teachers and one assistant. Every section of the Child Centre serves up to 25 children with one teacher and one assistant.

**2.3 Curriculum**

The Curriculum in pre-primary schools is developed by the Pedagogical Institute. The goal of these 'curricula' is to support children's gradual socialization so that they develop physically, emotionally, mentally and socially. These programmes are organized around 'themes' that attract children's interest and are pedagogically appropriate. The organization around 'themes' as well as the work plans are

basic features of the pre-primary curricula that emphasize inter-disciplinarity, a holistic approach to knowledge and the mobilisation of children's interests and ideas in the learning process.

More specifically, a typical daily programme at a *Nipiagogeio* includes hours for developing interdisciplinary activities, for spontaneous activities in 'activity corners', for breaks and for breakfast. The day starts and ends with a discussion to plan or to evaluate the activities of the day. Similarly, the daily programme of the all-day *Nipiagogeio* starts and ends with discussion time, while it includes more hours of inter-disciplinary and spontaneous activities and more breaks, meal and rest periods.

Child and Infant Centres have a daily programme of creative activity that aims at promoting the children's socialization and bonding, supporting their developmental progress and providing an environment of freedom and security in order to ensure their harmonious psychosomatic development. The day includes time for individualized growth and development programmes, for free play and creative activities supportive of the aforementioned goals, as well as meals and rest periods. The aim of the teacher is to contribute to the children's ability to concentrate, act independently and have confidence in themselves and their personal abilities.

## 2.4 Assessment

In *Nipiagogeio*, evaluation is continuous and is based on observing the everyday behaviour and activities of the infants, both on an individual and on a group level. Assessment results, records, occasional notes of the teacher and the child's work file are included in the evaluation file of each child. At least once a month or more often if there is such need, cooperation is arranged beyond the hours of teaching with the parents of the children. The evaluation file is accessible to parents. On special circumstances cooperation is possible during teaching.

Teaching staff at Child and Infant Centres meet with parents once a month to inform them about the child's general on-going development.

## 2.5 Teachers

Kindergarten teachers are University graduates and come from the Pedagogical Departments for Kindergarten Teachers. Their studies last for 4 years. They are Civil Servants or in cases of extra teaching needs they are appointed on a supplementary basis. Teachers in specific from the Child and Infant Centres can also be graduates from the corresponding departments of the Technological Education Institutes. Admission in these Departments follows the current legislation concerning the admission of prospective students in higher education. More specifically, admission in the University or Technological sector of higher education departments and the technological ones transpires through the procedure of general entrance examinations. The aforementioned Departments grant degrees which offer their holders the possibility of participating in an examination held by the Supreme Council for Civil Personnel Selection (ASEP) and being registered in a chart of provisional supplementary teachers so as to be appointed as kindergarten teaching staff. Apart from their success in the written exams, the following are being taken into account: a) Degree grade, b) Postgraduate degrees, c) PhDs, d) past experience in the field. Regarding the Child and Infant teachers, their degree provides them with the ability to take part in calls of interest by the competent local authorities for staff recruitment in Child and Infant Centres.

The educational counselling offered to the teachers is provided by: a) the Pedagogical Institute and b) The School Advisers for pre-primary education who belong to the Departments of Scientific and Pedagogical Guidance of the Regional Education Directories. The further training of teachers is stipulated by the Laws 1566/85, 1824/88, 2009/92, 2327/95, 2986/02 as well as by Presidential Decrees. The additional vocational training is organized by the Organization of Teacher Training (OEPEK) which is a legal entity under public law supervised by the Ministry of Education. In order to

achieve its goals OEPEK cooperates with the Pedagogical Institute, the Education Research Centre of Greece (KEE), Educational, Public Services and Organizations, with Greek or foreign Universities and Technological Education Institutes and research centres. In-service teacher is made-up of a compulsory phase for the newly appointed teachers and a continuous component (featuring both compulsory and optional stages).

### 3. PRIMARY EDUCATION

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Primary education constitutes a part of the 10-year duration of compulsory education and covers 6 grades from A to F. It is provided in primary schools for children aged from 6 up to 12 years old.

According to Law 1566/1985 regarding the structure and the function of the primary and secondary education, the goal of the primary education is to contribute to the complete, harmonious and balanced development of the mental and psychophysical abilities of the students, so that, regardless of gender or origins, they have the potential to evolve to integrated and creative characters. The programme of studies (curriculum) for primary education is based on the following basic principles: a) the offer of a general education, b) the promotion of pupil's interests and cultivation of their skills, c) the assurance of equal learning opportunities for all pupils, d) the reinforcement of the cultural and linguistic identity within the framework of a multicultural society, e) the preparation of pupils to use new information and communication technologies, f) the promotion of physical, mental and social health and g) the awareness of the necessity to protect the natural environment and adopt socially responsible patterns of behaviour.

With the goal of providing a well-rounded and integrated education, the Ministry of Education is promoting measures and policies at all education levels, including that of primary education, that rest on the following pillars: a) human-centered education, b) environmental education, c) multilingualism and Greek language, d) education, culture and sports and e) digital convergence. Within this framework, the primary school is called upon to undertake a multifunctional role, implementing innovative policies and programmes that upgrade the educational process.

Primary schools are divided into one-teacher, two-teacher schools etc up to six-teacher schools or twelve teacher schools, depending on the number of regular employees. Depending on the area, one-teacher primary schools can be merged into a central primary school (if the number of students attending the school lies under 15). The students are transported free of any charge from the area of the merged schools to the pre-determined place where the classes will operate or to the place of central primary schools. In primary education apart from the typical primary school there are also other types of schools. These are the all-day primary schools, the *Peiramatika* Schools (experimental schools), the Minority Schools, the Cross-cultural Education Schools, the School Units of Special Education and Training, the European Education School and the Second Chance Schools. All the aforementioned schools are of state control, mixed-sex and attendance is free of charge.

The all-day primary school was established in 1997 (Law 2525/1997) with the aim to expand the teaching hours and the curriculum as well as to cover the needs arising from the contemporary conditions of the children's family and the demands of the modern pedagogical views. Many *Peiramatika* Schools operate under the auspices of the Pedagogical Departments of Universities and their goal is the implementation on an experimental basis of programs and methods of teaching as well as educational material (books, audiovisual material etc.). In the geographical region of Thrace there are 194 Minority Schools for children from the Muslim minority. At Minority primary schools a special programme 'Education of Muslim children' has been implemented since 1997 that aims at harmoniously integrating pupils in education and in society and improving the educational outcomes of the Muslim minority. In areas where there is a significant density of repatriate, immigrant or Roma pupils operate the Cross-cultural Education Schools where attend the former and native pupils. For the time being operate 13 schools of Cross-cultural Education in primary education. In relation to the typical primary school they are differentiated as to the further teaching support they provide (special reception and tutorial classes), the specially trained staff and the educational material used. In the School Units of Special Education attend students with disabilities and special education needs, whose nature seriously impedes their attendance at a general school. Since 2008 operates the

European Education School in Crete for the children of the employees of the Organization for Security of Information Networks, as well as for these children whose one parent is a citizen from a country-member of the European Union. Finally, Second Chance Schools, without belonging to primary education, give to adults the opportunity to acquire, among others, a certificate equal to that awarded by primary schools.

Apart from those already mentioned other Laws and Presidential Decrees governing primary education are: 2327/1995, 2341/1995, 2413/1996, 2525/1997, 3518/2006 and the Presidential Decrees 462/1991, 8/1995, 121/1995 and 201/1998.

Statistical Data, school year 2007/08

	Public Schools	Private Schools
School Units <sup>a</sup>	5 448	371
Students <sup>a</sup>	592 855	45 278
Average Number of Pupils per School	108.8	122.0
Teachers <sup>a</sup>	60 558	3 841
Ratio of Pupils to Teachers	9.8	11.8
Average Number of Pupils per Class(Section)	16.7	20.5
Number of Graduates <sup>a</sup>	103 913	7 504
Sections <sup>a</sup>	35 495	2 207

Source: <sup>a</sup>Ministry of Education Lifelong Learning and Religious Affairs, Operations Research and Statistics, <[http://ypepth.gr/el\\_ec\\_category6638.htm](http://ypepth.gr/el_ec_category6638.htm)>

### 3.1 Admission

In grade A of the primary school there are admitted students who will have completed their 6th year of age by December the 31st of the year of admission. A student is admitted in a specific public school for primary education in reference to the area of their residence. Each primary school belongs in a specified school district the limits of which are established by the head of the Office of Education. The experimental schools for primary education do not have their own school district and the admission of students is done through drawing. In order to be admitted to grade A in primary school a pupil must have a *Nipiagogeio* attendance certificate, a birth certificate and the required health examination and vaccinations certificates.

### 3.2 Organisation of time, groups and venue

The organization of grades in primary education is determined on a central level. The total number of pupils in a primary school is divided into 6 grades, according to their age, that is in grade A attend pupils of 6 years of age etc. The classes in schools with 10 up to 45 pupils (one-teacher position school, two-teachers positions schools, three-teachers positions schools) host up to 15 pupils while classes in other schools have up to 25 pupils. The organization of the school time in primary education is stipulated by the Presidential Decree 201/1998. The teaching year in primary education commences on September the 1st and ends on June 21st of the following year, while the lessons begin on September 11th and end on June 15th of the following year. The school holidays last for 4 weeks (Christmas and Easter). The school suspends operation for the summer from June 16th until September 10th and the teachers stop their duties from June 22nd until August 31st. The teaching year includes 35 weeks of teaching, and each week has 5 teaching days (Monday to Friday) for a total of 175 days per year. Typical and all-day schools of primary education start their programme at 8:00 am. Typical primary schools finish their programme at 14:00 pm while the all-day schools at 16:15 pm. The latter have additionally an optional zone in which their line of activity extends until

17:00 pm. The starting time for classes may be modified according to local needs by decision of the Regional Service Council.

### 3.3 Curriculum

Curricula – including subject hours – of primary education are drafted by the Pedagogical Institute which makes a proposal for final approval to the Ministry of Education Lifelong Learning and Religious Affairs. Abiding by the curriculum is compulsory for teachers. The Pedagogical Institute evaluates the school books and makes a recommendation to the Ministry which is responsible for the final selection. It is not possible to choose from among different textbooks. Organisation of Curricula and preparation of school-books are based on the Cross-Thematic Curriculum Framework (Pedagogical Institute), which has been valid from the school year 2003/04 in primary and secondary education and has as its main target the cross thematic approach to knowledge.

In all grades of primary school are taught Modern Greek Language, Mathematics, Arts Education, Physical Education and Information and Communication Technology (this last subject has been incorporated and taught through other subjects). The subject 'Environmental Studies' is taught in the first 4 grades of the primary school. Apart from these subjects from grade C to grade F are taught Religious Education, History and First Foreign Language/English, while in grades E and F are also taught Geography, Natural Sciences, Civics and Social Studies and a Second Foreign Language (French or German). All subjects are of equal value and compulsory. Slight deviations only from this schedule are in effect for one-teacher or two-teacher schools. In all-day schools the subject of Information and Communication Technology constitutes an independent subject and pupils may choose in all grades among the following subjects: Visual Arts, Theatre Education, Music, Dance and Sports, the latter only in the 3rd to 6th grade). In all-day primary schools there time is allowed for study and preparation of pupils. The total number of hours per week for A and B grades is 25, for C and D grades 30 hours and for E and F grades 32 hours. The total of hours per week for all-day primary schools in all grades is 45.

In the context of application of the Cross Thematic Curriculum Framework in all grades there is the Flexible Zone of Interdisciplinary and Creative Activities, which takes up to 3 hours per week in the first up to the fourth grade and two hours in the fifth and the sixth grade. In the framework of Flexible Zone, but also of the optional School Activities, the teachers develop activities in the area of Environmental Education, in Health Education and in Cultural and Artistic issues. These activities put emphasis on the empirical, interdisciplinary and collective approach so that the students can develop social aptitudes and critical thinking, and at the same promote the opening up of school to society. The design of the optional programs of School Activities is carried out by teachers in cooperation with pupils as well as Coordination Officers of the relevant projects in the Directorates of Education. Their implementation is supported by competent bodies and specialists on a local level. In the school year 2007/08 there were organized in primary education 1 500 programs on environmental education, 3 285 on health education and 2 882 on cultural education.

Essential to the application of effective methods of teaching is the contribution of the school advisors / counsellors of primary education who belong in the Regional Directorates for primary and secondary education. The school advisors collaborate with the teachers for the implementation of supplementary educational support in the subjects of Modern Greek and Mathematics for pupils facing learning difficulties.

### 3.4 Assessment, progression and certification

The assessment of pupils is done by the teacher or teachers for all subjects on the basis of 'Descriptive Evaluation', which gives them the chance to provide accurate and detailed information to pupils and their parents with regard to the results of pupils' efforts at school, their skills and

preferences as well as their weaknesses in certain areas. The teacher of a grade keeps a record, where he registers analytically the descriptive evaluation of pupils. The assessment takes into account four elements: a) Everyday oral assessment and participation in the teaching-learning process and other school activities, b) The results of the pupil's performance on the 'assessment criteria' included in the teaching material, c) The results of tasks and work assigned to the pupil, d) A creative project in the 5th and 6th Grade. The results of the assessment of pupils constitute the topic of discussion in a special meeting of the Teachers' Association. Regarding the assessment of pupils teachers inform the parents or guardians at least once every term. Teachers and parents or guardians hold a discussion about the performance of the students and the learning difficulties that may exist and the 'progress reports' are distributed. In these 'progress titles' for the first and second grade, only the descriptive evaluation is employed. For the third and the fourth grade it is additionally employed the scale of grading: Excellent (A), Very Good (B), Good (C) and Fairly Good (D). For the fifth and the sixth grade it is used the following scale: Excellent (9-10), Very Good (7-8), Good (5-6). Pupils who receive a Fairly Good grade are considered to have learning difficulties and for this type of students the program of Support Teaching is employed.

In primary education pupils pass from one grade to the next if, according to the teacher's judgment, they meet the standards of assessment as they have been defined by the Presidential Decree 8/1995 and as long as they have attended classes for more than half of the teaching year. Repetition of the 3rd or 4th grade occurs if there are more D (Fairly Good) marks among the final average marks for the various subjects and in the 5th and 6th grade, if the general average mark is less than 4.5 (out of 10). In practice, however, a grade is rarely repeated in primary school since regulations provide for an individualized instructional / remedial Programme of Support Teaching for pupils facing serious learning difficulties, as well as for timely communication and cooperation between the teacher, the parents, the school advisor, and the teachers' association.

At the end of each instructional year a 'progress certificate' (*Titlos Proodou*) is awarded to pupils of the 1st through the 5th grades confirming their promotion; and to pupils of the 6th grade, a school-leaving 'Studies Certificate' (*Titlos Spoudon*) required for enrolment in *Gymnasio* (lower secondary school). The school-leaving Studies Certificate includes the pupil's general average of yearly achievement in the 6th grade – as does the 5th grade progress title. All titles are signed by the teacher of the class and the school head.

### **3.5 Guidance and counselling**

Youth Counselling Stations (one in each Directorate of Greece) provide support services to pupils of primary education facing personal, family or social problems. Special care is taken to enlist the families' cooperation and support. At the same time, health education advisors of the primary education Directorates cooperate with the educational community for the implementation of Health Education Programmes, developed by the Pedagogical Institute with a key focus on interpersonal relations and mental health.

In the context of the primary education curriculum, health education themes are incorporated in various subjects and the ability to use knowledge and skills for protecting health on a personal and social level is promoted. In addition, care is taken to deal with the special educational needs of pupils such as special measures for Roma children, programmes for foreign and repatriate pupils and programmes of support teaching of children with learning difficulties, as well as measures, children with disabilities and special education needs within the framework of the general school. (see the introduction of this chapter regarding special primary schools.)

The human-centered orientation of education policy means that within the framework of the general primary school, every effort should be made to integrate all pupils with their distinct characteristics and needs into the class and the school activities. The special measures implemented contribute to

improving the quality of educational provision, as well as to reducing the rate of early school leaving and school failure.

### **3.6 Teachers**

Teachers in primary education are exclusively university graduates and, more specifically, of the Pedagogical departments of primary education established by the Law 1268/1982. Their studies last for four years. The procedure of entrance into the University sector of higher education, their appointment, guidance and in-service training of teachers of primary education is the same as that of the kindergarten teachers (see 2.5).

In primary education a teacher is responsible for all subjects apart from Physical Education, and Music and Foreign Languages, subjects that are taught by teachers of respective specialisation. In the case of Music and Physical Education, if there are no teachers of respective specialisation, then the subjects are taught by the teacher of the class. It is common practice for the same teacher to remain in a class for two years.

## 4. SECONDARY EDUCATION

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Secondary education was established as part of the general education system in the 19th century. Since then, secondary education has been subject to successive legislative reforms, focusing on structure (a single level or divided into two levels, one or more different types in the upper level, examinations or free entrance to the second level, etc.) or curriculum. In particular, these legislative changes have often centered on the system by which secondary school graduates were admitted to higher education.

Secondary education is divided into two cycles: compulsory lower secondary and non-compulsory upper secondary education. Compulsory lower secondary education is provided in *Gymnasia* while non-compulsory upper secondary education includes two types of schools: *Geniko Lykeio* and *Epaggelmatiko Lykeio* (Vocational *Lykeio*). Compulsory vocational education in Greece does not exist. In public schools of secondary education attendance is free of charge. Attendance in *Gymnasia* lasts for 3 years and concerns students of 12 to 15 years of age. In *Esperino Gymnasio* (Evening *Gymnasio*) the age for admission is 14. For admission into the non-compulsory secondary education the completion of compulsory education is a prerequisite. Any other constraint in the age limit does not exist. As a general rule, in day *Lykeio* the age of pupils is 15-18 while at *Esperino Lykeio* (Evening *Lykeio*) pupils should be over 15. The policies implemented into secondary education are also based on the 5 pillars described in the introduction of chapter 3.

In parallel with the mainstream schools of secondary education operate *Esperina Gymnasia* (Evening *Gymnasia*) and *Esperina Genika* and *Epaggelmatika Lykeia* (Evening *Genika Lykeia* and Evening Vocational *Lykeia*). There are also *Epaggelmatikes Scholes* (Vocational Schools) operating during the day only which together with Vocational *Lykeia* make up secondary Vocational Education (Law 3475/2006). In addition operate Ecclesiastic, Minority, Cross-Cultural, *Peiramatika* (Experimental), Music and Special Education *Gymnasia* and *Lykeia*. Other alternative structures in secondary education are the Arts Schools, Sports Facilities Classes, classes in *Gymnasia* and *Lykeia* for students with special education needs and Second Chance Schools.

The aim of Music Schools (*Gymnasia* and *Lykeia*) is to educate and train students who wish to pursue a career in music while providing at the same time a high level of general education should they eventually decide to pursue another academic or professional field. In Music Schools all pupils apart from general education courses attend music education courses. A necessary prerequisite for the student to remain in such a school is to successfully progress to the next grade in compliance with the existing requirements for the schools of general education. Art Schools were established with the aim to encourage and support the interest of pupils in the Arts and prepare young people who wish to pursue a career in Theatre-Cinema, Dance and Visual Arts, while providing at the same time, as Music Schools, a high level of general education should they eventually decide on pursuing another academic or professional field. Curriculum in Art Schools includes General Education and Art Education subjects placing particular emphasis on direction courses. In Ecclesiastic Education Schools attendance is free of charge and pupils follow the same curriculum taught in *Gymnasia* and *Genika Lykeia*. The Ecclesiastic Education Schools aim at educating and training their pupils by equipping them with the values of the Christian Orthodox faith and Orthodox Christianity, such that either as future members of the clergy of the Orthodox Church or as lay persons they are able to contribute to the achievement of the church's aims. In the geographical region of Thrace operate 6 Minority Schools of secondary education for which applies what is mentioned in the introduction of Chapter 3. There are also in operation 12 Schools of Cross-cultural Education, 46 *Peiramatika* Schools as well as Special Education Schools in secondary education (see also introduction of chapter 3). In 184 *Gymnasia* there are Athletic Facilitation Classes and in 44 *Lykeia* Special Athletic Facilitation Classes. In these Classes, the regular Physical Education class is replaced by a two-hour

morning session in selected sports three times a week with training provided by Teachers of Physical Education specializing in those sports. From the school year 1999-2000 began the operation of Second Chance Schools for persons over 18 years of age and have not accomplished compulsory education (see also introduction of chapter 3).

Regarding *Gymnasio*, which constitutes the lower compulsory secondary education, its aim is to promote, in the spirit of the broader purpose of education, the all-around development of the pupils according to their capabilities at this age and the corresponding demands of life. In particular, *Gymnasio* helps pupils:

- To broaden their values (moral, religious, national, humanitarian and other values) so that they can regulate their behaviour to conform to these ethical concepts. To direct their emotional world towards creative goals and humanitarian actions.
- To supplement and combine the acquisition of knowledge with the corresponding social issues.
- To cultivate their use of the language so that they can express their thoughts correctly and clearly both orally and in writing.
- To develop their bodies in a normal way so that they can improve their physical fitness and cultivate their talents and physical skills.
- To become acquainted with the various art forms and create a set of aesthetic criteria, useful for their own cultural expression.
- To realize their abilities, tendencies, skills and interests.
- To acquire the necessary knowledge for various employments and pursue their further improvement through the framework of the cultural, social and economic life, so that they develop harmoniously as persons and future employees, understanding the equal contribution of both intellectual and manual work in social progress and development.

The aim of *Geniko Lykeio* is:

- To provide a high level of general knowledge.
- To develop the students' abilities, initiative, creativity and critical thinking
- To offer the pupils the knowledge and abilities necessary to continue their studies on to the next level of education.
- To cultivate pupils' skills which will, after specialisation or training, facilitate their access to the labour market.

The objective of secondary vocational education is to:

- Develop the pupils' abilities, initiative, creativity and critical thinking
- Transmit the required technical and professional knowledge and development of relevant skills.
- Offer pupils the knowledge and abilities necessary to continue their studies at the next level of education.

The current non-compulsory *geniki* (general) and vocational secondary education has been determined by the Law 3475/2006, which established two types of *Lykeia*: *Genika Lykeia*, and Vocational *Lykeia* together with Vocational Schools.

The basic legislation of secondary education includes the following Laws and Presidential Decrees: 1566/85, 2525/97, 2640/98, 3255/2004, 3475/2006 and the Presidential Decrees 323/2003, 128/2004 and 60/2006.

Statistical data, school year 2007/08

#### Private and Public Schools in Secondary Education, school year 2007/08

	Public Schools	Private Schools
School Units <sup>a</sup>	1 884	110
Students <sup>a</sup>	322 695	18 876
Average Number of Pupils per School	171	172
Teachers <sup>a</sup>	41 907	2 399
Ratio of Pupils to Teachers	7.7	7.87
Average Number of Pupils per Classroom (Section)	21.5	25.3

Source: <sup>a</sup>YPEPTH, Operations Research and Statistics Section, <[http://ypepth.gr/el\\_ec\\_category6641.htm](http://ypepth.gr/el_ec_category6641.htm)>

#### General and Vocational Non-Compulsory Secondary Education, school year 2007/08

	Public		Private	
	General <i>Lykeia</i>	Vocational <i>Lykeia</i> , TEE & Vocational Schools	General <i>Lykeia</i>	Vocational <i>Lykeia</i> , TEE & Vocational Schools
School Units <sup>a</sup>	1 293	927	112	41
Students <sup>a</sup>	224 000	89 986	17 649	967
% female	54 %	35.1 %	49.50 %	41.1 %
Average Number of Pupils per School	173	97	158	24
Teachers <sup>a</sup>	25 394	17 123	2 205	365
Ratio of Pupils to Teachers	8.8	5.26	8	2.65
Average Number of Pupils per Classroom (Section)	21.1	15.1	22.1	13.4

Source: <sup>a</sup>YPEPTH, Operations Research and Statistics Section, <[http://ypepth.gr/el\\_ec\\_category6641.htm](http://ypepth.gr/el_ec_category6641.htm)>

### 4.1 Compulsory Secondary Education (*Gymnasio*)

#### 4.1.1 Admission

Pupils attend the *Gymnasio* in the vicinity of their residence. Registration takes place under the condition that a student has a school-leaving certificate from primary school.

#### 4.1.2 Organisation of time, groups and venue

The organization of school time at *Gymnasia* is regulated centrally by Ministry circulars. The school year at *Gymnasia* starts on September 1st and ends on August 31st. The teaching year starts on September the 11th and ends on June 30th. The holidays of Christmas and Easter last for four weeks. Summer holidays for pupils last from July 1st until September the 10th. Each teaching period

lasts from 40 to 50 minutes. There are 35 teaching periods per week. *Esperino Gymnasio* starts its programme at 19:20 pm till 22:50 pm.

In the event of programmes of Remedial and Support Teaching (at Gymnasia of all types – participation is optional) the teaching time is extended by a period of time proportional to the number of subjects selected by the pupil and the corresponding teaching hours.

The pupil registration age at the first (A') grade – except for instances when a pupil had to repeat a year – is 12 years old. As regards *Esperina* (Evening) *Gymnasio*, the minimum age is 14 years. Each grade consists of one or more classes or sections, depending on the number of pupils. The number of pupils in every class/section should not exceed 30. Gymnasia are mixed-sex schools.

#### **4.1.3 Curriculum**

The curricula and timetable of Gymnasia are drawn up by the Pedagogical Institute and submitted to the Ministry of Education Lifelong Learning and Religious Affairs for approval. The observance of curriculum is compulsory for teachers. The Pedagogical Institute evaluates the school books based on the approved curricula of Gymnasia and again makes a proposal to the Ministry for approval. Teachers do not have the option of choosing among different school books. Curricula and the writing of school books are based on the Cross-Thematic Curriculum Framework (see also 3.3). In the beginning of each teaching year the Pedagogical Institute sends directions to the teachers indicating the method and teaching aids for all subjects.

The subjects taught in all grades of day Gymnasia are: Religious Education, Ancient Greek Language and Literature, Modern Greek Language and Literature, History, English, French or German or Italian, Mathematics, Physical Education, Music, Arts, Computer Science. During the first two grades are also taught Geography, Home Economics and Technology. In the final two grades are also taught Physics and Chemistry. In the third grade we have School Vocational Guidance and Civics and Social Studies. The subject of Biology is taught in the first and the third grade. In the curriculum of *Esperina* (Evening) Gymnasia there are not included French or German or Italian, Physical Education, Music, Arts, Home Economics, Technology and School Vocational Guidance. Furthermore, there is a slight differentiation concerning the hours in the timetable of the common subjects in day and evening Gymnasia.

Apart from the subject of the English Language taught on two different levels (beginners – advanced) per grade (the levels are determined by the degree of linguistic ability of pupils), pupils attend a common program for all subjects without differentiations. In order to support the educational level of pupils and confront school drop out, social exclusion and social inequality at Gymnasia there are programs of Remedial and Support Teaching especially for pupils facing learning difficulties. Participation of pupils is optional.

Parallel to the national cross-thematic curriculum, innovative actions and themes have also been introduced such as Health Education, Youth Entrepreneurship, Environmental Education, Flexible Zone of Innovative Actions, School Vocational Guidance, Olympic Education and the program 'Kallipatira' (a program which focuses on the contribution of Physical Education to the issue of equity within the Greek society).

Teaching takes place via traditional and contemporary teaching aids, as appropriate. School Libraries are a main area for implementing the above at Gymnasia. School Libraries implement innovative educational actions that aim on the one hand to increase pupils' critical thinking skills and on the other to provide teachers with the means for getting familiar with and incorporating new methodologies in the instructional process. School Libraries accommodate drama activities, music concerts, poetry and painting competitions Educational Television film projections as well as lectures by intellectuals. They also publish magazines and CD ROMs with the work of pupils produced in the context of their coursework and school activities. They periodically organize special events dedicated to themes from

literature, art and science. The activities of the heads of the School Libraries also include implementing innovative ideas such as the use of portable museum exhibits or educational games; as well as developing cooperation with various agents such as the Pedagogical Institute, educational television, the National Book Centre of Greece and the Organisation for Child and Adolescent Books.

#### 4.1.4 Assessment, progression and certification

Based on the Presidential Decree 409/1994 pupil assessment is regarded as an on-going pedagogical process which makes it possible to follow the pupil's learning progress, to determine its final results and to evaluate the different aspects of the pupil's personality as related to the school's task. The purpose is to continually improve the teaching process and more generally the operation of the school, as well as to inform teachers and pupils about the results of their efforts, in such a way as to achieve the best possible learning results. Assessment does not only refer to the pupil's performance in the various courses but also to other features, such as: effort, interest, initiative, creativity, cooperation with other persons and respect towards the rules of the school.

Student assessment is based on:

- Day to day oral examination and the pupil's total participation in the teaching-learning process.
- Short written tests.
- Hour-long compulsory written tests which are given without notice in each of the first two three-month terms, and cover the material of a broader teaching unit under the condition that relative revision has preceded the test.
- The assignments done by the pupils at school or at home, as part of their daily obligations that contribute to the learning process.
- The composite creative projects undertaken by the pupil either alone or in cooperation with classmates, on a subject of his/her choice and under the guidance of the teacher.
- Written review examinations at the end of the year are held right after classes finish, for all subjects except for Physical Education, Music, Household Economics, Technology, Art and School Vocational Guidance and also Information Technology in the first two *Gymnasio* grades.

The material on which the pupils are examined on the finals for each subject is specified as 3/5 of the material taught, providing that it is not less than half of the total curriculum material. The mark assigned to the pupil's performance in each review examination is calculated as  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the sum total of the three (3) term marks plus the mark received in the written final examination in June. In subjects that have no written final review examination, the yearly mark is calculated as  $\frac{1}{3}$  of the sum total of the three (3) term marks. In subjects taught for half the school year, the annual performance mark is based on  $\frac{1}{3}$  of the sum total of the two three-month term marks plus the mark on the written examinations. The annual mark for subjects that have branches constitutes the average of the final marks per branch.

In *Gymnasio* subjects are distinguished into two groups (A and B) regarding promotion and graduation of pupils. Group B includes the subjects: Physical Education, Music-Art, Home Economics, Technology and School Vocational Guidance. Group A includes all other subjects.

Pupils can be promoted or graduate in the following instances:

- When they have an annual general mark of at least ten (10) in each subject of groups A and B.

- When pupils have a mark of less than 10 in 1 up to 4 subjects of the B group and an overall average mark in both groups of at least a full 10.
- When they have a mark of less than 10 in up to four subjects of the A group but have an average overall mark of at least 13 in all subjects in the A group;
- When their mark is less than 10 in from 1 up to 4 subjects of groups A and B and the conditions outlined above in (ii) and (iii) for the subjects in each group apply.

Pupils may sit for a written and oral supplementary examination in September in as many subjects as they have failed to receive a passing mark of 10. This is the case when they have failed up to four (4) subjects and do not fulfil the conditions outlined above. Pupils who do not fall into any of these categories (i.e. promotion or supplementary examinations) are not considered eligible for promotion or graduation, in which case they must repeat the same grade.

Pupils in the last year of lower secondary school, not found eligible for a leaving certificate or for writing supplemental examinations, are permitted to repeat the examinations during the examination periods anticipated by the provisions in effect for each school year, with the exception of the June period in the year in which they attended this grade. This procedure can be followed until the student who has finished *Gymnasio* acquires his or her school-leaving certificate since the student is under no obligation to re-attend the 3rd grade. Pupils who have not exceeded the permitted number of absences from school have the right to take part in the June examinations.

Pupils who graduate from *Gymnasio* are given a diploma entitled School-Leaving Certificate issued by the school unit where the pupil graduated. There are no school leaving exams in the final grade of *Gymnasio*. Having obtained the diploma pupils can further proceed and register in a Geniko or Vocational *Lykeio* or attend the Apprenticeship Schools of Manpower Employment Organization (OAED) or the Vocational Training Institutes in fields corresponding to pupils' Diploma. School Leaving Certificates issued by private educational institutions are certified by the secondary education director or the head of Secondary Education Office.

#### **4.1.5 Guidance and counselling**

For teachers educational guidance and assistance is provided by the Pedagogical Institute and the secondary school counsellors/advisers. The Class Council resolves educational and pedagogical issues arising in a grade or class. The Youth Counselling Stations (see 3.5) are addressed to Lower secondary education pupils as well.

The *Gymnasio* curriculum includes School Vocational Orientation at primarily an informational and theoretical level but also incorporating activities such as visits to work-places, organization of Career Days in the school units and implementation of special Career Education programmes.

#### **4.1.6 Teachers and trainers**

Teachers at Gymnasia offer instruction exclusively on the subject of their specialization. They are University graduates of departments relative to the subject they teach. Their studies last for 4 years. The admission procedure to the University sector of higher education, the appointment, the guidance and in-service training of teaching staff of Gymnasia are organised in the same way as the one applying to kindergarten teachers and teachers of primary schools (see 2.5 and 3.6).

## **4.2 General non-compulsory Secondary Education (*Geniko Lykeio*)**

### **4.2.1 Admission**

Holders of a school-leaving certificate from a *Gymnasio* (lower secondary school) may register in a *Geniko Lykeio* (general upper secondary school), without entry exams or other limitations. To register

in an *Esperino* (evening) *Geniko Lykeio*, apart from the School leaving Certificate, a document attesting that the pupil works during the day is required – the same holds for *Esperino Vocational Lykeio*.

#### **4.2.2 Organisation of time, groups and venue**

Each grade in *Geniko Lykeio* consists of one or more classes or sections, depending on the number of pupils. The number of pupils in every class should not exceed 30. The organization of school year, the weekly and daily timetable is the same as Gymnasia (see 4.1.2). Instead of the program of Remedial and Support Teaching existing in Gymnasia, in all types of *Lykeia* may operate the program of Supplementary Support Teaching free of any charge serving the same goal (in this case the schedule is extended accordingly).

#### **4.2.3 Curriculum**

The aforementioned in paragraph 4.1.3 regarding the timetable, the school books, the innovative actions and the School Library apply to *Geniko Lykeio* as well.

In the 1st Grade of *Geniko Lykeio*, which is an orientation year, general knowledge subjects are taught over a total of 32 instructional hours per week, as well as elective subjects from which the pupil is obliged to select 1 subject for 2 instructional hours per week.

Subjects in the 2nd grade of *Geniko Lykeio* are divided into 2 categories: General knowledge subjects and Direction/Pathway subjects. The general knowledge subjects are taught for a total of 25 hours a week in the 2nd Grade and 17 hours in the 3rd Grade. The Direction subjects are divided into: a) compulsory subjects for all pupils and b) elective subjects. Compulsory Direction subjects are taught for a total of 7 to 8 instructional hours a week in the 2nd Grade and 12 in the 3rd Grade. Pupils also select 2 Direction electives in the 2nd Grade and 1 elective in the 3rd Grade. In the 3rd grade of *Geniko Lykeio*, the Technology Direction is divided into 2 courses: the Technology and Production course and the Information Science and Services course.

The weekly timetable of day General *Lykeia* is the following:

<b>SUBJECTS</b>	<b>A' GRADE</b>	<b>B' GRADE</b>	<b>C' GRADE</b>
<b>GENERAL EDUCATION</b>	<b>HOURS</b>	<b>HOURS</b>	<b>HOURS</b>
Religion	2	2	1
Ancient Greek Language and Literature	6	2	1
Greek Language	2	2	2
Modern Greek Literature	2	2	2
History	2	2	2
Algebra	2	2	
Geometry	3/2	2	
Physics	2/3	2	1
Chemistry	2	2	
1st Foreign language*	3	2	2
Economic Principles	2		
Technology	2		
Physical Education	2/1	2	1
School Vocational Orientation	-/1		
Biology		1	1
Introduction to Law and Civil Institutions		2	
Mathematics and Elements of Statistics			2
Sociology			2
<b>ELECTIVE SUBJECTS**</b>			
2 <sup>nd</sup> Foreign language ***	2	2	2
European Civilization and its roots	2		
Information Science Applications	2		2
Computer Applications		2	2
Software Applications			2
Aesthetic Studies (Theatre, Music and Visual Art)	2		
Psychology	2		
Social and Political organization in Ancient Greece		2	
Principles of Environmental Sciences		2	
Modern European Literature: History and Texts		2	
Astronomy and Space Studies		2	
Linear Design		2	
Freehand Design		2	
Technical Design		2	2
Architectural Design			2
History of Social Sciences		2	
History issues		2	
Biology		2	
Natural Resources Management		2	
Chemistry		2	
Principles of Economic Theory			2
Statistics			2
Logic: Theory and Practice			2
History of Art			2
History of Science and Technology			2

Philosophic Problems			2	
Modern Greek Literature			2	
Technology and Development			2	
Elements of Agronomy and Agricultural Development			2	
Industrial Production and Energy			2	
Principles of Accounting			2	
Technology of Computer and Operating Systems			2	
Multimedia and Networks			2	
<b>DIRECTION SUBJECTS</b>				
<b>Theoretic Direction</b>	Ancient Greek Texts		4	5
	Modern Greek Literature			3/2
	History			2
	Latin		2	2/3
	Principles of Philosophy		2	
<b>Science Direction</b>	Mathematics		3	5
	Physics		2	3
	Chemistry		2	2
	Biology			2
<b>Technology Direction</b>	Mathematics		3	
	Physics		2	
	Communication Technology		2	
<b>Technology Direction</b> -Technology and Production Course	Mathematics			5
	Physics			3
	Chemistry and Biochemistry			2
	Electrical Elements			2
<b>Technology Direction</b> – Information Science and Services Course	Mathematics			5
	Physics			3
	Applications Development and Programming			2
	Principles of Organisation, Business Administration and Services			2

\*Pupils may take English, French or German as their 1st Foreign Language – which they have already chosen as their 1st Foreign Language in Gymnasium. In order for classes to be formed, there must be at least 12 students requesting the language, or at least 8 students in the case of schools in island areas.

\*\*Pupils select one elective in Grade A', regardless of Direction, and two electives in Grade B' according to Direction.

\*\*As their elective 2nd Foreign Language pupils may take English, French or German.

In *Esperino Geniko Lykeio* (Evening General Upper secondary School) there are four grades. The 1st and 2nd grades of *Esperino Geniko Lykeio* constitute orientation classes and general knowledge subjects are for a total of 21 instructional hours (teaching periods) per week, as well as one elective subject for 2 hours per week. The courses of the 3rd and 4th Grades of the *Esperino Geniko Lykeio* are divided into General knowledge subjects and Direction subjects – as in the day General *Lykeio*. In the 3rd grade General Knowledge subjects are taught for a total of eighteen (18) instructional hours a week and in the 4th Grade for 12 hours. The number of instructional hours for Compulsory Direction subjects varies between 7 hours and 8 hours a week for the 3rd grade of *Esperino Lykeio* depending on the Direction and 12 instructional hours for the 4th class. The 3rd grade of *Esperino Lykeio* does not include elective subjects. In the 4th grade students may opt to take 'Principles of Economic

Theory' which is taught for 2 hours weekly. The 3rd grade of *Esperino Geniko Lykeio* corresponds to the 2nd grade of Day *Lykeio*, while the 4th grade of the first corresponds to the 3rd of the latter.

#### 4.2.4 Assessment, progression and certification

The assessment of pupils in the *Geniko Lykeio* is regarded as an integral part of the teaching process and its aim is to define the degree to which the teaching goals and those of the curriculum have been achieved. An effort is made to apply a variety of assessment methods and techniques, so as to arrive at a valid, reliable, objective and accurate assessment of pupils' knowledge, their critical ability and skills. Its ultimate purpose is to foster the pupils' self-knowledge, to keep pupils and guardians fully informed and to enable teachers to draw conclusions about the results of their efforts and provide feedback for the teaching process. Within this framework, pupils are evaluated on the basis of:

- Their participation in daily classroom work and their overall activity at school.
- Their performance on written tests during the two four-month terms of the school year.
- Their composite creative projects.
- Their individual file (keeping such files is optional for the school).

The school year has two four-month terms. The first term lasts from 11th September until 20th January, and the second term from 21st January to 16th May.

The subjects in the 1st grade fall into 3 groups: a) the 1st group includes all General knowledge subjects which require written examinations, b) the 2nd group includes all Elective subjects which require written examinations, c) the 3rd group includes all Subjects which do not require written examinations; i.e. Aesthetic Education, Physical Education, Computer Applications and School Vocational Guidance.

The subjects in the 2nd and 3rd grades fall into 4 groups: a) the 1st group includes all General knowledge subjects which require written examinations, b) the 2nd group includes all Direction subjects which require written examinations, c) the 3rd group includes all Elective subjects which require written examinations for promotion and graduation and their mark is taken into account when calculating the General Grade Average, d) the 4th group includes all Subjects that do not require written examinations. These are Physical Education, Computer Applications, Software Applications, and Multimedia Networks.

The marking scale for pupils' performance is from 0 to 20 as follows: Poor (0 – 5), Inadequately (5.1 – 9.4), Average (9.5 – 13), Good (13.1 – 16), Very Good (16.1 – 18), and Excellent (18.1 – 20).

The following forms of assessment are applied:

- Diagnostic assessment. This is carried out at the beginning of the school year in the Greek language (Ancient Greek Language and Literature – Modern Greek Literature), Mathematics (Algebra – Geometry), Physics, Chemistry and Foreign Languages. The main purpose of diagnostic evaluation is to determine the pupils' level of knowledge so as to adjust the teaching programme accordingly. Diagnostic procedures are not taken into account in evaluating a pupil's performance. Diagnostic assessment is compulsory for the first grade and optional for the second and third grades.
- Procedures for determining the oral mark. To evaluate this parameter for the term, the following factors are taken into account: a) Pupils' participation in the teaching-learning process, b) Pupils' diligence and interest in the particular subject, c) The assignments done at home or in class, and d) Pupils' performance on short or hour-long written tests in class.

- The file of performance and activities.
- Composite creative projects. These projects can be either group or individual work and seek to develop the pupils' creativity and exploratory spirit. Performance on these projects is considered only positively in the teacher's total assessment of the pupil.
- Assignments and activities that make up the pupils' optional performance and activity file. These are assignments carried out over and above the compulsory school assignments, reports on school activities, self-evaluating questionnaires etc.
- Written examinations for promotion or graduation. These examinations for pupils in the 1st and 2nd grade are based on questions set by the teachers at the school level. For the pupils in the third grade for certain General knowledge subjects, the examinations are based on questions set at school level by the teachers. For the rest of the General knowledge subjects and all the Direction subjects, the questions are set by an external nationwide examination committee and are graded by two markers in marking centres at the prefectural level.

For pupils to be promoted and to receive a school-leaving certificate an Average General Mark of nine point five (9.5) is compulsory; this is calculated on the total of the marks for all subjects requiring final written examinations (taking into consideration the oral marks) whether they are examined internally at the school level or externally at the national level – in the 3rd and final grade of *Lykeio*. If the above condition is not met, the pupils are not promoted or do not receive a leaving certificate. In this case, pupils in the 1st and the 2nd grades may resit examinations in September for all the subjects in which they did not obtain a passing mark. If, even then they do not receive a passing mark, they must repeat the class. Pupils in the 3rd grade can either repeat the 3rd grade or retain their term marks and re-sit the written certificate examinations the following June in all the subjects. Pupils who graduate from a *geniko lykeio* are given an upper secondary school-leaving certificate entitled *Apolytirio Genikou Lykeiou*. School-leaving certificated pupils may a) try to enter in higher education, b) After a procedure of selection by the institutes, attend a Vocational Training Institute or c) enter labour market without vocational specialization.

#### **4.2.5 Guidance and counselling**

Offering counselling services to pupils there are the institution of School Vocational Orientation and the Secondary education Graduate Observatory. Youth Counselling Stations (see 3.5) are related to general upper secondary education pupils as well (see also 4.1.5).

#### **4.2.6 Teachers and trainers**

For general upper secondary education teachers applies what is mentioned in paragraph 4.1.6.

### **4.3 Vocational Non-compulsory Secondary Education (Vocational *Lykeio* & Vocational School)**

#### **4.3.1 Admission**

Registration in the 1st grade of Vocational *Lykeio* (EPAL) takes place without examinations, once pupils submit the leaving certificate from a *gymnasio* (lower secondary school) or an equivalent foreign certificate. Pupils are registered in the school unit nearest to their place of residence given that all modules of all 3 cycles are offered – each pupil except for the general education modules selects a cycle of similar professional sectors – as stipulated by the provisions of the respective ministerial decision. To the contrary, regarding the 2nd and 3rd grade, where in addition to the common core of general education modules, there are also modules of professional sectors and specialties, pupils enrol in a school that he/she selects based on his/her preferences among the courses provided – since not all vocational specializations are taught at all school units.

In the case of Vocational Schools (EPAS) registration is independent of vicinity. Students enrol based on preference for courses provided. The specialisations offered by the EPAS depend on the demand of pupils and the socioeconomic conditions and needs of each area. Pupils who have successfully completed the 1st grade/year of either Vocational or General *Lykeia* may subsequently enrol in the 1st grade/year of EPAS.

#### 4.3.2 Organisation of time, groups and venue

EPAL (Vocational *Lykeia*) are attended by pupils who are fifteen (15) years old and over. EPAS (Vocational School) pupils are 16 years old and over (having completed the first year/grade of a *Lykeio*), Evening EPAL are exclusively attended by pupils that are employed. Pupils may not exceed twenty five (25) in EPAL and EPAS classes.

The organization of School year and weekly as well as daily timetable is the same as the one at Gymnasia and *Genika Lykeia* (see paragraphs 4.1.2 and 4.2.2). In Vocational *Lykeio* and Vocational School the free of any charge Supplementary Support Teaching operates for both general education and vocational specialization subjects (in this case the schedule is extended accordingly).

#### 4.3.3 Curriculum

What is mentioned in paragraphs 4.1.3 regarding the curriculum, the school books, the innovative educational actions and the School Libraries applies to Vocational *Lykeio* and Vocational School as well. In Vocational *Lykeio*, as in *Geniko Lykeio*, operates the program of Supplementary Support Teaching.

The subjects in *Epagelmatiko Lykeio* are distinguished into general education subjects and Technical-vocational education subjects, the latter including theoretical, workshop, design and combined (theory and workshop) subjects, for a total of 35 instructional hours per week. The timetable of the general education subjects of day Vocational *Lykeio* is the following:

COMPULSORY SUBJECTS	1 <sup>ST</sup> GRADE	2 <sup>ND</sup> GRADE	3 <sup>RD</sup> GRADE
	HOURS	HOURS	HOURS
Religion	2	1	
Modern Greek Literature	5	3	2
History	2	1	
Algebra	3/2	2	5
Geometry	2/3	1	
Physics	3	3	3
Chemistry	2	1	
Foreign Language	3	2	
Principles of Economics	2		
Physical Education	2	1	
Science & Technology Direction Mathematics		2	
ELECTIVES	1 <sup>ST</sup> GRADE	2 <sup>ND</sup> GRADE	3 <sup>RD</sup> GRADE
	HOURS	HOURS	HOURS
Modern Greek History			2
Principles of Economic Theory			2
Mathematics and Elements of Statistics			2
Biology I			2
Biology II			2
Natural Resources Management			2

The subjects offered in Vocational Schools (EPAS) correspond to the occupational specialization selected by pupils.

Four independent grades operate in Evening Vocational *Lykeio*. The 1st grade corresponds to the 1<sup>st</sup> grade of Day *Lykeio*, the 2nd grade of *Esperino Lykeio* to the 2nd grade of Day *Lykeio*, while the 3rd and 4th grades of *Esperino Lykeio* to the 3rd grade of Day *Lykeio*. For the 1st grade of Evening Vocational *Lykeio* 18 instructional hours of general knowledge subjects and 7 instructional hours of vocational subjects are provided. For the 2nd grade 10 hours of general knowledge subjects and 13 hours of vocational subjects; for the 3rd grade, 7 hours of general knowledge subjects and 15 of vocational subjects; while for the 4th grade, 12 hours of general knowledge subjects and 13 hours of Vocational specialization subjects.

#### **4.3.4 Assessment, progression and certification**

What is mentioned regarding the general principles and types of assessment, the distinction of teaching year and the marking scale in *Geniko Lykeio* (see 4.2.4) applies to Vocational *Lykeio* as well. Yet additional evaluation methods are applied regarding the results of pupils in Laboratory subjects.

Each term a unified grade is set down for every subject (also during the estimation of the average grade). Mixed subjects of theoretical, laboratory and drawing content are assessed and graded separately for each part of them. The grade for these subjects is the average grade of the theoretical, laboratory and drawing part (there is only one grade). Subjects which have two or more cognitive themes are examined and graded for each cognitive part. As a final grade is set down the average grade coming up from the individual cognitive themes.

For pupils to be promoted and to receive a school-leaving certificate an average general mark of nine and a half (9.5) is compulsory; this is calculated based on the total of the marks for subjects requiring written examinations, after taking into consideration the oral mark. In the case where pupils are not promoted or do not receive a school leaving certificate they may re-take examinations in September of the following school year, for all the subjects in which they did not receive a passing mark.

Graduates of Vocational *Lykeia* are granted a School Leaving Certificate equal to that of the General *Lykeio*. The School Leaving Certificate Mark is the General Average Mark of the subjects of the last grade (3rd for the Day and 4th for Evening schools). The School Leaving Certificate is issued by the school unit the pupil graduated from and may not change. It also lists the field, the specialization and the marks obtained in the subjects of the last grade. School-leaving certificated pupils may a) acquire a license for practicing their profession after examination, b) try to enter in higher education, c) after a procedure of selection by the institutes, attend a Vocational Training Institute in a corresponding to their previous studies field.

Graduates of Vocational Schools are granted a level 3 Vocational Title. This title lists the average of final marks obtained in all the subjects of the last year (year two) as well as the vocational specialization course attended by the pupil. Titles are issued once a year and may not change. School-leaving certificated pupils may a) acquire a license for practicing their profession, b) enrol into grade B of Vocational *Lykeio* or c) after a procedure of selection by the institutes, attend a Vocational Training Institute in a corresponding to their previous studies field.

#### **4.3.5 Guidance and counselling**

Regarding guidance services to students, there has been established the Observatory of Graduates from Secondary Education. The Counselling Youth Centres (see 3.5) also address themselves to the students of Vocational *Lykeia* and Vocational Schools (see also 4.1.5).

#### 4.3.6 Teachers and trainers

Teachers in Vocational *Lykeia* may be University or Technological Education Institutes (TEI) graduates. Their studies last for 4 years. TEI graduates teach technical subjects and get one-year teacher training from the School of Pedagogical and Technological Education (ASPATE). For some specializations these teachers may have attended 4 year studies in ASPATE which has been incorporated in the Technological sector of higher education. A number of teachers of technical or laboratory subjects may be graduates of non-tertiary education (Refrigerationists, Electricians etc.). What is mentioned about the appointment of teachers in primary and the rest of secondary education applies to the teachers of vocational non-compulsory secondary education (see 3.6, 4.1.6, 4.2.6). Their in- service training is organized in the same way as it is for all other teachers (see 2.5).

## 5. POST-SECONDARY NON-TERTIARY EDUCATION

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Post-secondary non-tertiary education in Greece is mainly organised around, and implemented through, the operation of Vocational Training Institutes (I.E.K.) which are post-secondary education institutions providing formal initial and further vocational education and training. IEK graduates can receive a Certificate or a Diploma of Vocational Training equivalent to that of the Vocational Lyceum (EPAL) with professional rights enabling access to the labour market in both the public and the private sectors.

The Ministry of Education supervises formal vocational education and training via the National System of Vocational Education and Training (ΕΣΕΕΚ/ΕΣΕΕΚ) that was established by Law 2009/1992. Its main tasks are the following:

- Organisation, development and provision of vocational training
- Formal certification of vocational training – Enhancement of vocational training within the educational system.
- Implementation of vocational training programmes and fulfilment of any other similar objective.

The Organisation for Vocational Education and Training (OEEK) (a legal entity under public law) was established in order to attain the objectives of the ΕΣΕΕΚ/ΕΣΕΕΚ. This Organisation is independent in administrative and financial matters and is supervised by the Education Ministry. Its objectives are:

- The organisation and operation of public Vocational Training Institutes falling under the competence of the Ministry
- The supervision of private IEK;
- The implementation of the objectives of the National Vocational Education and Training System

At present, one hundred and fourteen (114) public IEKs operate throughout the country. Along with the public IEKs, there are also fifty three (53) private IEKs operating in the country. The objective of the said institutions is to provide vocational training, whether initial or supplementary / further; to ensure the acquisition of relevant qualifications on the part of trainees through the provision of scientific, technical, vocational and practical knowledge; and to facilitate the acquisition of socially and professionally useful skills so as to ensure their graduates' professional integration and their adaptation to the ever-changing needs of the labour market. The IEK constitute the main means to achieve the aims set by the Vocational Education and Training Organisation (OEEK).

Vocational Training Institutes (IEK) fall under post-compulsory secondary education and offer formal yet 'unclassified' education since they enrol both graduates from lower secondary schools and graduates from all types of upper secondary schools, according to the specialties offered. General Lyceum graduates attending them receive initial training, which gives them the possibility to acquire all necessary skills in order to be integrated in the labour market whereas Vocational Lyceum graduates have the opportunity to supplement their professional knowledge and receive further training. The duration of training depends on the specialty field chosen by the candidate trainee and on the previous title possessed and varies from 1 to 4 semesters. Each training year is made up of two (2) independent semesters, the winter and spring semester, whereas the duration of each semester is fourteen (14) full training weeks.

It is possible for other ministries or legal entities of public law to establish IEK, bearing the responsibility for their organisation and operation by joint decision of the competent Minister and the

Minister of Finance. In any case, the definition of the specifications and the approval of the IEK curriculum transpire upon decision of the Minister of Education. There are also some IEK under the supervision of other ministries and bodies, such as the Greek Manpower Employment Organisation / OAED), which operates 28 IEK. There are IEK which belong in the National Centre for Immediate Help (EKAB), which is supervised by the Ministry of Health and Welfare, IEK which belong in the Organisation for Tourism Education and Training / OTEK) of the Ministry of Tourism. For all the above OEEK determines the specifications and approves curricula of formal vocational training, provided by other bodies that are not immediately supervised by the Education Ministry.

The main target group consists of adults aged 18+ who do not wish to continue their studies in higher education institutions or technological education institutes, but need to obtain IVET so as to enter the labour market equipped with the necessary qualifications. IEK also offer further specialist training to EPAL (vocational lyceum) and EPAS (vocational lower secondary schools) graduates in their area of specialisation. They are also suitable for more mature people who want to upgrade their skills and adapt to the changing needs of the employment world.

For upper secondary school (*Geniko Lykeio*) graduates training lasts for four semesters with the exception of EPAL and EPAS graduates who attend a specialty relevant to the one they studied in EPAL and EPAS, and in that case have to attend the relevant courses for two semesters.

The basic requirement for entering full-time post-secondary vocational training at an IEK is to hold an upper secondary education certificate (*Geniko Lykeio*) or an EPAL or EPAS certificate. There are also some post-lower secondary specialisations that accept people who have completed Lower Secondary Education (*Gymnasio*). Moreover, admission to public IEKs is based on criteria primarily relating to the average grade in the school leaving certificate, and age, professional experience in the area of expertise and socio-economic conditions. Private institutions are self-funded. The fees charged by the private IEKs vary and are adjusted each year in accordance with the regulations in force.

Trainees attend compulsory theoretical, laboratory and mixed lessons on the basis of the educational curricula, which cover a wide range of disciplines and specialisations. A total of roughly 200 specialisations (which are taught at the Vocational Training Institutes fall into 14 distinct fields). These fields are: Information technology – telecommunications – networks, Financial and administration services, Food and drink, Transport and tourism, Electronics – electrics – engineering, Construction, Industrial chemistry, Applied arts, Energy – environment, Health – cosmetics – social services, Communications and mass media, Clothing and footwear, Culture and sport, Agriculture. The subjects taught place emphasis on specialisation rather than broader occupational skills. They can be theoretical or based on workshops.

The trainees are assessed during the semester in the form of progress tests; final examinations are taken at the end of the semester. OEEK holds nationwide examinations twice a year, which include theoretical and practical tests. Before taking the qualifying examinations for the vocational training certificate, graduates of public and private IEK may attend an optional six-month practical training course which is considered as a recognised period of service for obtaining a licence to exercise an occupation. This training is provided by the public sector or by private firms and is supervised by a coordinator who is appointed by OEEK.

Trainees who successfully complete their training at public and private Vocational Training Institutes are awarded a Vocational Training Certificate, which entitles them to take part in the final certification examinations. The Vocational Training Diploma is recognised both in Greece and in the other E.U. member states and is a prerequisite for obtaining a licence to exercise a profession in the relevant specialisations. OEEK has regulated the professional rights of IEK graduates in 60 specialties in collaboration with the competent Ministries and is in the process of promoting the professional rights of 52 specialties. OEEK in conjunction with the aforementioned ministries also issue vocational training

diplomas, which are recognised as a formal qualification at the public sector. In particular, pursuant to Presidential Decrees 50/2001, and its amendments 347/2003 (Official Journal 115/A/31-12-2003, circular F/13/1873, annex c), Presidential Decree 44/2005 (Official Journal 63/A/9-03-2005), Presidential Decree 116/2006 (Official Journal 115/A/9-06-2006), Presidential Decree 146/2007 (Official Journal 185/A/3-08-2007), the diploma of vocational education and training is a qualification for getting a job in the public sector. Moreover, holders of a diploma issued by OEEK are given an extra of 150 points according to Law 3051/2002, article 8 (Official Journal 220/A/20-09-02).

There is no direct access to tertiary education and OEEK graduates can enter Higher Education (AEI, *Anotata Ekpaideftika Idrimata* and ATEI, *Anotato Technologiko Ekpaideftiko Idryma*), only by sitting national level examinations.

The number of trainees in the public Vocational Training Institutes (IEK) amounts to about 20 000 individuals annually, while in the private IEK the number is approximately 12 000.

At the same time, private institutions offering services at post-secondary level ('colleges') are classified as belonging in the informal post-secondary education and training realm according to the relevant Law 3696/2008. For their establishment and operation, licenses are required that are granted by the Ministry of Education Lifelong Learning and Religious Affairs while the study or other certificates they provide are not academically equal to those granted within the framework of the Greek post-secondary system of formal education, (e.g. Universities, Technological Education Institutes and the above mentioned I.E.K). The provisions governing the establishment and operation of Colleges are stipulated in Law 3696/2008.

Finally, with regard to apprenticeship options, the Vocational Education and Training Organisation / OEEK provides six-month optional apprenticeship programmes for graduates of public and private IEK in order to constantly adapt the initial vocational training system to the needs of production and development at both local and national levels and render the system compatible with the needs of the labour market. IEK graduates who have not yet sat examinations for vocational training certification are entitled to take a six-month apprenticeship. The time spent on this apprenticeship is recognised as prior experience for granting a license to practice a trade. The apprenticeship, supervised by a coordinator, may take place in the public sector, in legal entities of public or private law, or in private companies. Apprenticeship is a measure that aims to help graduates get job positions corresponding to their qualifications, reduce unemployment and improve the quality of the provided services.

According to the Organisation for Vocational Education and Training (OEEK) in 2007 there were in total 114 public and 53 private IEKs.

## **5.1 Admission**

Adults possessing at least a lower secondary school certificate can study at an IEK. The procedure for selecting trainees to register for the 1st semester in state IEK takes place twice a year: early in September for the winter semester and end of January for the spring semester. Students are selected for state IEK through a point system based on the following criteria: 1) school leaving certificate mark, 2) age, 3) work experience in relevant area and 4) child of a large family (socio-economic criteria).

## **5.2 Organisation of time, groups and venue**

Training programmes include the following courses: theoretical, aiming at the trainees acquiring the necessary understanding of the knowledge base of their field, applied workshops, aiming at consolidating the theoretical part of their training and mixed courses that promote theoretical understanding concurrently with the practical acquisition of skills. Attendance is compulsory for all subjects. The language of instruction is Greek while foreign languages (English, French, German or Italian) with the correspondent terminology per specialisation are also on offer.

Teaching at state IEK mainly takes place in the evening and the instructional hour for all courses is forty-five (45) minutes. Workshop courses or the workshop part of mixed courses may continue uninterrupted for up to three instructional (3) hours.

### 5.3 Curriculum

The curricula of the *Instituta Epagelmatikis Katartissis* (IEK) include both theoretical and practical components and accrue on new methods and a new conception of skills that broaden the occupational options of adult students. The determination of the curriculum (both in regard to state and private institutions) is largely the responsibility of OEEK. Course offerings are the result of a continuous process of consultation with social partners and are based on the recommendations of the Tripartite Consultative Committees of OEEK (the Organisation for Vocational Education and Training), comprised of representatives of OEEK, employers and employees, that take into account regional labour market needs and trends.

Teaching is based on vocational specialization, while each specialization provides its own particular and inclusive range of subjects organized in a weekly instructional schedule. The various specialties of the same sector offer their own special and complete cycle of courses organized on the basis of specific teaching hours per week. In terms of both content and form, the teaching method seeks to provide up to date and quality training with a modern approach that combines theoretical presentation with workshop practice. The apprenticeship of trainees in relevant work environments is part of the IEK programme. Visits to enterprises are encouraged as a means to help trainees appreciate the realities of the workplace such that they assimilate and transform theoretical knowledge in a way that facilitates their professional development.

During the last two semesters when mainly specialisation subjects are taught, instructional approaches rely on innovative methods (Internet teaching, tele-learning, simulation, case studies, role playing, etc) while workshop and mixed courses are taught in well equipped IEK workshops so as to strengthen the technical training component.

### 5.4 Assessment, progression and certification

Trainees are assessed in two stages: during and after training.

#### Assessment during training

Trainees are assessed every semester by a test in each subject between the 8th and 10th week of training. At the end of each semester, there is a final test for each course, in the form of an examination.

The final grade of each course is calculated based on the average of the progress grade and the final examination on a scale from one (1) to twenty (20).

At this stage of the training, assessment is conducted by the teacher/instructor of each course.

Trainees successfully completing all semesters in state and private IEK receive a *Vevaiosi* (Certificate) of Vocational Training (BEK).

#### Assessment after training

Once the Certificate has been acquired, graduates are entitled to participate in the external examinations of Vocational Training Certification in order to acquire a Vocational Training Diploma or Certificate. These examinations are held twice a year and trainees are examined by the Central Examination Committee for Vocational Training Certification (ΚΕΕΠΕΚ) and the Regional Certification Examination Committees (ΠΕΕΠ), which are set up by decision of the Minister of Education Lifelong

Learning and Religious Affairs, upon recommendation of the Administrative Council of the Organisation for Vocational Education and Training (OEEK).

The certification examinations are common for state and private IEK as well as the IEK monitored by other bodies.

Trainees who successfully complete their training at public and private IEK are awarded a Vocational Training Certificate, which entitles them to take part in the final certification examinations. Certification examinations lead to the award of a Vocational Training Diploma, at the level of post secondary (ISCED level 4) vocational training. The Vocational Training Diploma is recognised both in Greece and in the other E.U. member states and is a prerequisite for obtaining a licence to exercise a profession in the relevant specialisations. OEEK in conjunction with the aforementioned ministries also issue vocational training diplomas, which are recognised as a formal qualification at the public sector (see Introduction as well). There is no direct access to tertiary education and OEEK graduates can enter Higher Education only by sitting national level examinations.

## 5.5 Guidance and counselling

IEK (Vocational Training Institutes) aim at providing high level qualifications and securing graduates' employment in the labour market. To this end the Organisation for Vocational Education and Training (OEEK), among others, conducts market research to adapt the specialisations offered by every IEK to the particular needs of the labour market, and has also established Professional Development and Career Offices.

Professional Development and Career Offices (GEAS) that operate under the aegis of the OEEK state Institutes of Vocational Training are high up in the Organization's agenda and seek to open up employment routes within the existing labour market environment. More specifically:

- They help reduce structural unemployment, improve the employability of the labour force, reduce imbalances between work supply and demand and promote genuine gender equality in the workplace.
- They facilitate the induction of IEK graduates into the labour market.
- They provide comprehensive and updated information on the prospects of training, education, lifelong learning and employment at national and European level.
- They collect data on the employability of IEK graduates which are subsequently used to enhance the training programmes offered and to adjust the specializations offered by IEK to the needs of the labour market.

At the same time, market research is carried out in the areas where IEK operate so as to adapt courses to the needs existing at both local and regional levels. The fields, specialisations and institution numbers are determined within a holistic perspective that takes stock of geographic criteria and local particularities.

The decision to introduce, operate or abolish specialisations is made by the Board of Directors of the OEEK, upon proposal of the Tripartite Consultative Committees which consist of representatives of employees, employers and the IEK.

## 5.6 Teachers and trainers

The entry requirements for this type of teachers / trainers include a tertiary education certificate and a certificate in pedagogy (for those teachers that had never before been offered pedagogy components as part of their regular study curricula) gained after they have completed a two-semester training

programme in the School of Pedagogical and Technological Education (ASPETE). Apart from the requisite relevant formal qualifications, the recruitment of teachers / trainers depends upon their prior professional experience, which is considered to be an important factor for their being taken on. Given that the number of years of prior professional experience varies, this factor is usually correlated with formal qualifications and the particular training subject.

There is no pre-service training provided for this type of teachers / trainers.

In-service training is provided by the Organisation for Vocational Education and Training / OEEK through the organisation of seminars on the latest developments and current trends in the various fields related to the specialties available.

Training curricula are designed by teams of experts employed by OEEK. Teachers / Trainers can be members of such teams.

## 6. TERTIARY EDUCATION

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Tertiary Education in Greece is public and funded primarily by the state. It comprises **two parallel sectors**: a) the University sector, which includes the universities, the technical universities, and the School of Fine Arts, and b) the Technological sector, which includes the (Higher) Technological Education Institutions (TEIs), and the School of Pedagogical and Technological Education (ASPETE).

Admission of students to the above institutes depends on their performance at nation-wide exams taking place in the 3rd grade of the upper secondary school. Tertiary education in Greece is provided free of charge (exceptions apply with regard to specific post-graduate programmes, the Hellenic Open University and the International Hellenic University).

The **types of institutions** that collectively make up tertiary education are broadly divided into two types: universities and technological education institutions. In the country there are twenty-three (23) Universities, including technical universities, the School of Fine Arts, the Hellenic Open University (ΕΑΠ/ΕΑΡ), and the International Hellenic University (DIPAE/IHU). According to article 16 of the Constitution, higher education is provided exclusively by institutions that are fully self-administered legal entities of public law. These institutions fall under the supervision of the state and are financed by it. State supervision is exercised by the Education Ministry.

Higher technological education is mainly provided by the Technological Education Institutions (TEI), which are self-administered legal entities under public law, supervised and subsidised by the state through the Education Ministry. In 2001, Law 2916 was passed, pursuant to which the TEI have been incorporated in the Technological Sector of Higher Education and are governed by the same constitutional provisions applicable for Universities as far as their organization and operation are concerned.

In 2002, the higher school for Teachers of Technological Education (ΑΣΠΑΙΤΕ/ΑΣΠΑΙΤΕ), which was established in Athens to replace the School of Teachers for Vocational and Technological Education (ΣΕΛΕΤΕ/ΣΕΛΕΤΕ), was embedded in the Technological Sector of Higher Education. ΑΣΠΑΙΤΕ/ΑΣΠΑΙΤΕ features a General Sector of Pedagogy, which offers relevant teacher training to various categories of higher education graduates.

With regard to the **recent historical background**, higher education in its current shape and condition is the outcome of the dynamics and priorities of the Third Hellenic Republic (1974-). Democratisation, enhanced participation and wider access to education, modernisation of infrastructures and administration, integration into the European family of partner nations, all these national goals have been reflected on the changes, developments, and trends undergone or adopted by the higher education system in Greece. Important legislative milestones along the way have been Law 1268/1982, which set the framework for the modernisation of the operation of higher education institutions and instigated a large-scale reform in universities upon which accrued a series of important laws, such as Law 1404/1983, which provided for the establishment of Technological Education Institutions (TEI), and Law 2083/1992, which set forth the organisation of postgraduate study programmes. In 2001, Law 2916 was passed stipulating that tertiary education in the Hellenic Republic consists of the university and technology sectors, which are governed by the same constitutional provisions as regards their organisation and operation.

Closer to the present, the more recent 'Law-Framework' 3549/2007 reformed and overhauled the structure and framework of operation of the domestic HEIs by increasing both their autonomy and their accountability. The realm of higher education has expanded through the creation of new institutions and / or departments and an increase in the number of students admitted whereas a systematic effort at reforming the entire system has been under way in the past few years drawing additional impetus

from the *Bologna Process* and the broader commitments undertaken in the context of the EU. The establishment of the Hellenic Open University (1992) and the International Hellenic University (2005) have widened equitable accessibility and academic extroversion and have imbued higher education in Greece with the international dimension.

As regards the **implementation of the Bologna Process** in the country, there was already a strong compatibility basis as the Greek higher education system had already been organised on the basis of a two-tier structure, undergraduate and postgraduate, since 1982. The majority of the first cycle programmes in universities comprise 8 semesters (4 years – 240 ECTS credits) and they are fully compatible with the European Qualifications Framework as decided in Bergen. Technological Education Institutions (TEIs), run four-year undergraduate programmes (8 semesters-240 ECTS credits). There are certain first cycle programmes offered by Universities, mainly concerning the regulated professions, whose duration exceeds the said 8 semesters. All first cycle University and TEI graduates can apply for admission to second cycle graduate programmes. The second cycle includes postgraduate studies offered by Universities or by TEIs in consortia with Universities, both Greek and foreign. The postgraduate programmes last one to two years (2/3-4 semesters, 60/90 or 120 ECTS credits) and lead to MA or MSc degrees. On the basis of recent legislative initiatives, TEIs will have the opportunity to run their own postgraduate programmes once the condition of quality assurance through internal evaluation processes monitored by the Hellenic Quality Assurance Agency has been fulfilled. At the same time, the state of implementation of the ECTS (European Credit Transfer System) is satisfactory and it is the case that it has contributed substantially to inter-institutional cooperation and student mobility. The Greek HE Quality Assurance system was introduced by law 3374/2005 and is fully compatible with the European Standards and Guidelines. The National Qualifications Framework (NQF) is currently under way against the background of developments concerning the European Qualifications Framework (EQF), and joint degrees increase in number.

**Current debates and perspectives on HE** in Greece can be summarised as follows:

Given that the national tertiary education system has to a considerable degree kept pace with the EU and international trends and priorities in the context of an international environment with commonly shared challenges and opportunities, most of the reform necessities emanate from both national priorities and EU-driven confluence commitments. One of the main challenges that the reforms effort has addressed to a considerable degree is the consolidation of equitable, widely accessible and internationally-oriented academic institutions that will be accountable to the state and the society at large, and will be open to the possibility of international cooperation.

Widening access to tertiary education constitutes a priority. To this end, consultations with institutionally mandated agencies and stakeholders focusing on reforming admission criteria and procedures have already begun with the aim to increase the number of available options for young people and vulnerable groups such as persons with special needs or those from lower socio-economic backgrounds, and help them enter higher education. A special Council for primary and Secondary Education (working in close cooperation with the National Education Council under the auspices of the Education Ministry) has received the mandate to draw up flexible higher education entry routes, especially given the fact that it is now commonly held that the existing admissions system has run its course.

In addition to the above, there has been a systematic effort to secure the quality enhancement of academic institutions. Many departments have already submitted to internal evaluation processes and proceed to external evaluation in accordance with the newly set up quality assurance mechanisms. The Education Ministry has finalised a series of measures within the framework of the Operational Programme 'Education and Lifelong Learning' to improve on existing infrastructure through, among others, the enhancement of libraries and the expansion of digital services that will facilitate the work of the academic community and the flow of information. What is more, increased funding is provided for

measures such as the support of Liaison Offices and student work placement and the enhancement of youth entrepreneurship in a broader context of measures taken to help increase the employability of young graduates.

Moreover, the Education Ministry has taken on research with renewed urgency. Higher education institutions play a crucial role in the development of research in Greece since the majority of research programmes are carried out by HEIs. The research programmes of Universities and TEIs are funded, among others, by the Education Ministry. Along with recent legislative initiatives rendering the domestic research environment more flexible and conducive to global cooperation, a pledge for increasing the funding of research has been made for the period 2007-2013 in addition to the regular state budget. The appropriate legislative framework now exists for the organisation and carrying out of joint postgraduate programmes between domestic and foreign HEIs along with joint supervisions of doctoral theses. Additionally, the operation of the Hellenic International University has woven the international dimension into Greek HE. The Hellenic International University, based in Thessaloniki, already offers postgraduate study programmes exclusively in the English language and plans to expand the range of the courses on offer in order to serve as an innovative education hub in the Balkans and the eastern Mediterranean. The Education Ministry harbours the ambition that Greek HEIs will gradually come to occupy a more visible place within the framework of the European Higher Education Area.

## 6.1 Admission

Admission in higher education institutions takes place through centrally organised, nation-wide exams ('panhellenic' exams). The Education Ministry bears the responsibility for the central organisation of these exams and the implementation of the various stages whereas the local / regional Education Directorates mediate between the Ministry and the school units in order for the exams procedures to be carried through. The student scores attained in the context of oral and written exams in especially designated finalist courses of general upper secondary school (general lyceum) are taken under consideration. These are independent from the internal score achieved for graduation and award of the secondary-school diploma. For that reason, the general lyceum graduate is also given an appropriate 'Certificate,' besides the graduation Diploma, which serves as evidence for his / her access to higher education. Subjects in the final grade of upper secondary general school are distinguished into subjects of general knowledge, 'directions' (specialisation-oriented subjects) and electives. HE candidates subsequently indicate their preferences. Successful admission to a higher education institution is determined through the combination of: a) score attained; b) order of preference with regard to desired academic institutions; and c) the number of places available in each academic department.

For admission to certain Faculties and Departments whose cognitive field requires specialised knowledge or skills, special admission exams are necessary in one or more designated subjects (such as architecture, photography, music studies, translation and interpretation, foreign languages and literature), or preparatory tests (health, sports, psycho-technical) as regards military schools and the academy of police officers, or sports tests (as regards physical education and sports departments).

The number of persons admitted to each university department complies with the principle of *numerus clausus* and is fixed each year by the Education Ministry.

With regard to access to the Technological Education Institutions (TEI) and the Higher School for Teachers of Technological Education, prospective students must have successfully completed their secondary-education studies either in the general lyceum or in the Technical Vocational Educational Schools (EPAL) and must have been successful in the relevant admission exams elements of which vary in accordance with the particular orientation taken up in the context of studies at EPAL. The

number of persons admitted to TEI complies with the principle of *numerus clausus* and is fixed each year by the Education Ministry.

As regards '**non-typical**' candidates for entry to higher education institutions, apart from the determined number of students to be admitted to each department or faculty of a University or Technological Education Institute, there is a number of candidates that are admitted on the basis of belonging in the following special categories:

- Children of Greeks living abroad
- Children of Greek employees seconded abroad
- Greek graduates of foreign upper secondary schools
- EU and non-EU foreign nationals
- EU and non-EU foreign nationals holding scholarships
- Ethnic Greeks from abroad holding scholarships
- Muslims from Thrace
- Pupils distinguished during the Balkan or International Olympiad of Mathematics, Information Technology, Physics or Chemistry
- Pupils suffering from grave illnesses ('special category of patients')

Those falling under the category 'Special Category of Patients', are directly enrolled in a school or department of a University or a TEI, in addition to the number of those admitted and until a number corresponding to 3 % of the number of admitted students is filled. If the applications outnumber the places available in a faculty, selection takes place according to the score average of the graduation diploma. In addition to the above categories, graduates of other departments of the same faculty or other faculties may be admitted to departments of higher education (following special admission exams and up to a certain percentage). Such graduates, depending on the scientific and statutory relevance of the two degrees provided, may be exempted from attending a given number of compulsory courses in the host department and from sitting the relevant examinations.

Finally, it must be noted that students of other departments and persons who are not students may attend the above-mentioned courses in the tertiary education institutes. Interested parties are enrolled at the Secretariat, and acquire the identity card of an observer and an enrolment certificate, without, however, participating in exams or getting a degree.

**Prospective foreign students** can access Greek HEIs on the basis of the following criteria: An 8 % is reserved for EU candidates at each academic institution, and they are admitted on the basis of their (secondary education) graduation diploma (ratified by their national competent authority). A smaller percentage (1 % for the 1<sup>st</sup> cognitive field, 0.5 % for the rest) is reserved for non-EU candidates. With regard to his/her registration, the candidate admitted into a Faculty or a Department must also hold a certificate denoting his/her command of the Greek language. Such a certificate is issued after relevant examinations organised either by the University of Athens or by the University of Thessaloniki; alternatively, the candidate should hold a 3<sup>rd</sup> or higher level certificate issued by the Greek Language Centre. If the candidate does not hold any of these language certificates, he/she can only enrol in the next academic year of his/her admission to a Greek University, on condition that he/she will by then have obtained the prerequisite language certificate.

## 6.2 Students' contributions and financial support

According to the Greek Constitution, higher education is free of charge and provided solely by the Hellenic State. This applies to all types of students. Therefore, admission and registration to all the institutions of higher education (universities and technological education institutes) as well as attendance of the respective courses of study are provided to students free of charge. However, following the proposal of the Special General Assembly of the Department and upon decision of the University's Senate, fees may be fixed for postgraduate students attending specific postgraduate study programmes. Students in the Hellenic Open University pay tuition fees. Students of the International Hellenic University make a financial contribution in order to cover the operating expenses of undergraduate and postgraduate study programmes. The level of this contribution is fixed following the joint decision of the Ministers of National Economy and Education Lifelong Learning & Religious Affairs, upon opinion of the Senate.

As regards financial support, university textbooks are provided to all students of higher education free of charge. Social criteria apply as well. Many students, depending on their family and personal income, may have their living and accommodation expenses covered while undergraduate students making their studies in a city other than the one in which they live permanently may be granted an accommodation allowance. In particular, based on the new law-framework of 2007 on Higher Education, it is provided that scholarships can be given to graduate and post-graduate students, with the only obligation – on the part of the students – to offer part time work, up to forty (40) hours a month, to services of the University or TEI. Moreover, based on the same provisions of the said law, students facing financial problems have the right to take interest-free student loans from Greek credit institutions of their choice, provided they have successfully passed the exams for all the compulsory classes of the previous semester and have not exceeded the allowed maximum time of studies. All students, whether undergraduate or postgraduate, are also entitled to free health care until the end of their studies. Furthermore, all undergraduate and postgraduate students are granted special student cards so as to get reduced prices in all public transportation means and in museums, theatres, art galleries and special artistic events. Finally, student loans may also be granted mainly to postgraduate students, as the case may be.

Scholarships are granted by the State Scholarships Foundation (*Idryma Kratikon Ypotrophion* – IKY) to undergraduate students having received excellent marks in universities and technological education institutes and to those students wishing to pursue postgraduate studies in Greece and abroad and have sat successfully for special exams held for this purpose. In addition, IKY grants selectively scholarships for postgraduate research in Greece. Concurrently, a certain number of scholarships, allowances and financial aid schemes are offered to students and institutions of all education levels through various legacies and donations from individuals and legal entities of private law.

## 6.3 Organisation of the academic year

The academic year begins on 1st September of each year and ends on 31st August of the following year. Each academic year is structured chronologically into two semesters. Each semester includes at least fifteen (13) full weeks of classes and two (2) weeks of examinations. The first semester begins in the second fortnight of September and the second semester ends during the second fortnight of June. Throughout the year, there are holidays –Christmas and Easter periods—lasting four (4) weeks as a whole.

## 6.4 Assessment, progression and certification

Students are assessed by the competent academic staff on the basis of a flexible set of written and / or oral exams, assignments, projects, etc., depending on the nature of the specialisation field. Exams take place at the end of each semester. Overall student progress and rates of participation (where

applicable) are also taken into account. Students complete their studies and are awarded their degree when they have passed the necessary number of courses stipulated in the study programme and have accumulated the required number of credits.

## **6.5 Guidance and counselling**

Higher Education institutions provide information services and further aid to their students with regard to academic and career prospects and alternative routes. Career Offices have been established at most HEIs and TEIs. Their purpose is, on one hand, to ensure closer co-operation between institutions and businesses so that the actual needs of the economy and the labour market are taken into account to the maximum degree possible in the educational process, and, on the other hand, to facilitate the professional integration of graduates. In each university department operates a student support service in order to provide counselling services to students and specialised support to students with disabilities or students facing social-economic difficulties. At the same time, members of the academic staff under the capacity of advisor provide guidance to students for their progress and the successful completion of their studies. Many university departments have put in place an on-the-job-training programme for students – in co-operation with public bodies, research centres and institutes, and private institutes – in order to help students put to the test their scientific knowledge in the workplace and attain a more efficient vocational orientation, according to their personal wishes and the absorption capacity of the labour market.

## **6.6 Academic staff**

In summary terms, on the basis of the standing legislative framework, university staff branches out into two distinct categories: Non-PhDs operate as Assistants, Scientific Associates and Special Laboratory Teaching Faculty. PhD holders belong in the Teaching and Research Faculty proper, on the basis of 4 distinct ranks: Lecturer, Assistant Professor, Associate Professor, and Professor. The required qualifications correspond to the respective position in the academic hierarchy.

## 7. CONTINUING EDUCATION AND TRAINING

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### 7.1 Policy and legislative framework

Lifelong Learning (LLL) constitutes one of the basic pillars of the *Lisbon Process* and the European Employment Strategy. The fundamental principles of LLL provision as crystallised in both the national and the EU contexts have been adopted by the political leadership of the Ministry of Education. Boosting LLL provision mechanisms has been woven into the basic strategy against unemployment, as they allow the continuous updating of knowledge throughout one's entire active life span. Fully thought-out and properly implemented lifelong learning practices can help combat social exclusion, disseminate citizenship skills, promote the social and professional integration of all participants and facilitate the social integration of socially disadvantaged groups, including migrants. National policies focusing on LLL have, in the past few years, shaped up as part of a profound reform project that has sought to overhaul all parameters of the Greek educational system. The fragmentation and dispersal of LLL services and agencies that traditionally hampered adequate domestic provision has now been tackled to a considerable extent, and the alignment of national with European priorities on this field has added momentum and strengthened the impetus for further progress.

LLL is mostly administered, designed and implemented by the General Secretariat for Lifelong Learning (henceforth GSLLL), an agency that operates under the auspices of the Education Ministry. At the same time, the existence of a central coordination body (the National Committee for Lifelong Learning that was established on the basis of law 3369/2005) and the consolidation of national policy planning by the competent ministries through closer coordination of efforts and complementarity of actions have enabled the achievement of arguably satisfactory results in the field of LLL provision.

In the past 3 years a process of profound reforms regarding the provision of lifelong learning has been under way codified, initially, in its legislative form by Law 3369/2005 ('Systematisation of Lifelong Learning') which set the institutional, infrastructural and regulatory foundations for all ensuing developments. Lifelong learning provision has been the focus of consistent attention in the broader context of an ambitious effort to gradually overhaul all education grades setting off with tertiary and adult education. LLL provision has mainly been devolved to the agency of the **General Secretariat for Lifelong Learning (GSLLL)**, which evolved (2008) from the previous General Secretariat for Adult Education as an advanced agency supervised by the Education Ministry and entrusted with the design and implementation of a broader spectrum of LLL – mostly informal learning – platforms with a wider impact and equitable accessibility along with its complementary executive agency, the **Institute for the Continuous Education of Adults (IDEKE)**. The quality dimension of the progress achieved so far relates to, and is measurable in terms of:

- the further harmonisation of the LLL provision system with the national strategy for the economy and employment
- the modernization of the institutional and regulatory framework with particular emphasis laid on quality assurance with regard to the provided lifelong learning services
- increase of the provided thematic fields and evaluation of all systemic constituent parameters
- the facilitation of stronger links with formal education environments and the labour market

LLL provision is mostly addressed to adults not participating in the formal education system who seek the opportunity to reintegrate into the education and employment environments. There is particular sensitivity for the integration of vulnerable social groups, those in the grip of periodic or chronic

unemployment, immigrants and women in relation to entrepreneurship, in the context of a wider effort that takes into account issues of social cohesion and progress.

The most important laws that have determined the provision of LLL (in the past three decades) are the following:

- The Directorate for Adult Education at the Ministry of Education, pursuant to law L. 1320/1983 is upgraded to the General Secretariat for Popular Education (*Geniki Grammateia Laikis Epimorfosis* /GGLE).
- Law 2327/1995 stipulates the establishment of the Institute for Lifelong Adult Education (IDEKE). Law 2525/1997 establishes Second Chance Schools (SDE) attended by adults who have not completed compulsory education and who are granted a qualification equivalent to the one obtained after successful completion of Lower secondary (or primary) Education. In 1995, the Adult Education Centres (KEE) are set up, under L. 2327/1995 as well as the Vocational Training Centre (KEK) of the Adult Education General Secretariat.
- Under Law 2909/2001 the General Secretariat for Adult/Popular Education was changed into the General Secretariat for Adult Education (ΓΤΕΕ/GGEE) with a mandate to undertake the planning, coordination and implementation of activities concerning Lifelong Learning at a national level and for Greeks abroad. Under the same Law (2909/2001), art. 3) the Institute for the Continuous Education of Adults / IDEKE falls under the General Secretariat for Adult Education. The Institute's mandate is the technological and scientific support of the General Secretariat for Adult Education and the implementation of actions regarding lifelong learning. The activities of IDEKE are financed by EU and National Resources and by other sources.
- Law 3191/2003 stipulates the establishment of the National System for Linking Vocational Education and Training with Employment (ΕΣΣΕΕΚΑ/ESSEEKA).
- Finally, under the seminal Law 3369/2005 on 'Systematisation of Lifelong Learning and Other Regulations', the operation of the already operating bodies-providers of adult education and training as well as of the newly-founded bodies (such as the Lifelong Learning Institutes) is systematised and integrated into the rubric of a coherent institutional framework for LLL. Pursuant to Law 3369/2008 the General Secretariat for Adult Education has been renamed as the General Secretariat for Lifelong Learning.

## 7.2 Distribution of responsibilities

The General Secretariat for Lifelong Learning (GSLLL) undertakes at national level, but also for Greeks abroad, the planning, coordination and implementation of Lifelong Learning. It is aided in its mission by the Institute for the Continuous Education of Adults (IDEKE) on a basis of complementarity. The above agencies draw up and implement LLL actions under the aegis of the Education Ministry.

The **established institutional framework** is continually updated to meet rising needs and challenges, and is supported by a host of agencies / organisations such as, primarily, the Adult Education General Secretariat (including the Institute for the Continuous Education of Adults / IDEKE), the Greek Manpower Employment Organisation / OAED, the Organisation for Vocational Education and Training / OEEK, the Central Union of Municipalities and Communities of Greece / KEDKE, the Greek Association for Community Development and Self-Governance / EETAA (the latter two co-supervising the Centres for the Creative Occupation of Children / KDAP), the Hellenic Open University, the Adult Education and Training Centre 'Euclid', the Tripartite Consulting Committees at the level of the Regions, the Centre for Adult Distance Education and Training and, finally, the National System for Linking Vocational Education and Training with Employment / ESSEEKA.

Finally, in relation to **the private sector**, the Federation of Greek Industries / SEV, the Athens Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the Foundation for Economic and Industrial Research (IOVE), the Greek Business Management Association (EEDE), et. al., contribute in various ways to the consolidation of a coherent LLL platform (PRAXIS Network, etc.). The aim is to systematise and update the existing platforms for education and training so that knowledge and learning can be accessible during a person's working life and even one's entire life span.

### 7.3 Financing

With regard to funding structures, the programmes carried out by the General Secretariat for LLL and its executive agency, the Institute for the Continuous Education of Adults / IDEKE, are funded by the state (involved Ministry budgets, where applicable). Private bodies may occasionally contribute to employers' training costs depending on the case.

### 7.4 Programmes and providers

The programmes / actions that materialise the state LLL policy branch out, roughly, into two distinct yet complementary categories, the –general- programmes that are carried out by the General Secretariat for LLL (henceforth GSLLL) *itself* and the ones implemented by the agency supervised by the Secretariat, the Institute for the Continuous Education of Adults / IDEKE. The only structures of the General Secretariat for LLL that fall in the realm of formal adult education are the Second Chance Schools. The remaining structures (Adult Education Centres, Parents Schools, Lifelong Learning Prefectural Committees, Vocational Training Centre, Centre of Distance Lifelong Education and Training for Adults as well as the autonomous programmes of the General Secretariat for Adult Education) belong in informal education for adults.

#### A. Programmes executed by the GSLLL.

- 1) The **Prefectural Committees for Adult Education / NELE** offer training programmes to adults in order to promote development, employment and social cohesion. The Prefectural Committees of Adult Education (NELE) constitute autonomous public services at the level of prefectural administration. The subjects offered are:
  - Culture – Art
  - Social Economy – Entrepreneurship
  - Citizens' Education
  - Programs for People with Disabilities (6 Programs).

The total number of participants (during the years 2005-2008) has amounted to 96 500. During the academic period 2007/08 N.E.L.E. developed 52 further education programmes. Graduates are granted a Training Certificate.

- 2) The **Vocational Training Centre (KEK) of the GSLLL** is addressed to unemployed graduates of secondary technical education, of *Lykeio*, of IEK, and of higher education with the aim to provide educational services in the field of adult vocational training, as well as to develop mechanisms promoting employment of the unemployed, which have been prepared by the agency. Indicatively, the following programmes amongst others are relevant: Training in IT Basic Skills, Office Automation Using Computers, etc. KEK are fully incorporated in the new operational network providing Lifelong Learning, under the Law 3369/2005 on 'Systematisation of Lifelong Learning'. Graduates of KEK are granted a Lifelong Training Certificate. Moreover, the Vocational Training Centre (K.E.K.) of *Aghioi Anargyroi* implements

vocational training programmes regarding the environment and 'green' power which are very popular since they contain thoroughly innovative subject matters.

- 3) The **Educational Programme 'Risk, Crisis, Emergencies and Disasters Management': 'I Protect Myself and Others' – Offer of Voluntary Services'** aims to offer to citizens – volunteers the necessary knowledge and skills for risk and crisis management and for dealing with emergencies and natural disasters within an LLL perspective. The said programme lasts for 110 hours and is funded by national resources. Graduates of the Programme receive a Lifelong Training Certificate.
- 4) Targeted Guidance and Counselling programmes offering services in the field of social entrepreneurship and employment.

#### **B. Programmes executed by IDEKE (Institute for the Continuous Education of Adults under the auspices of the General Secretariat for Lifelong Learning**

- 1) The task of the **Centres for Adult Education (KEE)** is to offer all adult citizens (including higher-risk social groups such as prison inmates, and those who missed the opportunity to complete secondary education) the opportunity to catch up with updated knowledge and skills so that they can participate more effectively in the economic, social, cultural and political life. Educational programmes are allocated in two units of long duration (75 to 250 hours) and short duration (25 to 75 hours). In the second unit modules have been included focusing on the European dimension, education and guidance services to vulnerable social groups (Roma, immigrants, prisoners, etc.). The number of those who profited from the KEE services (their number amounts now to 58) exceeded 210 000 for the period 2005-2008. After proper evaluation, KEE graduates receive a Lifelong Education Certificate for educational programmes lasting from 100 to 250 hours and a Training Certificate for training programmes lasting up to 75 hours.
- 2) **Second Chance Schools (SDE)** is an innovative institution that aims to combat social exclusion. This institution concerns young people over the age of 18, who have not completed the 10 year compulsory education cycle, and are therefore at risk of social exclusion and marginalisation. Second Chance schools offer the possibility to acquire a compulsory secondary school leaving certificate and integrate smoothly into the social, financial and professional structures. Curricula are particularly flexible, so that they respond to the young people's individual needs. Emphasis is laid on the acquisition of basic qualifications and the development of personal skills. Acquisition of general knowledge, use of new technologies, learning of a foreign language, counselling in subjects of vocational guidance, significantly improve the chances of integration in the labour market. 57 units, along with 70 associated departments / branches operate so far covering the entire national territory. Second Chance schools are addressed to socially vulnerable schools such as prison inmates (the number of these units operating from within prison establishments is set to rise to 8). The degree given by the SDE is equivalent to the lower secondary education Certificate and recognised by the Supreme Council for Civil Personnel Selection (ASEP).
- 3) **Schools for Parents** are fully integrated in the new operational network providing Lifelong Learning, under the Law 3369/2005 on 'Systematisation of Lifelong Learning,' and offer targeted educational services in the fields of 'Parents Consulting', 'School-Family Relations' and Health Education for socially vulnerable groups'. Evidently, these are actions with a strong social dimension.
- 4) The **Educational Programme 'Training of Adults in the acquisition of basic skills in New Technologies – Heron'** which aims to instruct citizens on the basic principles of operation and use of the computer and the Internet in the context of the national strategy for the promotion of digital literacy.

- 5) The **Educational Programme 'Training of Farmers in order to Undertake Activities in the Secondary and Tertiary Sector of the Economy – Hesiod'** aims to provide the necessary competences and skills to farmers (of all ages, any nationality and education) to prepare and encourage them in order to effectively undertake activities in the secondary and tertiary sectors of the economy (processing, standardisation and marketing of agricultural products and services).
- 6) The **Training Programme 'Health Education – Sexually Transmitted Diseases – AIDS'**, functions and is addressed to students of upper secondary schools, parents' and guardians' associations, to young people in the Armed Forces and generally to every citizen. Special scientists (Doctors, Health Visitors, Sociologists, Social Workers) offer counselling through informative events.
- 7) The **Educational Programme 'Greek Language Learning as a Second Language to Working Immigrants'** is addressed to working Immigrants regardless of ethnic origin, who wish to benefit from a programme that aids in their social and professional integration. Successful completion of the programme has become prerequisite to their obtaining long-residence status. The programme's goal is the learning of the Greek language as a means for the more effective integration of adult immigrants into a linguistically and culturally distinct society, the enhancement of their ability to find work and the improvement of their work position. It generally aims to boost their social integration. The training programme is structured in four learning levels of a total duration of 425 hours. The duration of each learning level is 100 hours with the exception of the last level (4th) with an increased duration of 125 hours and includes the teaching of basic Greek history and culture. The teaching material used in all learning levels includes, in addition to the purely linguistic topics, also elements pertaining to the Greek daily life and culture, as well as more general elements of urban orientation in order to help immigrants become familiar with the current Greek reality. Prospective students for these learning courses are enrolled in the corresponding course on the basis of their present knowledge of Greek. Written examinations are carried out in order to assess the immigrants' level of linguistic skills in the Greek language, to establish the level of their fluency on the basis of which they are assigned into the appropriate learning level. The current phase of the programme in question (2008-2011, '*Odysseus*') builds on previous experience and forms part of a wider social integration set of policies.

The above by no means exhaust the provision of LLL provision in the country, but form the central core of the state system, and are indicative of the orientation that LLL provision has taken in the past few years. There are parallel structures operating in the interest of enhanced and equitable accessibility, such as the **Centre of Distance Education for Lifelong Adult Learning of the General Secretariat for Lifelong Learning** which provides e-distance learning to citizens. The thematic fields of the Programmes cover Training of Adults' Trainers, Information and Communication Technologies, and Economy – Management – Businesses. The 'Parental Guidance' and 'Family-School Relations' programmes are openly accessible as well, and the same applies for the *Hesiod- farmers' programme*. The General Secretariat's **Lifelong Training Centre for Instructors of Adults** continuously upgrades the knowledge and skills of the instructors and trainers who staff the structures and autonomous educational and training programmes. The Integrated **Register of Adult Trainers** has been established at the General Secretariat for Lifelong Learning in order to monitor all issues regarding instructors.

Finally, the **Hellenic Open University (HOU)** offers open and distant formal education at graduate and post-graduate level.

## 7.5 Quality assurance

Programme evaluation and quality assurance constitutes a core priority for the General Secretariat for Lifelong Learning. The period 2006-2008 saw the implementation of the National Quality Assurance

Framework (NQAF), which follows the general principles of the Common Quality Assurance Framework for VET in Europe (CQAF). According to the Greek framework, adult learning providers design and implement self-evaluation procedures for their programmes following national programme evaluation standards and procedures. Self-evaluation concerns evaluation of procedures (administrational procedures, management and leadership, resources and outcomes/educational pathways) as well as evaluation of educational processes (teaching methods, training packages and contents, learner assessment model, teacher evaluation procedures and training, etc.). In addition, external audit procedures have been carried out by regional evaluators in all 13 regions of the country to ensure accountability and quality improvement.

Furthermore, the National Framework ensured both the assessment and accreditation of learning outcomes through the development of a National Competency Framework (NCF). The NCF assesses performance on six generic key competencies (i.e. organizational, technical, cultural, personal, civic, communicative) and it covers a wide range of knowledge, skills and attitudes adult learners acquire after their training in each individual programme. Finally, the NCF assesses and recognises prior learning.

Finally, the future implementation of the quality assurance framework will be strengthened through its integration into the National Strategic Reference Framework to support this important action.

## 7.6 Guidance and counselling

Career advisers operate in all Second Chance Schools (SDE). Counselling support is offered at group, as well as at individual level, and aims to trace the needs of trainees as regards skills that are necessary to the pursuit or retention of a work position, and help secure their integration into the labour market. The guidance services handle information regarding supply and demand, and monitor trends in the labour market. They also inform interested parties on offered opportunities for continuing education and training.

## 7.7 Teachers and trainers

The teaching staff in non-formal adult education who are taken on for each particular programme must have attended series of special training seminars. To this day, trainers hired by means of open procedure (announcements, staff selection calls of interest etc.) must be university or technical school graduates, have adequate professional experience, be computer literate and speak at least one foreign language, while a Master's degree, a PhD, publications, participation in conferences, seminars and professional experience in general are an extra valued asset.

The aim of the **Lifelong Training Centre for Instructors of Adults** of the General Secretariat for Lifelong Learning is to continuously upgrade the knowledge and skills of instructors and trainers who will staff the structures and autonomous educational and training programmes, so that they meet the specific needs of lifelong education and training of adults. The **Integrated Register of Adult Trainers** has facilitated the whole teacher training process both in the administrative and the educational sense.

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