

# **National Report on the quality situation in guidance in group settings in GREECE**

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## 1 Offer in scope of guidance in group setting measures in Greece

Although “Vocational counselling and career guidance” has been introduced in Greece since 1955, we might say that the first important reforms in the field took place during the 80’s. The next important steps towards the modernization and upgrading of the sector took place at the end of the 90’s.

Nowadays the system of guidance and initial/further training involves a large number of agencies and institutions (public or private). However the quality and high performance are the challenging issues.

The counselling and career guidance as well as the further training institutions (private or public) are mainly being developed, supervised and controlled by the **Ministry of Life Long Learning and Religious Affairs (YPEPTH)** and the **Ministry of Labour and Social Security**.

According to the current legal framework the guidance sector is supported at national level by the **National Resource Centre for Vocational Guidance (EKEP)**. We should also mention the establishment of the **National System for Linking Vocational Education and Training to Employment (ESSEKA)**.

### **The National Resource Centre for Vocational Guidance (EKEP) <sup>1</sup>**

Established in the year 2000 under the supervision of the **Ministry of Employment Labour & Social Protection and the Ministry of LLL & Religious Affairs**, the **National Resource Centre for Vocational Guidance - Euro guidance Centre of Greece (EKEP- NRCVG)** is a Private Law Body Corporate pursuant to Law 2525/97 and Presidential Decree 232/98. EKEP is governed by a nine-member Board of Directors consisting of representatives from the two supervising Ministries, the Pedagogical Institute, the **Greek Manpower Employment Organization (OAED)** and social partners.

On a national level, EKEP is body for the coordination, support, certification and enhancement of the actions taken by those offering Counselling and Vocational Guidance services in education, training and employment. In addition, EKEP is an information resource centre for education and vocational guidance. In view of its role, EKEP cares for the development of a unified strategy with respect to the aims and orientation of Vocational Guidance in Greece.

Acting as an executive agency of the State, EKEP endeavours to contribute, along with other competent bodies, to harmonization of the content and orientation of education and training with the requirements of the labour market to meet the demands of employers and employees in the light of current socio-economic concerns.

EKEP's scope of activities is nationwide and also tied to the web of Counselling & Vocational Guidance activities of the E.U..

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<sup>1</sup> [www.ekep.gr](http://www.ekep.gr), date of access 05/12/2009

## **“National System for Linking Vocational Education and Training to Employment” (ESSEEKA) <sup>2</sup>**

The establishment of “The National System for Linking Vocational Education and Training to Employment” (ESSEEKA) in 2003 consists a recent and important development in “Continuing Vocational Education and Training (CVET) aiming to link it with formal education and employment.

ESSEEKA distinguishes among six separate sub-systems and links them:

- Research into labour market needs,
- Technical-vocational education (at secondary level),
- Initial vocational training,
- Continuing vocational training,
- Accreditation of vocational training and qualifications and lastly,
- Counselling and vocational guidance. For each of these sub-systems, roles, responsibilities and coordination arrangements are explicitly defined and clarified.

Emphasis is also given to qualitative upgrading of training at Vocational Training Institutes (IEK)

### **1.1 Initiator(s) of guidance measures**

#### **A. Education sector**

The Career & Counselling Centres were established by force of Law 2525/97 and organized by the Ministry of Education in cooperation with the department of (School) Vocational & Career Guidance (SEP) of the Pedagogical Institute.

Currently:

a) the operation of two KE.SY.P Centres is of particular orientation: i) the KE.SY.P of the Ministry of Education (Dept. of School Vocational & Career Guidance - Directorate of Vocational Guidance and Education Activities) was established to provide coordination and administrative support to the network of KE.SY.P Centres and SEP Offices around the country, ii) the KE.SY.P of the Pedagogical Institute (P.I.) was established to provide expert support to the network of KE.SY.P and SEP Offices in Greece, furthermore

#### **B. Employment sector**

The **Manpower Employment Organization (OAED)** is the principal body of the government policy for employment, to ensure the necessary conditions for the rapid adjustment of labour supply to the requirements of demand, in line with current economic development program of the country and relevant guidelines and directives of the Minister of Labour and Social Security.

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<sup>2</sup> Cedefop, 2007 Greece: Overview of the Vocational Education and Training System. Refernet.p.10

Specifically, the Agency should provide

- Vocational Guidance in the workforce.
- Technical Vocational Education and Training of the workforce.
- facilitate contact between labour supply and demand.
- various benefits, such as with the conditions grant unemployed, to supplement the pregnancy and maternity benefits etc

OAED is the major body responsible for implementing continuing vocational training programs in order to cover the needs of the unemployed who require specialisation in order to find work. The main focus of OAED is to develop and/or expand upon existing continuing vocational training courses with a view to making a more effective intervention in the labour market and covering the needs of the largest possible number of interested persons in training services.

## 1.2 Organisations carrying out the training measures

### Initial vocational training

#### **Structure, duration and objective**

Initial training is supervised by the Ministry of National Education and Religious Affairs. Initial training is provided chiefly by the **Vocational Training Institutes (IEKs)**. The public and private **IEKs** operate in the framework of the National System of Vocational Education and Training (ESEEK) which was established in 1992 under the aegis of the **Organization for Vocational Education and Training (OEEK)**. There are also some IEKs under the supervision of other ministries and agencies, such as the **Greek Manpower Employment Organization (OAED)**.

The objective of the **IEKs** is to provide all types of vocational training, both initial and advanced, and to ensure that the students obtain the necessary qualifications by imparting scientific, technical, vocational and practical knowledge and by cultivating skills with a view to facilitating their occupational integration and their adaptation to the changing needs of the production process.

Graduates of Unified Lyceum or older type of Lyceum and Technical Vocational Schools (TEEs) may enroll in the **IEKs**. For holders of Unified Lyceum leaving certificates, training lasts four semesters. Each training year consists of two self-contained semesters (14 full weeks of training each semester).

Holders of TEE (or TEL / Technical Vocational Lyceum) Cycle 2 certificates are admitted directly to the third semester of the **IEK** in their specialization (total

duration of study: one year) or they may choose another **IEK** specialization, in which case they study for the regular four semesters.

Certain **IEKs** have specific Departments which also accept Gymnasium leavers aged over 18 who may study for up to two semesters.

### ***Educational curricula***

During term the students attend compulsory theoretical, laboratory and mixed lessons in the framework of the educational curricula, which cover a wide range of branches and specializations. A total of 168 specializations are taught at the **IEKs** in the following fields:

- Information technology - telecommunications - networks
- Financial and management services
- Food and drink
- Transport and tourism
- Electronics - electrics - engineering
- Construction
- Industrial chemistry
- Applied arts
  - Applied arts level 1 (Gymnasium)
- Energy - environment
- Health - cosmetics - social services
- Communications and mass media
- Clothing and footwear
- Culture and sport
- Agriculture

Students at public IEKs must pay fees for each semester. Scholarships are available in certain circumstances. Besides, students have the opportunity to participate in subsidised practical exercises. The fees charged by the private IEKs vary and are adjusted each year in accordance with the regulations in force

### **Examinations - Qualifications acquired**

The students are assessed during the semester in the form of progress tests; final examinations are taken at the end of the semester.

Trainees who successfully complete their training at public and private IEKs are awarded a **Vocational Training Certificate** which entitles them to take part in the qualifying examinations leading to the award of a **Vocational Training Diploma, at the level of post secondary (3+) vocational training**. The OEEK holds nationwide examinations twice a year, which include theoretical and practical tests.

Adult Gymnasium leavers who study at the IEKs' post-Gymnasium departments sit for qualifying examinations in order to get a Vocational Training Diploma, Level 1.

Before taking the qualifying examinations for the vocational training certificate, graduates of public and private IEKs 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. The Vocational Training Diploma is recognised both in Greece and in the other E.U. countries and is a prerequisite for obtaining a licence to exercise a profession in the relevant specialisations.

### **Continuing vocational training**

#### **Structure, duration and objective**

**Continuing vocational training** includes all vocational training and further training activities organised outside the formal initial vocational training and education system.

The purpose of continuing vocational training is to maintain, refresh, upgrade and modernise the job skills of persons seeking employment and to help workers interested in career development.

Continuing vocational training in Greece is provided by a plethora of bodies which focus on specific population groups and are supervised by various Ministries. The existing institutional framework focuses on four categories:

- Training of the unemployed
- Training of private-sector workers
- Training of wider public sector workers
- Training of socially disadvantaged groups

The vocational training programmes are short-term and the number of hours of tuition depends on the subject, the content of the curriculum and the group to whom the programme is addressed.

### **Agencies - Educational curricula**

In Greece, the public and private sector agencies which organize continuing vocational training programs are the **Vocational Training Centers (KEKs)**.

The KEKs provide continuing vocational training services and are accredited by the National Centre for the Accreditation of Vocational Training Structures and Accompanying Support Services (EKEPIS).

The KEKs organise informal continuing training programs with a view to combining training and employment; programs to combat social exclusion for the unemployed, the self-employed and special groups; and in-house training programs.

The continuing vocational training programs include theoretical training and practical exercises in firms; the trainees are subsidized for the duration of the program.

### **Examinations - Qualifications acquired**

The KEKs implement trainee assessment systems on the basis of the training curriculum; on successful completion of their courses the trainees receive an **Attendance Certificate**.

The programs focus in particular on improving job opportunities for trainees.

## **Second Chance Schools**

The institution of **Second Chance Schools** has been developed as an effort to combat the social exclusion of adults who have not finished basic education and do not have the necessary qualifications and skills to adapt to modern vocational requirements. Young people aged between 18 and 30 who have dropped out of school are now able to complete their compulsory 9-year education

### **1.3 Setting in which guidance measures are carried out in Greece (either in single coaching, group coaching, group training etc.)**

#### **A. Education sector**

##### **Career & Counselling Centres - KE.SY.P**

**KE.SY.P** Centers operate at the seats of all prefectures of the country. In total, there are 79 **KE.SY.P** Centers in Greece. Their task is to provide education and vocational guidance services and information to young people up to 25 years of age and to their parents. In addition, these Centers also support School Career Counselors who implement the relevant institution of counseling either on an individual or group basis. These Centers are staffed by one or more experts responsible for Vocational Guidance and one expert in Information and Documentation. The Centers feature libraries with information material pertinent to Vocational Guidance.

### **School Career Counselling Offices (GRA.SE.P)**

These Offices were established by the Ministry of Education and housed in 200 major or jointly-housed schools. Their task is to support the implementation of Vocational Guidance in schools, as well as provide counselling and information to students and their parents. The staff of the School Career Counselling Offices comprises trained Guidance practitioners. In addition, these Offices are furnished with library materials on the field of their competence.

### **Implementation of the Vocational Guidance Institution in the Classroom (SEP)**

The institution of Vocational Guidance has been incorporated to national education in the sense that is an additional item in the curriculum involving specific activities for which the students are not marked. In the context of Vocational Guidance, teachers ran numerous Career Education programmes at the secondary level of education during the academic period 2000-2001. During the same period Career Day events was adopted to enhance Career Guidance at schools.

### **Career Education**

This is to support the institution of Vocational Guidance in education by expanding its application at a local, regional and national level. The thematic content of Career Education programmes includes issues relating to the work environment, local economic activity, labour relations and occupational sectors, the European dimension of education-employment and the development of skills.

### **Career Services Offices for Universities & Technological Educational Institutes (GD)**

These Offices provide pivotal Counselling & Vocational Guidance services to graduates of **Universities and Technological Educational Institutes (TEI)**. Their support consists of actions aiming to facilitate the smooth entry of graduates into the labour market. At the same time they provide Vocational Guidance services, career counselling and information about postgraduate studies, training courses, scholarships and knowledge about employee / professional rights. In addition, the **Career Services Offices** mediate the students' placement (practical training) where warranted and organize Career Day events.

### **Office of the Pedagogical Institute for People with Special Needs**

In 1998 the **Pedagogical Institute** set up a **SEP Office** with the aim to provide Counselling and Vocational Guidance services to people with special needs and others threatened by social exclusion. This Office provides information about vocational training and rehabilitation for the targeted individuals. Additional aims include support to School Career Counsellors, cooperation with agencies / organizations operating in Greece and abroad for the benefit of such vulnerable groups, as well as with representatives from the sector of production and with prospective employers.

### **Organization for Vocational Education and Training - O.E.E.K.**

The Organization for Vocational Education and Training plans to operate Career & Employment Centres at a regional level starting from the town of Lamia. The cooperation of OEEK with GRA.S.E.P offices aims to provide timely and reliable Vocational Guidance and Counselling services to students of public **Institutes for Vocational Training (IEK)** and strengthen the institution of practical training (placement) of those students.

## **B. Employment Sector**

### **Centres for Promotion to Employment (K.P.A.)**

The **Centres for Promotion to Employment** in their total comprise the steam engine for the work done by the **Greek Manpower Employment Organization (OAED)** in the area of Vocational Guidance and Employment. The **KPAs** provide information about employment, vocational guidance or career counselling and placement. To this end the Centres apply an individual and/or group approach to support methods and procedures targeting mainly the unemployed. The aim is to help them find a job on the basis of their skills

and qualifications. In addition the **KPAs** facilitate labour mobility. In locations where **KPAs** do not have a presence, their services are available through **OAED** establishments (e.g. Employment Offices) at a local and regional level. The **KPAs** were established to address the needs of the following groups of people:

- long-term unemployed
- the young or old unemployed
- those threatened by unemployment
- school drop-outs and in search of work or training
- redundant owing to previous employer business failure
- vulnerable social groups: people with special needs, repatriates, rehabilitated addicts, women, single-parent families, etc.
- the young and old seeking reorientation owing to obsolescence of previous skills
- individuals interested in labour mobility - in which case they are referred to a Eurocounsellor.

#### Individual and/or Group Approach

This approach results from the knowledge that each client to Employment Services is unique in terms of personality, capabilities, interests, previous experience, talents, aptitudes, norms, values and knowledge. To this end each individual merits due respect.

The aim of Individual and/or Group Approach to Guidance is to help the unemployed individual, irrespective of age and sex:

- help himself / herself, under the guidance of the Counsellor, to look for a job (either through the Employment Office or independently),
- search and apply for a training programme where specialization is required for carrying out one's vocational action plan. This action plan is designed jointly by the individual and the Counsellor,
- participate in a Job Search Guidance group, particularly when the individual is a long-term unemployed. This also applies to individuals who, owing to long economic, social, psychological and family hardships, are in need of specialized support to re-enter the labour market. Participation in the Job Search Guidance groups offers the targeted individual(s) encouragement, tools and techniques to successfully meet the requirements of an interview, skills to organize and write one's curriculum vitae, help in drafting one's personal vocational action plan, techniques to keep one's job and, where warranted, information with respect to inclusion in advanced Vocational Guidance processes.

#### Employment Offices for Special Social Groups

These Offices of the **Greek Manpower Organization (OAED)** come under the Directorate of Special Social Groups of the same Organization. Their declared objective is to help groups of people with difficulties adjust to changing economic conditions and enter the labour/job market. Some of the reasons leading to social exclusion and marginalization are: lack of basic skills and

qualifications owing to deficient education, physical handicaps, history of institutionalization and/or addiction to chemical substances, social stigma and stereotyping, deficient or lack of knowledge pertaining to government measures and provisions in favour of vulnerable social groups, lack of communication with others.

The individuals that can benefit from the operation of these Employment Offices are:

- people with special needs
- ex-prisoners
- rehabilitated addicts
- young delinquents or other marginalized individuals
- other vulnerable social groups

The Employment Offices for Special Social Groups provide psycho-social support, counselling, vocational information and guidance. In addition, a number of programmes are promoted and carried out for the benefit of these social groups. Furthermore, the targeted groups receive on-going support during their inclusion in the special programmes for vocational rehabilitation. Employment Offices for Special Social Groups operate in Athens, Thessaloniki, Larissa, Volos, Patras, and Heraklion-Crete. Similar services are also provided by OAED offices and agencies established to address the needs of the general population.

### **Information Offices for the Unemployed and Businesses (GEA)**

These Offices come under certain groups of actions taken up by Local Government Organizations, Industrial & Handicraft Chambers, and Trade Unions (Employers and Employees). The establishment of these Offices was co-financed by the E.U. Structural Funds and **OAED** with the aim to benefit both the unemployed and businesses with respect to information about education/training and vocational opportunities, as well as information about Counselling & Vocational Guidance programmes. Some of these Offices are:

### **Information Office for the Unemployed and Businesses - Greek Workers' Confederation (G.S.E.E)**

The operations of this Office of **G.S.E.E.** are housed in the Information **Centre for the Employed and Unemployed (KE.PE.A)**. The latter was established in 2000 by the [Greek Workers' Confederation](#) with the aim to provide information about labour relations, insurance legislation, and immigration policy. In this context, the aim of the Information Office for the Unemployed and Business of G.S.E.E. is to provide information about employment, education and training and facilitate one's inclusion to the labour/job market.

### **Information Offices for the Unemployed and Businesses - Local Government Organizations (O.T.A.)**

The establishment and in-house operation of such Information Offices in [Local Government Organizations'](#) premises is in progress. The aim of these Offices coincides with that of their counterparts established by other agencies and organizations.

Concerning the private sector there are several institutions offering counselling and career guidance services.

## **1.4 Requested initial and further training of guidance staff in Geece**

### **A. Postgraduate Course in Counseling and Vocational Guidance**<sup>3</sup>

Since the 1993-1994 academic year, the Philosophy - Pedagogy - Psychology Department of the Athens University - Faculty of Philosophy has been offering a Postgraduate Course in Counselling and Vocational Guidance. It is aimed at graduates of the departments of the Humanities, Social, Economic and Pure & Applied Sciences of Greek universities, or similar departments abroad as well as at graduates of the Social Work Departments of Technological Educational Institutes. Studies last for 4 semesters and 23 courses must be completed, a dissertation prepared and 400 hours of work-related practical training undergone. Following successful completion of studies a Postgraduate Diploma is conferred.

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<sup>3</sup> [www.ekep.gr](http://www.ekep.gr) date of access: 05/12/2009

From the 2001-2002 academic year, the Primary School Education Pedagogic Department within the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences of the University of Patras has offered a Postgraduate Course leading to the conferment of a Postgraduate Diploma in Education Sciences with a major in "Counseling in education and the people support professions: a relational-dynamic - person-centered and ecosystemic approach". Graduates of University departments from Greece or similar University departments abroad are admissible for the course with preference being given to graduates to pedagogic departments. Moreover, graduates of the relevant departments of Technological Educational Institutes may also be admitted. Conferment of the Diploma requires successful attendance at four semesters including a period of at least 3 months for preparation of a research based or composite dissertation.

A Counseling and Vocational Guidance Department had been in operation at the former Vocational and **Technical Teacher Training Academy (SELETE)** since 1998. Following the establishment of the **Higher School of Pedagogical and Technical Education (ASPAITE)** in 2002 and the abolition of SELETE, the Counseling and Vocational Guidance Department became part of the Pedagogical Subjects General Department.

The course taught by the Counseling and Vocational Guidance Department is aimed at graduates of Universities and Technological Educational Institutes where they also hold degrees from the Pedagogical Technical School or Higher School of technologist - Engineer Training of **SELETE**. Moreover, it is aimed at graduates of the Departments of Philosophy - Pedagogy - Psychology or Philosophy and Pedagogics of University Philosophy Faculties. Furthermore, it is aimed at holders of tertiary level education degrees who also hold a degree from the Pedagogical Institute or a degree in kindergarten or preschool education studies or a degree from a kindergarten school. Lastly it is aimed at graduates of the Departments of Philosophy and Social Studies of Greek University Philosophy Faculties and graduates of tertiary level education who have successfully completed studies on in-service training courses run by the Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs lasting at least 500 hours on the subject of educational vocational guidance in general or some of its main aspects.

The course lasts for two academic semesters and requires that 21 subjects be studied, a dissertation prepared and 300 hours practical work experience be completed. Following successful attendance, a Specialized Degree in Counselling and Vocational Guidance is conferred

## **B. Guidance and Counselling agencies in education sector <sup>4</sup>**

All counselors and information experts employed in Career and Counseling Centers (**KESYP**) and counselors employed in Educational Guidance Offices (**GRASEP**) are teachers who work in Secondary Education. Between 1998 and 2000 in the framework of the Education and Initial Vocational Training

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<sup>4</sup> Cedefop, 2007 Greece: Overview of the Vocational Education and Training System. Refernet,(p.49)

Operational Program, training was provided to: 120 teachers as Educational Vocational Guidance Counselors via an one-year post-graduate diploma course in counseling and vocational guidance in order to staff Career and Counseling Centers (**KESYP**) and 78 teachers as Information and Documentation Experts via a 6-month training (900 hours) course that focused on the collection, dissemination and documentation of information on vocational guidance. Moreover, in order to implement educational guidance at school level, the Ministry of LLL and Religious Affairs (**YPEPTH**) provided 6-month training (520 hours) to 400 full-time secondary education teachers in counseling and educational vocational guidance.

They were used to staff 200 Educational Guidance Offices (**GRASEP**) at school level and to provide vocational guidance to their pupils. According to the study conducted by IEPAS<sup>5</sup> all staff members in the agencies of **GRASEP, KESYP and Career Services Offices for Universities & Technological Educational Institutes GD's** hold a degree in tertiary education, 50% hold a master degree whereas in **GD;s** 42% hold a Phd.

Pedagogical Institute organizes seminars for the in-service training of the councilors.

Offices of Vocational Development and Career (**GEAS**) are staffed with teachers who are interested in working as vocation counselors and have considerable communication skills. They participate in informal meetings organized by the Organization for Vocational Education and Training (**OEEK**).

### **C. Guidance and Counselling agencies in employment sector <sup>6</sup>**

The situation reported in the employment sector GEA's is similar 90% of the councillors are University graduates and half of them hold a master as well. 30% of the masters are in guidance field. The staff has attended special training as well.

It is worth saying that there is no registry for the counsellors but EKEP aims to create one in the framework of establishing accreditation procedures in the sector.

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<sup>5</sup> IEPAS, 2007. "Study and mapping of structures and Actions of Vocational Guidance". YPEPTH 2007. ( p. 221)

<sup>6</sup> IEPAS, 2007. "Study and mapping of structures and Actions of Vocational Guidance". YPEPTH 2007. ( p. 116-131)

## **D. Vocational Training sector**

### **a. Initial vocational training<sup>7</sup>**

The entry requirements for this type of trainers include a tertiary education certificate and a certificate in pedagogics (for those that pedagogics are not included in the curriculum of their basic studies) gained after they complete a two-semester training program in the Higher School of Pedagogical and Technological Education (**ASPATE**). Additionally, in this type of structures Secondary Vocational Education graduates (TEE graduates), who work as assistants of the formal trainers, or Initial Vocational Training certificate holders (**IEK** graduates) may serve. Besides formal qualifications, the recruitment of trainers depends upon professional experience, which is considered to be an important factor for admission. The number of years of prior professional experience varies and is usually correlated with formal qualifications and the training subject.

In-service training is provided by the Organization for Vocational Education and Training (**OEEK**) through the organization of seminars on the latest advancements and current trends in the various fields related to the specialties available. **OEEK** is the process of issuing a call for interest addressing trainers of adults, who have already been employed in Vocational Training Institutes (**IEK**), in order to draw up a list of trainers.

Training curricula are designed by teams of experts employed by **OEEK** and trainers can be members of such teams.

### **b. Continuing Vocational Training (CVET)<sup>8</sup>**

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<sup>7</sup> Greece: Overview of the Vocational Education and Training System. Refernet. (p.37-38)

<sup>8</sup> Greece: Overview of the Vocational Education and Training System. Refernet. (p.38)

Candidate trainers who wish to be appointed in structures providing continuing vocational training such as **KEK** should be included in the Introductory Register of Trainers in Continuing Vocational Training established by the **National Accreditation Center for Vocational Training (EKEPIS)**. After having registered, they have to attend training seminars, which last for 800 hours, and on completion of the seminars they are assessed. Successful assessment entitles trainers to enroll in the Register of Accredited Trainers in CVET. In-service training for CVET trainers is not foreseen. Trainers in CVET have possibly the opportunity to participate in training courses provided by various educational and training institutions. However, training is voluntary and not necessarily related to the tasks performed in CVET training structures.

Pre-service training is provided by the National Accreditation Centre for Vocational Training (**EKEPIS**). **EKEPIS** has initiated the National Training Program for trainers in CVET. The program was launched in late 2002 and aimed at setting up and providing pre-service, pedagogical training for trainers in Continuing Vocational Training. The program has planned to implement distance learning methods and techniques for large-scale, nation-wide training courses.

Up to now, there are no continuous assessment procedures to evaluate quality and performance of trainers while in-service.

### **1.5 Requested quality certificates from the guidance institutions**

There is no certification procedures like those existing in the vocational training sector (see below, 2). However the public agencies in the education sector meet specifications concerning infrastructures, electronic networks, equipment and staff.

Moreover the introduction of accreditation procedures for the guidance sector is a stated priority of **EKEP**.

## **2 Quality programmes in continuous and further group training in Greece**

All agencies involved in continuing vocational training, both public and private ones, are supervised and coordinated by **The National Accreditation Center for Vocational Training (EKEPIS)** acting under **the Ministry of Labor and Social Security (YPAKP)** and it has administrative and financial autonomy. The Center's mission is to develop and implement the National Accreditation System for Continuing Vocational Training. This system aims to achieve quality assurance in vocational training, linkage between initial and continuing vocational qualifications and recognition of vocational qualifications provided via continuing vocational training.

In order to assure the quality of non-formal vocational training courses **EKEPIS** uses evaluation criteria and has implemented systems for:

- Accreditation of vocational training centers (**KEK**).
- Accreditation of continuing vocational training trainers via the establishment of a register.
- Accreditation of continuing vocational training courses that result in the acquisition of accredited knowledge, skills and qualifications related to the needs of the labor market.
- Accreditation of staff providing support services via the establishment of a register.
- Development of the system for the ongoing monitoring and evaluation of the work of accreditation centers.

The following are criteria generally employed in designating a training institution as a **KEK**:

- experience in organizing adult training courses
- teaching personnel
- facilities

Moreover, the Organization for Vocational Education and Training **OEEK** cooperates with the National Accreditation Centre for Continuing Vocational Training (**EKEPIS**). The goal is to link Initial Vocational Training and Continuing Vocational Training and to formulate common regulations and principles concerning the certification of trainers and accreditation of structures, bodies and training programs

### **3 Quality situation in guidance in group settings in Greece**

As mentioned above

#### **3.1 Existing problems on the system and meta level**

The IEPAS study revealed the following issues for improvement and or reconstruction in the guidance sector:

- Organisational structures (no job description-organisational chart, housing)
- Human resources (deficiencies in administration personnel and sociologists, physiologists, various employment status, high educational level of personnel)
- Funding (low budgets or absence of autonomous financing, dependence on European funds to a great extent)
- Low rates of intervention in the target group (5% of the targeted population) (low exploitation of best practices and application of existing tools, low participation of early school leavers,
- Methodologies and performance of the services (wide differentiation in methodologies -no standardization, deficiencies

in tools use, no internal-external evaluation in many agencies, annual increase-law percentage, absence of effectiveness indicators,

- Cooperation of agencies-institutions (overlapping/conflicting roles and missions between the agencies, boundaries in competences)

### **3.2 Suggestions by experts to improve the situation or solve the problems**

The summarised proposals <sup>9</sup>of the study aforementioned for the guidance sector include:

#### a. Organisation

- Organisational structure of all bodies and agencies (domains of competence, concrete missions, accountability, strategic plans, evaluation of performance, accreditation mechanisms)

#### b. Human resources

- Recruitment of expertise counsellors in specific fields (sociologists) for the psycho-social support of the participants
- Cooperation of local agencies with the coordinating body and the local institutions activated in other sectors
- Common guidelines for in-service training of counsellors in all sectors

#### c. Financial resources

- Rationalisation in funding and management of available resources as well as fund raising. The central coordination towards this purpose is considered a matter of priority
- Financial autonomy of all agencies/institutions and accountability mechanisms

#### d. Upgrading and expansion of the provided services

- Rationalisation and expansion of the first grade activities for raising awareness, dissemination and information
- Full exploitation of ICT's
- Full application of know-how
- implementation of all applied knowledge which is available

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<sup>9</sup> IEPAS, 2007. " Study and mapping of structures and Actions of Vocational Guidance". YPEPTH 2007 ( p.276-301)

Creative incorporation of career guidance methodologies in school curriculum

- Raising of the effectiveness
- Homogenisation of methodologies and introduction of the accreditation procedures
- Certification of counsellors in using the tools
- Full use of the psychometric tools in all sectors
- Standardisation of courses for different target groups

#### **4 Existing quality standards in guidance in group settings**

Please describe existing quality standards used in the partner country and if possible in how far they are used and what the possible problems with the current quality certificates are! Maybe you may also find any quality projects or other efforts undertaken to improve the quality in this field. Please note what sources you can refer to with regards to your overall judgement (expert interviews lead with whom, existing research projects etc.)

##### **4.1 Quality certificates used in Greece**

(as above)

##### **4.2 Quality efforts or individual quality programmes by the initiators, training institutions or trainers' organizations**

a. The **IEPAS** study consists an integrated effort for raising the quality of counselling and career guidance. It was conducted in 2007 by the Institute of Vocational and Career Guidance (IEPAS) on behalf of the Ministry of LLL and Religious Affairs (**YPEPTH**) and it was co-funded by the EU. The study depicts the situation and the areas of concern for all institutions and agencies exercising vocational guidance and counselling services at all levels. The study is grounded on field research (questionnaires, structured interviews, study visits/observation). It includes examination of the existing legal framework, the conclusions and the current situation, proposals for improvement at all levels of operation, extended proposal for legal interventions, new organisational charts for the tree levels of provision, framework of guiding principals for guidance and counselling services as well as an extended Greek and international bibliography<sup>10</sup>.

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<sup>10</sup> IEPAS, 2007. "Study and mapping of structures and Actions of Vocational Guidance". YPEPTH 2007 ( p.30)

The research team set a number of performance/effectiveness indicators <sup>11</sup> in order to assess the quality of the institutions engaged:

1. Population ratio taking advantage of the guidance provision
2. The application of quality assessment mechanisms
3. The uniformity and the extent of standardisation of the services provided
4. The organisational efficiency of the institutions (selection of personnel, appraisals, organizational charts, job descriptions, TQM procedures)
5. Human resources (experienced personnel, educational level, training needs analysis, frequency of training)
6. Infrastructures (autonomy, equipment, safety, access for special needs population)
7. Financial issues (budget and accountability)
8. Scientific level of services related to available sources and best practices
9. Available sources for the provision of services
10. Implementation of activities for raising awareness and dissemination
11. Quality assurance provision

#### **b. The activities of the Hellenic Society of Counseling and Guidance (ELESYP)**

The **Hellenic Society of Counseling and Guidance (ELESYP)**<sup>12</sup> is a scientific society of multiannual activity, high class and indisputable recognition in the wider relevant field in Greece.

The society was established in 1985 and the Members of the ELESYP today counting about 1050, are Counselors of Vocational Guidance, Psychologists, Sociologists, Social Workers, and - in majority - Teachers-Counselors on Vocational Guidance and Heads in charge on School Vocational Guidance.

It is a scientific, non profitable company, aiming at:

- Reinforcement, promotion and establishment of Counseling and Guidance.
- Fortification of qualification of the Counselors - Guide in Greece.
- Knowing, helping, cooperating and communicating with each other of all Members of the Society

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<sup>11</sup> IEPAS, 2007. "Study and mapping of structures and Actions of Vocational Guidance". YPEPTH 2007 ( p.249)

<sup>12</sup> [www.elesyp.gr](http://www.elesyp.gr), date of access: 15/12/2009

They edit the "Review of Counseling and Guidance" which is in electronic form as well. They have organized many seminars, national and international conferences.

The last one : "Current challenges and the counseling and guidance sector" was international and it was held in Athens in November 2009. It was implemented in cooperation with **EPEK**.

## **5 Important quality domains in scope of guidance measures with regards to the specific problems in Greece**

After the presentation of the current situation in Greece we may set some priority issues for Vocational counseling and guidance at all levels and all sectors (employment, education, training).

One which is of major concern is the methodology to motivate the bottom-up procedures.

The initiatives/measures being proposed will not achieve the initial goals unless all practioners engaged get the ownership of changes and acquire a self commitment attitude towards them. At the same time all offering their services should be supported with the adequate methodologies and tools to meet the goals set.

The "QuideMe" proposal consists an integrated and tested approach for the empowerment and motivation of all stake holders leading to quality assurance. The project provides methodologies and tools for self-reflection, evaluation and self assessment procedures contributing to feedback and redesign mechanisms.

Furthermore it contributes to the diffusion and application of best practices and the strengthening of the "european dimension" of methodologies in the counseling and guidance sector.

## 6 Bibliography

Cedefop, 2007. "Greece: Overview of the Vocational Education and Training System". Refernet.

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### Electronic sources visited

[www.cedefop.europa.eu](http://www.cedefop.europa.eu) (European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training)

[www.edull.gr](http://www.edull.gr) (Operational program "Education and Lifelong Learning")

[www.ekep.gr](http://www.ekep.gr) (National Resource Centre for Vocational Guidance)

[www.ekepis.gr](http://www.ekepis.gr) (National Accreditation Center for Vocational Training)

[www.elesyp.gr](http://www.elesyp.gr) (Hellenic Society of Counseling and Guidance)

[www.oaed.gr](http://www.oaed.gr) (Greek Manpower Organization)

[www.oEEK.gr](http://www.oEEK.gr) ([Organization for Vocational Education and Training](http://www.oEEK.gr))

[www.pi-schools.gr](http://www.pi-schools.gr) (Pedagogical Institute)