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Needs Analysis for Greece



NETnotNEET

Larissa Greece, July 2015

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NNN - NETnot NEET

Need analysis Greece

1. Demographical overview

<p>NEET rate (%) including gender details and migration background and special needs (if any)</p>	<p>The Greek NEETs rate for young people aged 15-24 is 17,4% (according to the Eurofound (2012) or 16,9% according to the Absents Barometer Greek study (2013). Eurostat data present an increase of 54,7% of Greek NEETs rate from 2008 to 2011 (aged 15-29).</p> <p>According to OECD Education at a Glance 2013 for Greece, In 2011, some 22% of 15-29 year-olds were neither in employment nor in education or training (NEET), against 16% in OECD countries as a whole. In 2011, Greece reported 30% of NEETs among 25-29 year-olds, the second highest proportion of NEETs across the OECD countries (average 20%), just below Turkey (40%).</p> <p>According to OECD's interim report (2014) the breakdown sub groups of young Greeks aged 15-19 is:</p> <p>In education:89,3%</p> <p>Employed: 1,4%</p> <p>Unemployed:4,4%</p> <p>Inactive NEETs:4,9%</p> <p>Total % of NEETs aged 15-19:9,3%</p> <p>According to the Absents Barometer study the distribution of youth population aged 15-24 in Greece is:</p> <p>Employed: 16,2%</p> <p>Pupil-Student:65,4%</p>
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	<p>Trainee: 1,5%</p> <p>NEET: 16,9%</p> <p>According to Eurofound study, age details for NEETs are:</p> <p>15-19 years old: 8,6 %</p> <p>15-24 years old: 17,4%</p> <p>20-24 years old: 26,5%</p> <p>15-29 years old: 23,2 %</p> <p>Gender details of NEETs (in the total population):</p> <p>Male:45,6%</p> <p>Female:54,4%</p> <p>NEET rate by gender in Member States, 2012 or respective population 15-24 for Greece:</p> <p>Male:19%</p> <p>Female:21,6%</p> <p>Regarding the ethno-cultural origin of NEETs should be noted that as shown by the quantitative research the total percentage not have Greek nationality (immigrants and children of immigrants without Greek citizenship, i.e. without integrated institutions in Greece) is very small (see. GPO & KEADIK 2013: 27-28).We can speculate that the aforementioned low rate does not reflect the actual proportion of young people of another nationality, because this demographic group is underrepresented in the study.</p>
<p>Early school leaving rate (%) including gender details, migration background and special needs (if any)</p>	<p>According to Eurostat the early school leaving rate for Greece is:</p> <p>2010: 13,7% (EU 14%)</p> <p>2011: 13,1% (EU 13,5%)</p> <p>2012: 11,4% (Eu 12,8%)</p> <p>2020 National Target: 9,7% (EU <10%)</p> <p>At EU27 level there are only 76 girls for every 100 boys who are early school leavers (2012). In Greece it is 66 girls for every 100 boys school leavers. So the gender breakdown is:</p> <p>Male:60,2%</p> <p>Female:39,8%</p>

	<p>According to the Ministry of Culture, Education and Religious Affairs data (2010-2011 school year) the school leavers from public primary education were 0,6%. The early school leaving in primary education is quite low in our country. But there is a very small percentage of children who should be enrolled in the education system and it never occurs to school. These children belong primarily to special social groups (eg. Roma, immigrants etc.). The early school leaving in lower secondary education (Gymnasium) has a downward trend over the last twenty years (1987: 12,6% 2004:6,51%).</p>
<p>Youth unemployment rate (%) including gender details and migration background and special needs (if any)</p>	<p>According to Eurostat, Youth unemployment rates are generally much higher, even double or more than double, than unemployment rates for all ages. Youth Unemployment Rate in Greece averaged 33,46% from 1998 until 2015, reaching an all-time high of 60,50% in February of 2013 and a record low of 20,10% in May of 2008.</p> <p>Young people were hardest hit by the impact of the economic crisis, whatever their level of qualification. Among young adults (25-34 year-olds), the unemployment rate between 2008 and 2011 increased by more than 13 percentage points to reach 23% among those with an upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary education, and more than 26% among those with tertiary qualifications.</p> <p>Youth unemployment rate in Greece during the last 4 years is very high:</p> <p>2012:55,3% (EU-28: 23,3%) 2013:58,3% (EU-28: 23,7%) 2014:52,4%(EU-28: 22,2%) March 2015: 49,7%</p> <p>The youth unemployment rate as far as age is concerned is as follows for 2014:</p> <p>15-19 years old: 65% unemployed 20-24 years old: 50% unemployed 25-29 years old: 33% unemployed</p> <p>This reflects the fact that the majority of young aged 15-19 are still engaged full time in education. Though 15-19 year olds have the highest unemployment rates in 2012 (56% for males and 79% for females), this age group has low, and declining, rates of labour market participation between 2005 and 2012. When levels of participation</p>

	<p>are low, high unemployment rates can be consistent with relatively small absolute numbers of unemployed people. This is the case for this age group.</p> <p>In 2012, the unemployment rate for females aged 15-19 was 23% above that for males, while for those aged 20-24 and 25-29, the equivalent margins were 14% and 5%. Female youth unemployment rates are significantly higher than those for males.</p>
Age of NEETs	15-29 years
Educational level of NEETs	<p>Regarding the educational level of NEETs under the quantitative survey data the highest percentage of NEETS, are graduates of lower (less a percentage) and higher (the majority) secondary education (high school, most, or professional Lyceum and Technical School), while quite important is the category NEETs of graduates from higher education.</p> <p>More specifically in the population of NEETs:</p> <p>Compulsory-primary education:0,6%</p> <p>High education-Gymnasium:25,3%</p> <p>General Education-Lyceum:56,4%</p> <p>Technical School-VET:7,4%</p> <p>Tertiary Education:10,3%</p>

2. Background report

2.1. Description of the phenomenon of NEET in Greece / Thessaly / Larissa

- *trends of NEET phenomenon in the last 5 years (before and during the economic crisis)*

In the first part of this paragraph, we will try to understand the way the NEET phenomenon is related to the development of the labour market and the effect of the economic crisis, by presenting statistical data at European level with emphasis on data for Greece:

In 2011, the **economic loss** due to the disengagement of young people from the labour market was €153 billion. This is a conservative estimate and corresponds to 1.2% of European GDP. There is great variation between Member States, but some countries are paying an especially high price of 2% or more of their GDP: Bulgaria, Cyprus, **Greece**, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia and Poland. In absolute terms, the country where the cost of NEETs increased most in the period 2007–2011 was Romania (+78%), followed by **Greece (+76%)** and, surprisingly, Denmark (+62%). Spain recorded an increase of more than 45%.

The youth unemployment rate in the EU27 reached 21.4% in 2011 compared with 15.7% in 2007. Large differences occur between Member States. With the exception of Austria and Germany, all countries have recorded **an increase in their youth unemployment rate** since the economic crisis began. The situation is also striking in **Greece (44.4%)**, Slovakia (33.2%), Lithuania (32.9%) and Portugal (30.1%); in Ireland, Italy and Latvia, the rate is 29.1%.

The proportion of those with just a primary education who are unemployed has grown considerably in Europe, from 20% in 2007 to 28.2% in 2011. The situation at country level is much more complex. **The increase since the onset of the crisis has been most dramatic** in Ireland, **Greece** and Spain, while the rate is unchanged or has decreased in Austria, Germany and Slovakia. Tertiary education undeniably protects against unemployment, but since the onset of the crisis, the youth unemployment rate has increased dramatically among the most educated category of young people. For example **rates of unemployment among young people with tertiary education are very high in Greece (48.6%)**, Spain (35%), Romania (29.4%), Portugal (29%) and Italy (27.1%). In all these countries, the situation worsened considerably during the crisis.

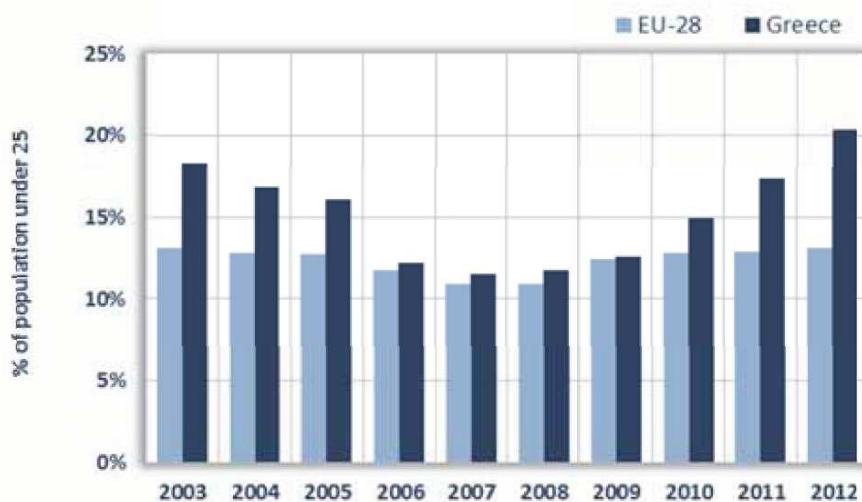
Long-term unemployment is particularly high in Slovakia, Bulgaria, Italy, Ireland, **Greece** and Romania; in all these countries 40% or more of jobless young people are long-term unemployed. Against an EU average of 33.6%, **young people seem particularly disengaged from the labour market** in Slovakia (20.2%), Bulgaria (20.1%), Lithuania (19.7%), Italy

(19.4%), Hungary (18.3%) and **Greece (16.3%)**, all of which are characterized by very low youth employment rates.

As far as Greece is concerned our country has been in recession since the autumn of 2009, when the risk of bankruptcy first officially appeared. The high levels of unemployment, the continuous wage and pension cuts, and the ever-increasing austerity measures have led to a decrease in purchasing power and a significant slide in per capita GDP. Despite the considerable drop in the cost of labour, investment remains low, while the political and institutional uncertainty impedes inflows of new capital.

According to the above mentioned data, the Greek labour market and economy was totally affected by the economic crisis, so NEETs rate in Greece is expected to be increased and remained high as the crisis lasts, as obviously is presented at the following histogram.

Figure 5. **Young people (15-24) not in employment, education or training, 2003-12**



Source: Eurostat, website database, 2013.

This can be also shown at the following table with the evolution of NEETs rate in Greece (totally and per region), where our Region Thessaly is above the mean of Greece. This regional increase of NEETs rate is reinforced by the increase of unemployment in Thessaly-StereiaEllada (26.9% for February 2015, the highest rate among the Greek regions).

Young people aged 15-24 neither in employment nor in education and training in Greece (Eurostat 17/4/2015)

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Greece (in total)	14,8	17,4	20,2	20,4	19,1
AnatolikiMakedonia, Thraki (NUTS)	21,5	27,4	28,1	28,3	22,2

2010)					
KentrikiMakedonia (NUTS 2010)	12,8	16,1	18,8	19,4	18,1
DytikiMakedonia (NUTS 2010)	12,2	18,5	23,3	22,1	15,7
Thessalia (NUTS 2010)	16,9	19,7	21,3	19,6	20,2
Ipeiros (NUTS 2010)	18,1	20,2	23,6	19,5	20,9
Ionia Nisia (NUTS 2010)	17,3	10,3	13,8	20,8	19,9
DytikiEllada (NUTS 2010)	16,7	18,1	18,3	17,4	19,1
StereiaEllada (NUTS 2010)	21,1	23,0	26,9	30,9	28,4
Peloponnisos (NUTS 2010)	17,4	20,5	29,0	28,5	26,6
Attiki	12,2	14,3	18,5	18,5	17,4
VoreioAigaio	17,6	18,9	19,6	21,8	19,7
NotioAigaio	19,1	21,9	16,0	18,8	14,8
Kriti	15,3	18,1	17,9	18,3	18,7

The project “Absents’ Barometer: Detection, classification and empirically founded policy proposals to tackle the new form of social vulnerability: the NEETs (Young People Not in Education, Employment or Training)”, based on qualitative and quantitative findings, attempted to identify the NEETs in Greece for the first time and present their characteristics, within the framework of a constantly changing socio-economic and political environment and under the shadow of a multilevel economic downturn.

There is a difference between the above mentioned study and the description of the current situation of Greece by Eurofound (2012) in respect to the consequences of the economic recession on the employment sector, and consequently, on the increase of unemployment rates.

Although Greece has a high rate of NEETs (17,4% according to Eurofound and 16,9% according to the «Absents’ Barometer» (see GPO & KEADIK, 2013: 9), Eurofound does not classify Greece as one of the countries the economic crisis has brought tremendous transformations in employment and youth unemployment and as a result, in an increase of the NEETs population. In contrast to the Eurofound study, the findings of the quantitative (see GPO & KEADIK, 2012 and GPO & KEADIK, 2013) as well of the qualitative research (see KEADIK & KANEP, 2013) in the framework of the «Absents’ Barometer», the economic crisis and the increase of youth unemployment rates are the main parameters for the increase of the NEETs in Greece. And

how can this not be the case, with Greece leading in unemployment rates having 27,4% in the total of population and 59,2% of young people (aged 15-24) in the second trimester of 2013. It is therefore empirical data that refutes the Eurofound assessment in respect to the impact of the economic recession to employment.

Empowering young people by creating favourable conditions for them to develop their skills and to work and participate actively in society is essential for sound and sustainable economic and social development. The integration of young people into the labour market, however, poses a great challenge for Member States and especially Greece. Young people have been particularly affected by the current crisis regarding both their employment prospects and alarming levels of youth unemployment. The social cost of the increase of youth unemployment is equal high. It is estimated that young people not in education, training or employment express less confidence in democratic institutions and have greater tendency to abstain from civic life. The problem of youth unemployment undermines growth prospects and erodes social cohesion (rise of extremist movements, weakened solidarity between generations, xenophobia and racism, anti-European and nationalism movements etc.), effects that already appear in Greece.

- *main causes of NEET phenomenon beyond the economic crisis*

Some of the causes of NEET phenomenon beyond the economic crisis are:

Early School leaving (School drop-out)

A majority of EU Member States have made progress on the Europe 2020 education targets to reduce the rate of early school leaving to below 10% and increase the share of young people with higher education (tertiary or equivalent) qualifications to above 40% by 2020, according to new figures for 2012 released by Eurostat. However, there are still wide disparities between Member States and between males and females.

The reasons why young people abandon education early are largely personal; many a time family reasons are involved. However, some recurrent characteristics have been identified establishing a close link to early school leaving. School dropout relates to individual circumstances occurring within a family often forcing the child to leave school (e.g. the loss of the father). The repercussions from early school leaving, at **individual** level, affect people throughout their life and decrease their possibilities of participating in the social, cultural and economic evolution of society.

Early school leaving drives young people to unemployment very quickly. Their employability depends closely on the level of formal qualifications acquired. Even in case unskilled persons are employed, they earn less, occupying mostly precarious jobs; very often they depend on social care and participate less in lifelong learning. Therefore, the early school leaving indicator is a critical element that could be utilized in the strategic planning process, with the aim to

combat educational disparities. For this reason, the elimination of educational disparities figures among the key strategic objectives of Lisbon strategy.

According to EUROSTAT data, approximately 15% of young people at the age of 18-24 leave secondary education early; this rate displays a small progress towards the target, i.e. 10% fixed for 2010. However, the target for 2014-2020 is 9,7%. The rate in Greece in the last year reaches 13,1%, i.e. we are lagging far behind. The research conducted has shown that the Primary school presents almost zero early school leaving rates, since education is compulsory in Greece till high school (gymnasium).

In Primary School, the school dropout rate is very limited. This rate increases more in Lower Secondary School, skyrocketing in vocational education. In vocational education, school dropout reaches 22% to 23%. The State, therefore, should implement actions in this field, in technical vocational education. Where do we observe the highest rates? Research shows that, per grade of education, the phenomenon is observed in secondary education and mainly in Technical Vocational Education, for reasons that we present later concerning the low appeal of VET.

The common denominator of many studies is that the non-completion of secondary education and thus the non-acquisition of adequate training and qualification skills unable young to enter the labor market, leads to lower employment levels, professional and personal success, but also in poverty, unemployment, marginalization.

If we consider the gender parameter, we shall observe that 16,3% of males leave school early, compared to 12,5% of females. This difference is higher in rural areas. In these areas, males abandon school much earlier. Throughout compulsory education, males tend to face more learning difficulties compared to females; this is why we often argue that girls study more compared to boys.

As regards the spatial and geographical distribution, in Greece the early school leaving rate in Lower Secondary School is smaller in the urban areas. In most Prefectures, the urban areas present a lower early school leaving rate compared to semi-urban and rural areas.

Greece has succeeded to reduce the early school leaving rate from 25,2% in 1982 to 10,1% in 2013. The early school leaving is a parameter that affects less than the others the NEETs rate in Greece.

Early leavers from education and training

geo	time	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
EU (28 countries)		9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	17	16.4 ^(a)	16	15.7	15.3	14.8	14.7	14.2	13.9	13.4	12.7	11.9	11.3 ^(a)
EU (27 countries)		:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	17.6 ^(a)	17.2 ^(a)	17	16.5 ^(a)	16.1	15.8	15.4	15	14.8	14.3	14	13.5	12.8	12	11.4 ^(a)
Euro area (18 countries)		:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	19.6 ^(a)	19.1 ^(a)	18.9	18.4 ^(a)	17.9	17.6	17.3	16.8	16.4	15.8	15.4	14.7	13.8	12.9	12.1 ^(a)
Euro area (17 countries)		:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	19.6 ^(a)	19.1 ^(a)	18.9	18.4 ^(a)	17.9	17.6	17.3	16.8	16.4	15.8	15.5	14.7	13.8	12.9	12.1 ^(a)
Belgium		18.1	17.4	16.1	15.1	12.9	12.7	14.5	15.2 ^(a)	13.8	13.8	14.1	14.3	13.1 ^(a)	12.9	12.6	12.1	12	11.1	11.9	12.3	12	11	10 ^(a)
Bulgaria		:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	20.5	20.7	21.9	21.4	20.4	17.3	14.9	14.8	14.7	13.9	11.8	12.5	12.5	13 ^(a)
Czech Republic		:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	5.7	6.5 ^(a)	6.3	6.2	5.1	5.2	5.6	5.4	4.9	4.9	5.5	5.4	5.5 ^(a)
Denmark		15.2	8.5	8.6	6.1	12.1 ^(a)	10.7	9.8	11.5	11.7	9.2	9	10.4 ^(a)	8.8	8.7	9.1	12.9 ^(a)	12.5	11.3	11	9.6	9.1	8	7.6 ^(a)
Germany		:	:	:	:	13.3	12.9	:	14.9	14.6	12.3	12.5	12.8 ^(a)	12.1	13.5 ^(a)	13.7	12.5	11.8	11.1	11.9	11.6	10.5	9.8	9.7 ^(a)
Estonia		:	:	:	:	:	12.6	14	15.1	14.7	13.6	13.7	13.9	14	13.4	14.4	14	13.5	11	10.6	10.3	9.7	10.7 ^(a)	
Ireland		27.1	24	22.9	21.4	18.9	18.9	:	:	:	14.6	13.1 ^(a)	13.1	12.5	12.1	11.6	11.3	11.7	11.5	10.8	9.7	8.4	7.2 ^(a)	
Greece		25.2	25	23.2	22.4	20.7	19.9	20.7	18.6	18.2	16.9	16.2	15.6^(a)	14.5	13.3	15.1	14.3	14.4	14.2	13.5	12.9	11.7	10.1	9.3^(a)
Spain		40.4	37.7	36.4	33.8	31.4	30	29.6	29.5	29.1	29.7	30.9 ^(a)	31.7	32.2	31 ^(a)	30.3	30.8	31.7	30.9	28.2	26.3	24.7	23.6	22.3 ^(a)
France		:	17.2	16.4	15.4	15.2	14.1	14.9	14.7	13.3	13.5	13.4	12.4 ^(a)	12.1	12.2	12.4	12.6	11.5	12.2	12.5	11.9	11.5	9.7 ^(a)	:
Croatia		:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	8	7.9	5.4 ^(a)	5.1 ^(a)	4.7 ^(a)	3.9	3.7	3.9	3.7	4.1	4.2	4.5	3.2 ^(a)	
Italy		37.5	37.1 ^(a)	35.1	32.8	31.7	30.1	28.4	27.2	25.1	25.9	24.2	23	22.9	22.3	20.6	19.7	19.7	19.2	18.6	18.2	17.6	17	15.6 ^(a)
Cyprus		:	:	:	:	:	:	17.5	18.5	17.9	15.9	17.3 ^(a)	20.6	18.2 ^(a)	14.9	12.5	13.7	11.7	12.7	11.3	11.4	9.1	7.9 ^(a)	
Latvia		:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	16.5	18.8	15.9	15.4	15.6	15.8	15.5	14.3	12.9	11.6 ^(a)	10.6	9.8	8.7 ^(a)		
Lithuania		:	:	:	:	:	:	:	16.5	14.9 ^(a)	13.4 ^(a)	11.4	10.3 ^(a)	8.4	8.8	7.8	7.5	8.7	7.9	7.4	6.5	6.3	5.9 ^(a)	
Luxembourg		42.2	36.8	34.4	33.4	35.3	30.7	:	19.1 ^(a)	16.8	18.1	17	12.3 ^(a)	12.7	13.3	14	12.5	13.4	7.7 ^(a)	7.1	6.2	8.1	6.1	6.5 ^(a)
Hungary		:	:	:	:	17.8	15.9	13	13.9	13.1	12.2	12 ^(a)	12.6	12.5	12.6	11.4	11.7	11.2	10.5	11.2	11.5	11.8	11.1	11.1 ^(a)
Malta		:	:	:	:	:	:	54.2 ^(a)	54.4 ^(a)	53.2 ^(a)	49.9 ^(a)	42.1 ^(a)	33 ^(a)	32.2	30.2	27.2	25.7	23.8	22.7	21.1	20.5	20.2 ^(a)		
Netherlands		:	:	:	17.6	16	15.5	16.2	15.4	15.1	15.3	14.3 ^(a)	14.1	13.5	12.6	11.7	11.4	10.9	10 ^(a)	9.1	8.8	9.2	8.7 ^(a)	
Austria		:	:	13.6	12.1	10.8	:	10.7	10.2	10.2	9.5	9 ^(a)	9.5 ^(a)	9.1	9.8	10.7	10.1	8.7	8.3	8.3	7.6	7.3	6.9 ^(a)	
Poland		:	:	:	:	:	:	7.4	7.2	6	5.6 ^(a)	5.3	5.4	5	5	5.3	5.4	5.6	5.7	5.6	5.4	5.4		
Portugal		50	46.7	44.3	41.4	40.1	40.6	46.6 ^(a)	44.9	43.6	44.2	45	41.2	39.3 ^(a)	38.3	38.5	38.5	34.9	30.9	28.3	23	20.5	18.9	17.7 ^(a)
Romania		:	:	:	:	19.7	19.1	21.5	22.9	21.7	23	22.5	22.4 ^(a)	19.6	17.9	17.3	15.9	16.6	16.4	17.5	17.4	17.3	17.7 ^(a)	
Slovenia		:	:	:	:	:	:	6.4	5.1	4.6 ^(a)	4.3	4.9	5.6	4.1	5.1	5.3	5	4.2	4.4	3.9	3.8 ^(a)			
Slovakia		:	:	:	:	:	:	6.7	5.3 ^(a)	6.8	6.3	6.6	6.5	6	4.9	4.7	5.1	5.3	6.4	6.6 ^(a)				
Finland		:	:	:	11.1	8.1	7.9	9.9	9 ^(a)	9.5	9.7	10.1 ^(a)	10	10.3	9.7	9.1	9.8	9.9	10.3 ^(a)	9.8	8.9	9.3	9.4 ^(a)	
Sweden		:	:	7.5	6.8	:	6.9	7.3 ^(a)	10.2 ^(a)	10 ^(a)	9.2 ^(a)	9.2 ^(a)	10.8 ^(a)	8.6 ^(a)	8	7.9	7	6.5	6.6	7.5	7.1	6.9 ^(a)		
United Kingdom		34.7	36.3	32.3	:	:	19.8 ^(a)	18.2	17.8	17.6	12.1 ^(a)	12.1	11.6	11.3	16.6 ^(a)	17	15.7	14.9	15	13.6	12.3	12.1 ^(a)		
Iceland		:	:	:	:	:	30.3	29.8	30.9	28.8	20.3 ^(a)	24.9	24.9	25.6	23.2	24.4	21.3	22.6	19.7	20.1	20.5	19.4 ^(a)		
Norway		:	:	:	10.9	7.3	:	12.9	8.9	13.5	6.3 ^(a)	4.7	4.6	17.8 ^(a)	18.4	17	17.6	17.4	16.6	14.8	13.7	14.6 ^(a)		
Switzerland		:	:	:	6.1	6.5	4.9	5	7.3	6.6	6.7	9.7 ^(a)	9.5	9.7	9.6 ^(a)	7.6	7.7	9.1 ^(a)	6.6	6.3	5.5	5.4	5.5 ^(a)	
Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, the		:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	22.8	19.9	19.6	16.2	15.5	13.5	11.7	11.4	12.4 ^(a)	
Turkey		:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	48.8	46.9	45.5	44.3	43.1	41.9	39.6	37.5	38.2 ^(a)	

Source of Data: Eurostat

Last update: 25.03.2015

Hyperlink to the table: <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/eurostat/tgm/table.do?tab=table&init=1&plugin=1&language=en&pcode=tsdsc410>

General Disclaimer of the EC website: http://ec.europa.eu/geninfo/legal_notices_en.htm

Short Description: The indicator is defined as the percentage of the population aged 18-24 with at most lower secondary education and who were not in further education or training during the last four weeks preceding the survey. Lower secondary education refers to ISCED (International Standard Classification of Education) 2011 level 0-2 for data from 2014 onwards and to ISCED 1997 level 0-3C short for data up to 2013. The indicator is based on the EU Labor Force Survey.

Special-vulnerable target groups (Children with learning difficulties, Immigrants, Roma...)

Research has shown that the Primary school presents almost zero early school leaving rates, nonetheless the highest rates are observed in areas with Roma children population, children of immigrants and generally in the areas with the biggest socioeconomic problems. In Greece, drop-out rate for vulnerable groups at schools is really high. On the one hand, this is due to the social exclusion that immigrants face and on the other hand due to the monoculture character of the Greek educational system which is not in a position to adopt and apply the basic principles of multicultural education effectively.

Vulnerable and socially disadvantaged groups and persons coming from a low educational background constitute some recurrent patterns. There are also educational factors, such as the low response of educational programs in supporting students with educational difficulties or in meeting labour market needs. It is very common that study programs themselves are to blame, as they are not adapted to face children with special characteristics, specific problems and learning difficulties. It is quite probable therefore to “lose” this child from the classroom.

The gigantic and continuous flow of immigrants, coming from totally different cultural characteristics and environments, resulting heterogeneity acting inhibitory to the socialization of these children and their integration in the school environment. So these children reinforced the feeling of rejection by their classmates, and this leads to the abandonment of school.

Although a lot of surveys carried out in Greece on school dropout in general and for specific categories, such as Roma, no specific researches on immigrants have been performed. There are insufficient data (quantitative and qualitative) on the performance of foreign students in Greek schools and the factors affecting them. A major problem that immigrants encountered is the temporary place to leave, as survival issues force them to seek any kind of work anywhere.

The family, therefore, face a lot of difficulties in the integration at the host country (residence permits, daily living problems) and often ignores education issues for their children, who will leave education earlier.

As for the foreign students, the economic deprivation forces them to work during their schooling, so they cannot meet both requirements and ultimately interrupt their studies to school.

The difficulties faced by foreigners, with the Greek language, makes communication with teachers and classmates impossible. These operate negatively on educational integration and the development of foreigners.

Furthermore, the systematic linguistic support of children belonging to families that do not speak the language of the school (immigrants, Roma, etc.) is also important. For years now many programs have been put in place to support Roma students. These programs carry out a very important task but are fraught with a significant weakness. This weakness rests in the fact that we lack to date an integrated evaluation and data entry system to be able to know across the national territory the success and sustainability level of such programs, i.e. how many Roma children finally managed to continue going to school and complete it, whether at Primary or Secondary Education level. How many children kept on attending the school? Where are these children, who in one year find themselves in the area of Larissa and the following year in Lamia? Is there a system, an Observatory to keep track of all these children? Do we find these children in the school environment or have we lost them? Do we make an effort to depict all these data? All the above, Cooperation Observatories taking place in local communities, the school with Roma parents etc. last for as long as the program lasts and then we miss out on them. We should envisage how these programs shall keep on operating and supporting local community.

Another problem is teachers' mobility, i.e. teachers serving in schools with Roma students and who have been trained in order to support these social groups and after a year or two leave or change schools. Although the State has invested and has created specially trained human resources, teachers' mobility results somehow to the waste of such expertise. This is why education and the mechanisms elaborated through such programs should be carried over to the school's culture. The entire school should learn how to build on this mindset; it is not only the responsibility of the person who was trained and teaches Roma students etc.; so when this

person leaves, it should be possible for the school itself to transmit know-how to young teachers and continue operating without any hindrance.

Low appeal of Vocational Education

Greek society has always been characterized by a strong demand for general education and university studies. VET held little appeal for young people and was associated with 'laborious' and 'inferior' manual labour; on the contrary, general education is associated with expectations of improved social standing. Today, young people continue to see vocational education as a last resort, despite unceasing efforts by the authorities to present it as an alternative of equal value with general education. The statistics show that those with technical and vocational qualifications have less trouble in finding jobs than those with general education.

Most youngsters (about 75%) still opt for the general upper secondary school giving access to university studies. Vocational education remains the second choice for most parents and children. It attracts low performers, who for the most part come from lower economic brackets. This tends to reinforce negative stereotypes and creates a vicious circle at the expense of vocational education (Ioannidou and Stavrou, 2013). Low participation in VET seems to be directly associated with its inability to attract young people.

In addition, early leaving from VET is particularly high, reaching 20.3% for Greece as a whole, compared to 3.3% from the unified (general) lyceum. There are significant regional differences with the highest early leaving rate in Crete, Epirus and Central Macedonia (>20%). The main reasons for leaving VET early, according to the Pedagogical Institute appear to be the low social/economical/educational level of the student's family coupled with his/her working in the family business or in seasonal employment in the tourist sector. For example in tourist areas, such as Rhodes, very high school leaving rates are observed, due to economic reasons. These children follow the tourism economy; they seek for a job very early in tourist enterprises: they become waiters, hotel employees, etc. The study programs followed at schools in vocational education do not cover such specialties, are limited or ineffective. In addition, Kastoria and Ioannina are areas with a strong local production (fur production, milk & cheese production, etc.); it is self-evident that these areas need Vocational Education schools to offer students special qualifications and professional skills. The two aforementioned examples are listed among the educational factors closely linked to early school leaving.

Mismatch between education-VET and labor market

Although the formal educational level (25-34 years old) in Greece is relatively close to the OECD average (Low education GR 20%, OECD 18% - Medium education GR 48%, OECD 44% - High education GR 33%, OECD 39%) the cognitive skills actually attained in Greece are still considerably below the OECD. Greece also performs relatively poorly in the PISA study when compared to countries with similar GDP and per-capita spending on education.

The Greek education system is highly centralized and exams oriented for entering Universities. As there are no external evaluations of schools and/or teachers, there is a lack of important information for quality control purposes. In order to offset the lack of quality in the public school system, it is customary to invest in private tutoring (so-called “frontistíria”).

Besides these country-specific problems, the transition from the education system to the labor market needs to be improved. This takes a very long time when compared with other EU countries. As far as vocational training is concerned, a greater commitment by employers is needed, as well as improved on-the-job training. The countries under consideration are currently investigating ways of strengthening of their vocational training system and the introduction of a dual system similar to the German model. In some cases they have already launched pilot projects in this regard. But it is doubtful whether the highly acclaimed dual vocational training system can easily be exported to other countries. After all, the system in Germany was developed and enhanced over decades and is therefore adapted to the structure of the German economy.

In addition, reforms in the education system have an impact on the labor market only in the medium to long term. Nevertheless, from an economic perspective it makes sense to eliminate the aforementioned structural problems in the education system, which existed even prior to the financial and economic crisis.

The lack of connection is based on the following results from a relevant study “Exploring the Connection between Education, Training and Employment (Centre for the Development of Educational Policy-Greek General Confederation of Labour):

- very low link among vocational training systems (initial and continuing) and employment, since only 15.7% of graduates from continuing training and 21.85% from initial training found work within the first 6 months of graduation;
- the low degree of retention of employment, since from those who found work, within about 18 months later, 81.5% of graduates from continuing training and 81.2% of those from initial training were unemployed;
- low relationship / relevance of training subject to the profession / specialty work of those who finally managed to find a job (27% for graduates from ongoing training and 31% from initial training);
- only 37.7% of the initial training graduates surveyed managed to obtain the certification of studies in vocational training institutes;
- the general disappointment of trainees from the obvious weakness and inefficiency of the system to provide a solid access to work and the low use of the knowledge obtained from training to work (Continuous training: 21%, Initial Vocational training: 32%).
- however trainees appear satisfied (or not so unhappy as we would expect) from their participation in the programs, indicating not only that trust and that expect a lot more from the field of non-formal education;

- the first feature that the trainees want is finding a future job with social security, but at the same time 8 out of 10 agree to work even if lacking desirable traits such as insurance, satisfactory wages, full employment, good labor relations;
- the very low participation of graduates of vocational training programs in bodies of collective expression and representation such as trade unions, voluntary organizations, NGOs, political parties.

Lifelong Learning (LLL) is considered a policy priority at European as well as at international level. It is strongly linked to a person's employment, prosperity and full participation in society. The challenges placed today by the ageing population, the skills and competences deficit of the workforce and the global competition are further enhanced by the ongoing financial crisis and thus, highlight the crucial role of Lifelong Learning in addressing these issues. The percentage of the population aged 24-65 participating in Lifelong Learning in Greece (3%) appears to be well below the European average (9,1%) and the Europe 2020 target (15%). Accordingly, the percentage of low achievers in basic skills in Greece is 27,7%, while the European average lies at 20% and the target for 2020 is <15%. So special emphasis in LLL may improve the link between education and labour market.

International surveys show that close links between vocational education and the requirements of the job market and economy are an essential precondition for an efficient, high quality system that would make it easier to move from school to active life (McCoschan et al., 2008; Wolf, 2011; CEDEFOP, 2012b).

Structure of labour market - Rigid labour markets

The sharp rise in youth unemployment in the affected countries during the crisis is a result of the dualisation of the labour market: older workers have well-paid jobs that are nearly impossible to terminate, with generous severance arrangements, whereas younger workers are hired, if at all, only on a temporary basis.

In addition, the collective bargaining agreements of a sector usually apply nationwide, without the possibility of adapting them at individual company level in order to react flexibly to a crisis. The necessary flexibility is therefore established by limiting the duration of employment contracts for younger employees.

Fixed-term contracts usually contain few rights regarding protection from dismissal or continued employment, meaning that in a downturn the younger employees hired with these contracts are the first ones to lose their jobs.

It can be assumed that young people in **temporary employment** are, in some cases, hired to replace permanent employees who have been dismissed as a result of the crisis. However, the extent to which this is the case and the extent to which temporary employment can represent a stepping stone towards permanent employment need to be further investigated. An investigation of reasons for being in temporary employment found that in Belgium, the Czech Republic, Cyprus, **Greece**, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia and Spain, a very high share of young

people reported being in temporary work because they could not find a permanent job. This implies that the share of permanent jobs on offer to young people is limited in a number of countries, and that this has worsened during the crisis, making young people even more insecure in the labour market. This is a worrying development since, as discussed above, young people are already particularly vulnerable in the labour market, and labour market experiences early on in life have an impact on future employment prospects.

Despite the decrease in the number of people in employment, the share of self-employed young people has remained almost constant over recent years. Countries with a high unemployment rate such as Greece, Italy and Romania also have a higher rate of self-employment among young people, which must be taken under consideration in order to support entrepreneurship.

The recession has aggravated chronic structural problems in the labour market. Eurostat figures show that Greece has the fastest rising rate of unemployment in the EU, with jobless numbers having more than doubled (+209%) since 2008. The rise in the number of long-term unemployed is particularly worrying, since the longer people remain unemployed the less chance they have of entering the labour market. So Greece faces a danger that without job creation measures and a better matching of skill supply with demand, cyclical unemployment will turn into structural unemployment.

Ageing of population and demographic issues

The demographic factor is particularly important in a country like Greece which, compared to other countries in the European Union (EU), is geographically both small and, because of its islands, extremely dispersed. The main demographic trends are the gradual ageing of the population and the change in composition brought about by immigration.

These demographic changes constitute a major challenge for the country's economy and development. The shrinkage of the labour force observed in Greece usually leads a country into social and economic decline. Based on an OECD study (2011) Greece's economically active population is expected to decrease by roughly 12% by 2050. As the workforce decreases, so do social insurance contributions, while the state spends more on social security and the health system. At the same time, the increasing number of immigrants, especially from third countries, creates new issues relating to their integration into education and employment.

As Greece's population ages and economic potential of the country for development investments worsen, the likelihood of young people to find new jobs are minimized, resulting in the NEET phenomenon to grow.

- *features and related comments of NEET people (sex, any migration background, educational level, special needs and any other social issues)*

The NEETs in Greece are a newly found and rather unknown socially vulnerable group. The majority of the Greek population has never heard of the term NEET. Hence, the definition and characteristics of this socially vulnerable group remain unknown to the Greek society. Moreover, as previously stated, it is very common that the NEET population is often confused with the total number of unemployed young people, while the (sometimes) “underlying assumption that NEETs are a homogeneous entity is arguably, inaccurate”. The Greek family, acting as a protecting and support ‘umbrella’ (unlike other family models of EU member-states), diminishes the effect of the phenomenon in Greece. The lack of information on the phenomenon at a political and social level makes it very difficult for the NEETs to be calculated and mapped.

The findings of the project “Absents’ Barometer: Detection, classification and empirically founded policy proposals to tackle the new form of social vulnerability: the NEETs (Young People Not in Education, Employment or Training)” allow us to attempt a depiction of the Greek NEET. More specifically:

The majority of the Greek NEETs is aged between 20 and 24 (and probably older). **Age is a main determinant, and perhaps the most important, affecting the chances of someone to be classed as NEET.** NEETs show their largest proportion in the age group of the 20-24 year olds, where the rate reaches 30.9% compared with 4.2% of the population. In short, the vast majority of all NEETs (87.5%) belong to the age group of 20-24 years old, while only 12.5% is younger. Age thus represents a par excellence over determinant of classification in the category of NEETs. In addition it should be noted that, as demonstrated by quantitative researches, after the age of 22, there is a rapid growth reaching up to 33% for the individuals aged 24 years old of the NEETS index.

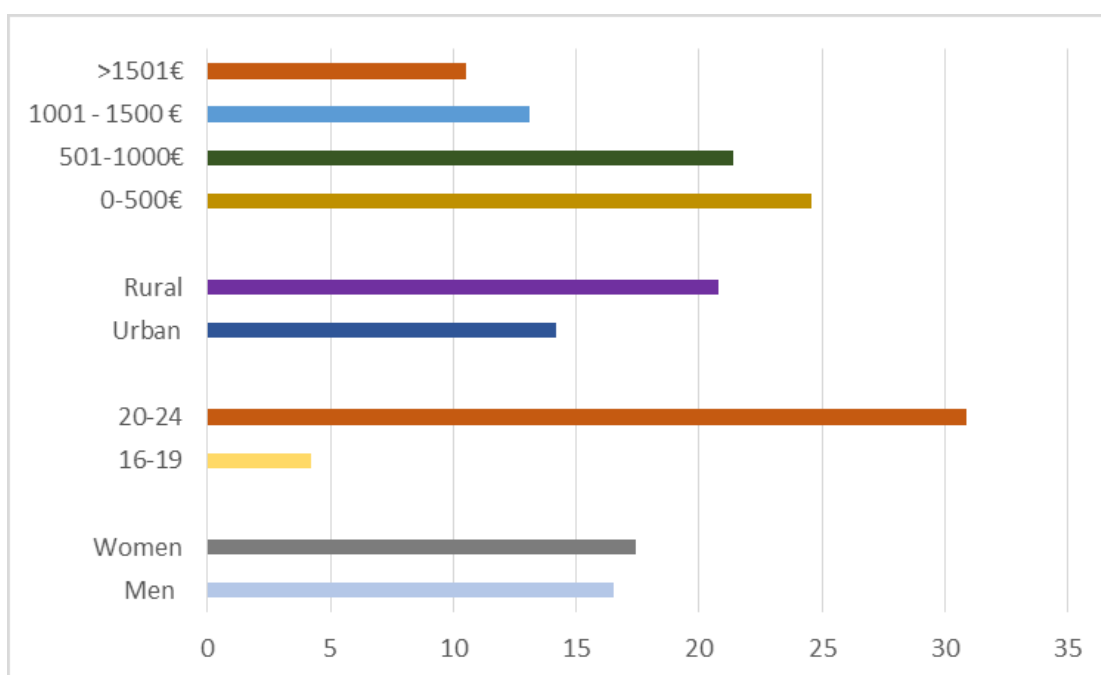
NEETs in Greece may be either male or female. In fact, **sex may to some extent influence the possibilities of someone becoming NEET**, as the rate for women is highest than this of men. More precisely the percentage of women who are NEETs is slightly larger than that of men. In detail the percentage of women NEETs stands at 17.4% compared with the general population of that age group, while in the case of men the rate is 16.5%.

Family income ranges from low to medium level while no NEETs were found on families with a higher income, which further leads to the conclusion of socio-economic inequalities and intergenerational transmission of poverty. It is worth to mention though that the NEETs in Greece seem to be in a better socio-economic status compared to NEETs of other EU member states, as living with their family (and sharing the family income) prevents to some extent social exclusion and extreme poverty.

They show limited correlation to urbanity. More specifically, data collected during the second phase of the quantitative study implies that it is easier to encounter a NEET in the rural areas of the country, a finding which was not highlighted during the first phase of the quantitative research (where the majority of the NEETs appeared to live in urban areas). On the other hand,

and given that the population is mainly concentrated in urban areas, the NEETs appear to be relatively more in number. Hence, we could suggest that NEETs are more frequently encountered in rural areas but they outnumber in urban areas. **Urbanity however cannot be considered a critical variable**, such as age, family income and educational level, but can neither be ignored. The NEETs rate by the above mentioned factors are presented at the following graph.

Distribution of NEETs by gender, age, urbanity and family income.



Source: GPO & KEADIK 2013: 12.

The Greek NEET **has a low educational level** (a majority has graduated from lower secondary education) and in most cases, moderate educational level (graduates of higher secondary level or technical school). A significant percentage of NEETs are higher education graduates. Only a small percentage of the NEET population is early school leavers. It is evident that early school leaving in Greece does not constitute the main and decisive determinant for a young person to become NEET, however, it shall be considered a ‘risk and threat’ (the case of Roma students is characteristic of early school leavers). There is however a correlation between the educational levels and NEETs, as their majority is of low or moderate educational level (low/medium skilled).

The majority of the NEETs are not married and they do not have children. They live with their parents and other family members, while the educational level of their parents is mostly of a secondary – and rarely tertiary – level. NEETs parents seem to have a lower educational level, which brings forward the issue of correlation deficits between the educational level – cultural capital and socio-educational inequalities.

Most NEETs have health insurance (mainly provided by the healthcare carrier of their parents), however, there is a large percentage of uninsured. This fact increases the uncertainty and insecurity they feel but also points out the inefficacy and weakness of the Greek State to protect the NEETs and all socially vulnerable groups.

The main concern of the NEETs is to find a job, as the majority of them are self-characterized as unemployed. The job they had before their unemployment status was of semi-permanent, casual and seasonal nature. More specifically, the majority of NEETs has worked mainly in the tertiary sector, but their working experience does not exceed a six month period. Consequently, the Greek NEET has previous working experience, which is however seasonal and casual for a period of one year or less. The economic crisis is considered the main parameter for the unemployment of those previously employed, as they lost their jobs due to staff cut-offs or left their job for personal reasons (conflict with superiors, lack of satisfaction, delay in payment, bad working conditions).

It is worth to point out that the NEETs are in a very difficult economic condition and the main – and most probably only – source of income is their families. Therefore, it is not strange that the Greek NEETs are very anxious in respect to their current status and the future prospects. However, they take care of their appearance and health. What is also worth to note is that they do not feel socially excluded, as many young people of their age are in the same position as them.

In addition, they require major transformations in the political system and political personnel and a reinforcement of the welfare state. They in fact request a new production model, for they believe that government choices are responsible for their current status. They are skeptical about the operation and effectiveness of the institutional structures and link the inefficiency of the welfare state to the increase of social inequalities.

As the main priority of the NEETs is to find a job, they are willing to immigrate within the country or even abroad to achieve this goal.

The above analysis indicates that the profile of the Greek NEET deriving from the study «Absents' Barometer» presents similarities with the NEET profile presented in the Eurofound study (2012: 39) for cluster 2, to which Greece is included.

- *other comments (features, needs, and so on) about the different age class of NEET people*

No other comments

2.2. The legal framework and important institutions on national, regional and local level which are working to contrast NEET phenomenon, youth unemployment and Early school leaving (ESL).

The main Institutions on national, regional and local level which are working to contrast NEET phenomenon, youth unemployment (within the Ministry of Labor) and early school leaving (within the Ministry of Education) are:

- Ministry of Culture, Education and Religious Affairs
 - General Secretariat for Lifelong Learning
 - General Secretariat for Youth
 - Regional Authorities of the Ministry e.g. Regional Directorates for Primary and Secondary Education
 - National Organisation for the Certification of Qualifications and Vocational Guidance (EOPPEP)
 - Institute of Educational Policy (IEP)
 - Youth and Lifelong Learning Foundation (INEDIVIM)
- Ministry of Labour, Social Security and Social Solidarity
- Manpower Employment Organization (OAED)
 - Regional Directorates
 - Public Employment Services
 - Employment Offices for Special Social Groups

Since 2000, four laws – on the national system linking VET with employment(Law 3191/2003), systematizing lifelong learning (Law 3369/2005), developing lifelong learning (Law 3879/2010), and restructuring secondary education(Law 4186/2013) – and numerous amendments have been enacted in an attempt to regulate the domain of VET and lifelong learning. This legislative activity is mainly due to the EU's post-2000 emphasis on creating a competitive Europe that is capable of meeting the new challenges of the knowledge-based society.

But the Greek state also recognizes the positive impact that developing lifelong learning would have on the country's economic life and on social cohesion.

The law (Law Nr. 3879/2010) on Lifelong Learning that was voted by the Greek Parliament in September 2010, sets the basis for the planning and implementation of a national holistic strategy on lifelong learning and for the creation of the National Network of Lifelong Learning (NNLL), which encompasses all LLL governing bodies and LLL service providers operating under the auspices of different ministries. The mapping and registration of the NNLL members,

as well as their consequent briefing on national LLL policy and the priorities linked to quality assurance, validation & accreditation, interoperability & mobility, enhancement of attractiveness, participation and accessibility are a prerequisite for fruitful interaction within the network.

Other recent legislative initiatives in Greece aimed at upgrading the quality of education provided at all educational levels are:

- (a) Law 3848/2010 on upgrading the role of the teachers and trainers – establishment of norms for evaluation and meritocracy in education and other provisions;
- (b) Law 4009/2011 on the structure, operation, quality assurance of studies, and internationalization of institutions of higher education.

The new law on the restructuring of secondary – including vocational – education (Law 4186/2013), which came into effect in September 2013, opens the VET system to the economy and the job market and attempts to regulate the field from the perspective of lifelong learning. Nevertheless, the major issues facing the Greek VET system persist: closer links with the job market and economy, more vigorous involvement of the social partners, sense of social co responsibility and consensus on vocational training matters, decentralization and greater school autonomy, attracting more young people into vocational training, improving the quality of initial vocational training and linking it more closely to continued vocational training (Ioannidou and Stavrou, 2013).

3. Already implemented policies and projects

3.1. Policies which are already implemented by public administration

- *Early school leaving*

The Second Chance Schools (SCS) are two-year public educational programmes which follow the principles of the European Union and the European Commission in particular, which first launched the Second Chance School scheme. In Greece, they were instituted by law in 1997 and came under the General Secretariat of Adult Education (now General Secretariat for Lifelong Learning). After attending the programme successfully, the trainees receive a title equivalent to the secondary education diploma (gymnasium level).

The Second Chance Schools address all the adults who dropped out of the education system at an early stage of their studies and didn't complete their 9-year compulsory studies due to social, financial or personal reasons. The school aims at developing all those qualifications and skills which will help the trainees better adapt to the modern vocational requirements of the labour market and integrate into society more successfully.

The school follows a flexible curriculum based on illiteracies such as Greek Literacy, Numeracy, English, ICT, Art, Social Literacy and Environmental Literacy as well as counselling services (psychological counselling and vocational orientation). The material and mode of attendance are particularly tailored to meet the educational needs and interests of the adult learners and help them achieve their personal goals. The school also uses techniques and strategies of innovative educational approaches such as Project Based Learning (PBL), cooperative approach learning and Differentiated Instruction (DI). The school duration is 18 months (two school years) and 25 hours/week (afternoon classes).

The program of Second Chance Schools (SCS), co-financed by the European Social Fund (ESF) and the Greek government, began in Greece in 2000 with the opening of the first SCS in Peristeri. From 2000 to date 58 SCS were established across the country as well as several annexes. Eight Schools operate within prisons. Their operation is based on three main principles:

1. flexible curricula adapted to the abilities and needs of learners, thus ensuring their active participation
2. support in all areas where they face difficulties
3. teaching staff and consulting services that are able to respond to the complexity of the tasks undertaken

A large percentage of the graduates of SCS continues to the next level of education (EPAL, Lyceum) and some have moved on to the University. The experience of the continuation of their studies in the formal educational system and their performances indicate that during their studies at the Second Chance School they have learned how to learn .

- *Professional Guidance*

In Greece, the responsibility for administering career guidance services in the fields of education and employment lies with the Ministry of Education & Religious Affairs and the Ministry of Labour, Social Security & Welfare, through the activities of the National Organization for the Certification of Qualifications & Vocational Guidance (EOPPEP). In this respect, EOPPEP acts as the national coordination body, implementing systemic guidance interventions, which ensures the quality provision and the professionalization of career guidance, the networking among the different guidance stakeholders and the constant development of information, guidance and counselling tools and material for the guidance practitioners working in education and employment settings in the public and private sector. In addition, innovating guidance services for the end users of all ages are also developed within the activities of EOPPEP at national level.

The EOPPEP Interactive Guidance Portal for adolescents and youngsters (/teens): The Portal was developed by EOPPEP at the end of 2012 is widely used by secondary and upper secondary students, young people and guidance practitioners. Friendly career tools enhance the access of more users to career and educational guidance, such as: digitized interest, values and decision making tests, e-portfolio development tool available also in English language, “ask the counsellor” section (<http://www.eoppep.gr/teens/index.php/consultant/16-symvoulos>) where you can contact a guidance counsellor serving in one of the 79 regional Counselling and Guidance Centres (KESYPs), administered by the Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs, thematic information catalogues and other useful links. The Greek Real Game for adolescents aged 12-15 and 15-18 and also videos for professions and basic skills, will be also found in the portal very soon.

The EOPPEP Lifelong Career Development Portal (<http://e-stadiodromia.eoppep.gr/>): The newly developed Lifelong Career Development Portal is supported within the activities of EOPPEP as the Euroguidance Centre of Greece, providing innovating services for career development and mobility information targeted to adults of all ages. In the portal you can find digitized career tests, E-Counselling Services (soon to be launched), E- Lifelong Career Portfolio Development Tool which is available also in English language, Career & Mobility information Resources, Career Management Skills Section.

- *Improving the status of Vocational Education and Training*

The main incentives used by the state to encourage young people to enter VET are regulatory and financial. Public VET is free and, following examinations, assures graduates of most specialties access to the occupation and the labour market. With the establishment of the 12-

month apprenticeship, EPAL graduates who pass their certification examinations receive a level 4 (higher education) qualifications. EPAL graduates are also entitled to sit special examinations for entry into an institution of higher education (tertiary tier).

The new secondary education law (Law 4186/2013) also concerns VET. It aims to achieve closer ties with the labour market and the economy, so as to attract more young people to this sector. It is not possible to assess the results of the most recent reforms yet, since they were first implemented in the school year 2013-14.

The lifelong learning law (Law 3879/2010) also provides incentives for developing lifelong learning and updating the knowledge, skills and competence of the country's human resources. These include:

- (a) linking non-formal education programs to the formal education system through accredited modular programs. These would allow the recognition, accumulation and transfer of credit points between systems;
- (b) granting education leave for participation in lifelong learning programs, especially for workers in the private sector;
- (c) setting up personal education accounts, with contributions from the employer and the employee (and possibly the state) to cover the worker's training needs;
- (d) establishing personal learning time accounts to let workers take part in continuous training programs.

Most of these legislative provisions have not yet been implemented.

Many companies receive financial incentives to offer training places to students in or graduates of VET programs. In this way they contribute to the education of the trainees, as for example in the EPAS apprenticeship schemes and SEKs, as provided by the new secondary education law (Law 4186/2013).

There are also subsidies for companies that take part in vocational training actions funded by the NSRF (ESF) that combine training with counselling and work placement schemes.

- *Increasing the participation in training programmes*

Apart from regulatory incentives, there are also financial incentives for workers and jobless to take part in continuous vocational training programs, aimed at upgrading their knowledge, skills and competences. Continuous vocational training is subsidized primarily from ESF, but also from the Greek LAEK. In other cases, participation in adult education and continuous vocational training programs is a prerequisite for entry into an occupation (such as energy inspectors, mediators) or for career advancement and qualification for positions of responsibility (such as teachers, public administration).

- *Connection between education, VET and labour market*

Attempts have been made in Greece to create a mechanism for early identification of medium term trends in labour market needs through the Employment Observatory (PAEP SA) and later the National Labour and Human Resources Institute (EIEAD). These did not produce the desired results and could not be used to shape education and training policy.

The business survey varied out in 2011 by the Foundation for Industrial and Economic Research (IOBE) to forecast changes in regional local systems and local labour markets provides important information about domestic human resources needs and the skills in demand. Most companies (70%) reported that their workers did not take initiatives or risks, were lacking in organizational, project management and technology/innovation-handling skills, and often did not have the proper technical knowledge for the job they were doing. Clearly, today's labour force is deficient not only in **social skills** but also in job-relevant technical knowledge. There seems to be much less of a problem with foreign language and communications skills, and the limited use of basic computer applications (IOBE and Remaco, 2013, p. 53).

The Hellenic Federation of Enterprises (SEV) has developed a mechanism for diagnosing a company's needs as regards occupations and skills (SEV,2013). It currently operates in eight sectors of particular interest to Greek industry and more generally to the Greek economy from the aspect of development and employment perspectives up to the year 2020: food, ICT, energy, construction products, supply chain, environment, metals and health. Using different growth scenarios for the period considered, it identified 87 key occupations as likely to require significantly different knowledge, skills and abilities in the future. SEV's forecasts coincide to some extent with those of the McKinsey report on perspectives for growth in certain economic sectors in Greece in the next 10years (McKinsey and Company, 2011). This study identifies the five major sectors (tourism, energy, food processing, agricultural production, retail and wholesale trade) and eight branches (rising stars), that are expected to grow dynamically and drive Greece's development efforts over the next 10 years: production of generic drugs, fish farming, medical tourism, care for the elderly and the chronically ill, creation of regional transit hubs, waste management, and secondary 'rising stars' including specialised categories of foods and the creation of targeted classical studies programmes. The study thinks that these branches will be able to generate 520 000 new jobs over the next few years.

Nonetheless, the recent changes in the institutional framework for VET(Law 4186/2013 on secondary education) suggest that economic forecasts were not taken into account in deciding which specialties would be offered by VET bodies (EPAL, SEK and IEK). As a result, there is a risk of mismatch between skills being developed and the real needs of the economy.

In addition, in a period of deep recession and exceptionally high unemployment there is a risk greater than that of a mismatch of skills: which is that skills will lose their value. Unskilled and older workers are at greater risk, as are the long-term unemployed. There are clear signs that in Greece there is significant over-education.

- *Facing youth unemployment*

In response to the huge increase in youth unemployment (persons aged 15- 24), the Ministry of Labour drew up, in collaboration with the Ministries of Education, Culture and Development, a unified operational *Action plan of targeted interventions to boost youth employment and entrepreneurship in the framework of the national strategic reference framework (NSRF) operational program (2012)*. In the framework of this action plan, a number of vocational training-related initiatives are being implemented to foster employment and entrepreneurship of persons aged 15 to 24 and 25 to 35. These include:

- (a) strengthening vocational training and apprenticeship systems, particularly by combining training and work experience, through programs that subsidize job placements for young people and practical training in workplace settings(voucher for vocational training) either during education or later (such as practical training for graduates of tertiary education institutions, IEKs or other bodies for initial vocational training, students in OAED apprenticeship schools and students at merchant marine academies);
- (b) institution of systematic transition-to-work programs to help students gain initial work experience. These would need to be adapted to the needs and profiles of young job-seekers, through a combination of guidance, counselling, training and employment (e.g. job voucher schemes for young job-seekers);
- (c) providing more counselling and vocational guidance, especially for young job-seekers. Supporting vocational guidance in schools, career orientation and entrepreneurship counselling (such as through vocational education career offices, actions promoting youth entrepreneurship);
- (d) measures aimed at reducing early school leaving.

3.2. Public and private services targeted youth and NEET to prevent and contrast NEET phenomenon, youth unemployment and ESL.

According to the new law regulating secondary education (Law 4186/2013), which aims among other things to attract more students into VET, students now have the following options in addition to the general upper secondary school:

- (a) initial vocational education within the formal education system in the second cycle of secondary education at a vocational upper secondary school(day or evening school) (EPAL,EPAS);
- (b) initial vocational training outside the formal education system (referred to as non-formal) in vocational training schools (SEK), vocational training institutes (IEK), centres for lifelong learning and colleges.

OAED operates a total of 51 EPAS apprenticeship schools, which have an average annual enrolment of 10 000 students, depending on the relevant annual announcement. Their courses

last two school years (four semesters). They admit students aged 16 to 23 who have completed at least one class of the upper secondary school.

As far as Lifelong Learning is concerned, the General Secretariat for Lifelong Learning, acting as the executive authority for Lifelong Learning in Greece, conducted for the first time in 2012, at national policy level, an initial registration of all LLL activities organized and implemented by state agents and major social partners. The information contained in this report is a result of data provided by ten different ministries, by Regions and municipalities and by 25 major social partners including tertiary trade union organizations. It refers to non formal and informal types of learning, which took place in 2012.

The annual report refers to the overall political and social environment, to the European and international policy context as well as to the legal framework underlying LLL in Greece. The LLL policy and activities presented are implemented by the following actors:

A. Governing bodies of LLL

- General Secretariat for Lifelong Learning (GSLL)
- Regional LLL department units (Attica, Central Greece, Central Macedonia, East Macedonia and Thrace, Western Greece, Western Macedonia, Epirus, Thessaly, Ionian Islands, Crete, Peloponnese)
- Municipal LLL department units (Athens, Thessaloniki)
- National Organisation for the Certification of Qualifications and Vocational Guidance (EOPPEP)
- National Centre for Public Administration and Local Government (EKDDA)

B. LLL providers by field:

- Education: Ministry of Education, General Secretariat for Youth, Youth and Lifelong Learning Foundation (INEDIVIM), Hellenic Open University, University of Athens, University of Thessaloniki, University of Crete, University of Thessaly, University of the Aegean, Centre for the Greek Language (KEG), National Book Centre of Greece (EKEBI)
- Employment: Manpower Employment Organization (OAED), National Institute of Labor and Human Resources (EIEAD), Specialized Centers for Re-integration of the Disabled and of Former Addicts into Society and into the Labor Market
- Health: National School of Public Health (ESDY), Institute for Social and Preventive Medicine (IKPI), Organization Against Drugs (OKANA), Therapy Centre for Dependent Individuals (KETHEA), Greek Union of Nurses (ENE), Health Units SA (AEMY AE), Therapeutic Education Study Group and other health related LLL providers
- Agriculture: Hellenic Agricultural Organization "Dimitra" (EGEEKA), Institute of Agricultural Sciences (IGE)
- Shipping: Directorate for the Education of Marines and Sailors

- Tourism: Ministry of Tourism
- Security: Centre for Security Studies (KMA)
- Interior Affairs & Decentralization: Ministry of Interior, National Centre for Public Administration and Local Government (EKDDA)
- Tertiary Trade Union Organisations: Greek General Confederation of Labour (GSEE), Hellenic Confederation of Professionals, Craftsmen & Merchants (GSEVEE), Senior Management of Civil Servant Unions (ADEDY), National Confederation of Hellenic Commerce (ESEE), Hellenic Federation of Enterprises (SEV)
- Foundations, museums, collectives, unions, chambers, NGOs, cultural groups, private entities and other social partners: Hellenic Management Association (EEDDE), Hellenic Adult Education Association (EEEE), Technical Chamber of Greece (TEE), Journalists Unions of Daily Press (of Athens, Macedonia and Thrace, Thessaly and Central Greece, Peloponnese, Epirus and the Islands) & Periodical and Electronic Press Union, METAction etc.

3.3. Concrete projects which are already implemented on these issues.

A. Operational Sectoral & Regional Programmes

The Operational Program "**Education and Lifelong Learning**" for the programming period 2007 - 2013, aimed to modernize the educational system of our country and enhance the quality of education at all levels. A key development framework of strategic planning for education during the 2007-2013 programming period is the fourfold Development - Competitiveness - Education - Employment. The budget of the Program amounts to 1.694 mil. Euros Public expenditure (IGC), and funded by the European Social Fund and National Resources. The European Commiss

ion contribution amounts to 1.440 mil. Euros and the percentage funding 85%. The OP Education and Lifelong Learning has single-fund character since actions were financed only by the European Social Fund. The OP "Education and Lifelong Learning" focuses on four (4) Strategic Objectives:

1stObjective:"Upgrading the quality of education and promote social inclusion."

2nd Objective:"Upgrade of initial vocational training and vocational education and link education with the labor market"

3rd Objective: "Strengthening lifelong adult education "

4th Objective:"Strengthening of human capital for the promotion of research and innovation"

Operational Programme "**Human Resources Development 2007-2013**" was among the Sectoral Programmes of the National Strategic Reference Framework (ESPA) 2007-2013. It was co-funded by the European Social Fund and constitutes a multifaceted programme, which covers all 13 Regions of the country. The Total amount of co-funding by the E.U. is EUR 2.825,333,333, of which EUR 2,260,000,000 is derived from Community Resources (from the European Social Fund) and EUR 565,333,333 from National Resources. The Programme's Priority Axes were the following:

Axis 1: "Systemic Interventions"

Axis 2: "Supporting Adaptability of Human Resources and Enterprises". Among the axis objectives "Development of an integrated framework of Continuing Vocational Training (CVT) for employees, employers and the self-employed, to improve the quality of CVT and increase participation in training actions" was included.

Axis 3: "Facilitating Access to Employment". The 3rd Priority Axis of the Programme aimed at: a) Supporting youth employment, through active employment policies, b) Supporting employment of women, through active employment policies, c) Activating the long-term unemployed and individuals of socially vulnerable groups, which are threatened with exclusion from the labour market, through the implementation of specially targeted actions and d) Improving the effectiveness of employment policies

Axis 4: "Complete Integration of all H.R. into a Society of Equal Opportunities"

Axis 5: "Establishment of Reform in the Mental Health Sector - Development of Primary Healthcare and Promotion of Public Health"

The three regions Thessaly, Mainland Greece and Epirus, covered by the **Regional Operational Programme of Thessaly - Mainland Greece - Epirus**, encountered common problems that allow the synthesis of a single strategy with common goals for all regions of the above mentioned territorial section. This is because all three regions face the problems of delayed development of the Greek territory outside of the metropolitan areas. The program had a budget of 1,8 billion €. Thus the design of the ROP 2007-2013 aimed at:

- improving competitiveness, openness, quality and innovation capacity of enterprises
- improving accessibility
- the development of human resources
- the sustainable management of natural and built environment and natural resources
- strengthening intra-regional economic and social cohesion and interregional cooperation
- the development of tourism and culture for sustainable development
- the promotion of digital convergence.

B. Projects of the General Secretariat for Youth

The General Secretariat for Youth implements programs aimed at young people and offer opportunities and information on every subject of their interest, such as employment, volunteering, interculturality, education, culture and citizenship:

- Freetime
- Employment - Youth Entrepreneurship
- Participation
- Volunteering
- Youth Support
- Information
- International relations - European Union
- Education
- Environment

C. Other projects

A lot of projects were funded by European Initiatives, Competitive Programs (Leonardo, Comenius etc.) during the last decade. Also we have to emphasize that a lot of new projects are already implemented under Erasmus+ aiming at early school leaving and issues concerning directly or indirectly the NEET phenomenon (youth employment, vocational training etc.). Unfortunately there isn't a national database to search for relevant projects, so we present some of them:

- CAPWIN - Remobilising skills and life goal of early school leavers, Project No 2013-1-FR1-LEO05-48264. The project objective is to provide professional skills development tools in charge of prevention and treatment dropout children or adults.
- INCLUSIVE LEARNING- Supporting Teacher Training for an Inclusive Vocational Education, Project No 2012-1-ES1-LEO05-49449. The project addressed two strategic priorities: "Support for the initial and continuous training of vocational training teachers, trainers, tutors and administrators of vocational training institutions" and "Proposed solutions and tools for addressing the imbalance between labour supply and demand" of the LLP.
- FAMILY CAREER COMPASS - Efficient Career Guidance Approaches Supporting Parents in Guiding their Children's Vocational Career", Project No 2013-1-PL1-LEO05-37576. FAMICO is an invaluable system for school vocational counsellors with tools, methods and mind set to work with families and children of all age.

- DANSUL - UNESTE TINERII (DANCING - UNITING THE YOUTH), Project No 2014-1-RO01-KA105-000328
- Innovative teaching methods for combating school drop-out, Project No 2014-1-EL01-KA102-000201. The project was based on the high school drop-out rate in the Technical Vocational School of Perama as well as the need for educationalists to apply new teaching techniques in order to increase learner motivation.
- PROVED (“Productive Learning in Vocational Education”)Project No 2014-1-DE02-KA202-001582. It is a two years project , that aims to contribute to a higher employment rate of youth and young adults, to reduce the rate of drop-outs of the vocational education system and in that way to fight poverty and social exclusion of young disadvantaged people.
- Building emotional relationships to prevent early school leaving Project No 2014-1-EL01-KA101-000574. In modern labour market either at the national or at European level, changing and constantly growing cognitive needs make lifelong education- learning a crucial factor for both personal development and for overall economic development. Acquiring knowledge and skills is deemed necessary as it improves the effectiveness of individuals, while giving them necessary skills for a successful career
- Professional capacity dealing with diversity Project No 2014-1-NL01-KA200-001295. The central topic in the present proposal is professional capacity concerning dealing with diversity related to migration (in all its different forms). Professional capacity includes innovative forms of cooperation between educational professionals and other professionals dealing with children.
- OKULU BIRAKMA PROBLEMİ İÇİN SOSYAL DAHİL ETME- SOCIAL INCLUSION FOR DROP OUT PROBLEM Project No 2014-1-TR01-KA105-004766. The project’s main theme are students who still drop out of school even though, in recent years, there have been many works to prevent the issue. Students who drop out of school early are at a higher risk of poverty and social exclusion in the labour market as well as impeded individual and social development.
- Strategies and systems Against YOUNG peoples' drop-out from upper secondary vocational education, EACEA-526609
- School Safety Net, EACEA-531028
- SCHOOL INCLUSION, EACEA-COMP-COM-134309
- Innovative activities at the secondary education in order to prevent school violence and drop-out Project No2014-1-EL01-KA102-001679.
- Drop-out in Greece- Region of Thrace. Prosociality for Integration and Multiculturalism Project n. 518393-LLP-1-2011-1-IT-COMENIUS-CMP
- LINC: Everyone matters! Holistic, inclusive, community-building approaches for early and continuous interventions addressing ESL, Comenius project 539024-LLP-1-2013-1-GR-COMENIUS-CMP

- “Let’s go to school in Europe!”
- Comenius-Regio programme entitled “Preventing Early School Leaving”.
- Grundtvig “Hands On Help”. Comenius “Physical and sports activities indifferent environments” we had always as an objective the prevention of early school leaving.
- “School Success-Failure is everyone’s business”, Comenius Multilateral School Partnership
- The Rapport project is a central Comenius action. The Rapport project main objective is to combat early school dropout at European level.

4. Biggest and urgent needs - Conclusion

4.1. The biggest and urgent needs which can be met by public authorities related to the NEET phenomenon

Greek NEETs feel that public Authorities are unfriendly and inefficient, so the Greek State has to take specific actions in order to face this socio-economical phenomenon, in order to promote social inclusion, financial development and social solidarity.

Some proposed activities are:

- Identify the NEETs phenomenon in Greece
- Fund and support specific research for this vulnerable social group
- Put emphasis on regions with high NEETs rate
- Strategic Plan for Greek NEETs, taking into consideration the heterogeneity of the target group
- Evaluate good practices in other member state in the E.U and adopt relevant initiatives
- National coordination and complementarity of actions undertaken by individual systems of education, training and employment through equal consultation and cooperation of stakeholders at central and regional level (ministries, social partners, productive bodies, educational and scientific community, local authorities, trade unions and labourcentres).
- Creating a last, reliable and prestigious institutional system detection of the Greek economy needs at national and local level to harmonize supply and demand of skills and professions
- Operation of a national system of certification of qualifications to all employees may accredit professional skills, knowledge and experience gained throughout their lifetime, regardless of how acquisition and vocational or educational path
- Decrease of the percentage of 16-64 year old early education leavers
- Increase of the percentage of the population aged 24-65 participating in LLL
- Consideration of complimentarity and synergies among providers of training with view to upgrading quality and saving resources
- Info points (one stop shop) for NEETs
- Training of civil servants and educators to handle NEETs in their daily life
- Increase entrepreneurship
- Promotion of apprenticeship in VET

4.2. The biggest and urgent needs which can be met by VET system related to the NEET phenomenon.

Very few of NEETs have followed a training programme and the vast majority of them strongly believe it was highly ineffective. This finding raises serious issues on the attractiveness of education and training in a country whose scores are very low in Lifelong Learning and relevant structures. We have to point out that concerning the VET system the disadvantages as far as NEETs are concerned are the following:

- low participation in training courses
- lack of information concerning training programmes and submission documents
- low appeal of vocational education
- old curricula and training methods
- lack of flexibility between general education and VET

The following issues have to be met by VET system to combat the NEET phenomenon:

- the reversal of the negative social stereotype that accompanies the selection of vocational education-training in the education and guidance of young people
- the selection of training programs take place in close connection with specific production needs at national, regional and local level
- the financial enforcement of the infrastructure and the qualified teaching staff in technical and vocational education-training
- interministerial cooperation for the coordination on LLL matters at national level
- specification of the programs to be based on updated, competitive and certified occupational profiles
- strengthen the role of internship promoted through more targeted placements in institutions, companies and organizations that meet certain conditions of quality, efficiency and reliability
- the development and promotion of services of training organizations whose purpose and mission support trainees to help them back into employment after completion of training programs
- compliance with clear standards and procedures in the practice so as to ensure the quality, the essence of practical learning through education, the rights of learners and the objectives of a meaningful process
- more work-based education and training programmes

- boosting the development of new skills, such as problem-solving, communication, green skills, lifelong career management and entrepreneurship
- flexibility of the education system . If the school's framework enables a General Lower Secondary School student to leave school easily opting for vocational education, in case of low performance and difficulties, this student shall not abandon school. As a result, the school's programmes and the educational system should offer students alternatives.

4.3. The biggest and urgent needs which can be met by the school system related to the NEET phenomenon.

The majority of NEETs are pessimistic and disappointed by the opportunities offered by the Greek educational system to early school leavers who have decided to return to school. The Greek NEET seems to believe that the educational system in Greece is insufficient, ineffective, fails to equip students with the skills and competencies necessary to enter employment and does not offer guidance on their future professional lives. Further, they consider that there is a malfunction in the connection between the education and training systems and employment (in fact, that there is no connection at all between them) as well as that the reintegration to the educational system is very difficult.

That means the Greek NEET believes the educational system in Greece does not fulfil one of its most fundamental functions that is to equip students with expertise and skills. However, the majority of early school leavers wishes to return to school and complete secondary education, while they do not seem interested in training.

A cohesive, comprehensive and evidence-based policy to combat early school leaving includes three key elements: prevention, intervention and off-setting measures. Some proposed actions are:

- upgrading the quality of education
 - The increased participation in good quality pre-school education and care constitutes one of the most effective measures, so that children can kick off on a solid basis and with the suitable qualifications. It is therefore very important for the State to put in place actions for pre-school age and not to be too concentrated on Upper Secondary School and University admission examinations.
 - All-day schools play an important role in education. They are not a parking space for children, as many people argue. All-day schools carry out activities having to do with children's education and cultural development.
 - Improvement of teaching methods and study programmes, both in General and Vocational Education are necessary to upgrade the quality of education.

- Teachers' training in teaching approaches, in digital school programmes, and in the use of new technologies in the teaching practice, aim at their professional development and at boosting classroom performance.
- Students presenting low performance need systematic support in their classes. Such courses are language and literature, mathematics and physical sciences. Such interventions are made through remedial teaching programmes, to support weak students. It is like a tutorial class to strengthen low performing students.
- promoting equal access

Measures of positive discrimination include the educational priority zones, the so-called EPZ. Offering targeted support to schools, improve the educational contribution of such schools, offer additional support to students in linguistic and mathematical literacy, create innovative learning environments, adapted to the particular needs of students. Positive discrimination measures should always be combined with active networking and close cooperation among participating schools for the exchange of experiences and concerns.

- intervention at schools

Intervention measures may address a school in its entirety or specific students who run the risk of leaving school and of dropping out of education. These measures, focusing on the school as a whole, aim at improving the school ambiance, at creating a supportive learning environment, at developing early notification systems and better cooperation, at creating networks with extracurricular parameters and access to local networks. Such networks consist of social support groups, social workers etc. The student-oriented measures mainly focus on counselling, guidance and supervision of students, on individualized learning approaches and improvement of guidance and pecuniary assistance, such as school allowances.

4.4. The biggest and urgent needs which can be met by Employment service related to the NEET phenomenon.

The economic crisis and the working environment constitute the main inhibitors in NEETs quest for employment as well as the in the formulation of the appropriate, permanent and satisfactory working conditions. The Greek NEET does not usually use public employment services, e.g. OAED.

The Greek NEETs feel that the labour market needs to be restructured and major transformations need to be made in all State structures (unemployment programmes, systematic evaluation of the employed, training programmes etc.).

So the Employment Services could:

- design initiatives for integrating or re-integrating the NEETs in the labour market
- strengthen the guidance paths for access to the labour market
- give incentives to employers to hire young people NEETs
- subsidy programmes to enterprises

4.5. The biggest and urgent needs which can be met by NGO related to the NEET phenomenon.

Ngos' as volunteer organizations could conduct both formal and informal projects and educational activities to motivate young people and encourage them to be more active, to be better informed, to reclaim their leisure time with social skills, communication skills etc.

4.6. The biggest and urgent needs which can be met by Trade Unions related to the NEET phenomenon.

Trade Unions and social partners have to collaborate with the relevant public Authorities in order to diagnose the labor market needs, the trends of the Greek economy and the formulation of training courses for NEETs.

Business and the social partners can play an active role in continuing vocational training. The role of the state is confined to financing and, in some cases, assuring the quality of the services provided, through the accreditation of providers and teachers/trainers.

The social partners could implement vocational training programmes for unemployed besides for their members.

During the previous period 2007-2013, Trade Unions and social partners had begun to implement training programmes. For example:

- GSEE implements vocational training programmes aimed at workers in the private sector, the unemployed, and its own union officials. More specifically, these programmes target sectors like tourism, technical trades and manufacturing/construction, teachers and teacher trainers, commerce, environment, consumer protection, social economy, informatics and economics/administration.
- The Hellenic Confederation of Professionals, Craftsmen and Merchants(GSEVEE) implements training and retraining programmes relating to tourism occupations, environmental management and basic technical vocational education skills, addressed to employers, self-employed persons, workers in every sector of the economy, and also to the unemployed, who accounted for about 6.5% of all trainees in 2013.

- Training programmes are also run by the chambers of commerce, the Technical Chamber of Greece (TEE), the Hellenic Management Association (HMA), the Hellenic Adult Education Association, METAction (an implementing partner of the United Nations High Commission for Refugees), local entities, cultural groups and museums.

The social partners have lately assumed an even larger role in planning and implementing vocational training actions funded by the European Social Fund (ESF). These actions address sectoral or local/regional labour market needs and combine training with guidance and counselling services and work placements to provide on-the-job experience.

4.7. The biggest and urgent needs of youth.

Youth in Greece are facing extremely unemployment problems, so Greece as the rest of the member states in E.U. has already designed a Youth Guarantee Plan.

In the end of 2013, the Ministry of Labour, as the competent public authority drew up and submitted the National Youth Guarantee Implementation Plan (YGIP) to the European Commission, pursuant to the relevant Council Recommendation. The National Youth Guarantee Implementation Plan has been updated in May 2014.

The Youth Guarantee, funded by the Youth Employment Initiative (YEI), with a budget for Greece amounting to 171 mil. Euro (and equivalent amount from the European Social Fund) is mainly focused on supporting young people of our country, who are neither in employment, nor education or training (NEETs).

The actions of the National Youth Guarantee Implementation Plan are divided into two basic categories:

- Early intervention and activation actions (information campaigns, awareness raise activities) and
- Labour market integration actions which focus on measures who facilitate entry into the labour market (training, job subsidies, support to entrepreneurial initiatives).

The Plan also includes a series of institutional interventions, which will have a positive effect on youth employment and are:

- development of a permanent mechanism to diagnose labour market needs,
- implementation of the reform in vocational training and the introduction of "Apprenticeship Class", as 4th, optional year into the secondary level education professional schools (EPAL),
- development of a National Qualifications Framework and skills certification system through National Organisation for the Certification of Qualifications and Vocational Guidance (EOPPEP),

- Adoption of a new regulatory framework for mutual obligations of unemployed and public employment services.

In 2014 began to be implemented as a front-loaded action for the Programming Period 2014-2020 the aforementioned work experience program through voucher, aiming at private sector businesses to hire young people aged from 18 to 24 years. The program with a budget of 43,2 mil.€ and 12.000 beneficiaries aims at achieving a structured course of entry of unemployed youth in the labour market, which potentially leads, through theoretical training and on the job training, in jobs in the private sector.

Under the Youth Guarantee Implementation Plan, a number of sectoral actions has been drawn up and will immediately be implemented to provide unemployed youth from 18 to 24 years advisory services, vocational guidance, continuing vocational training and certification, as well as on the job training in private sector enterprises in the following areas affecting the dynamics of development: supply chain (logistics), retail trade, openness and international trade, information and communication technologies.

4.8. Policy, projects and/or actions needed for contrasting and preventing the NEET phenomenon.

The Greek Partnership Agreement (PA) 2014-2020 was one of the first ones to be approved by the European Commission services in May 2014 as well as the 18 Operational Programs (5 sectoral and 13 regional) in December 2014. By the end of 2015, the Monitoring Committees will have taken place and the issuance of the Joint Ministerial Decisions, necessary for the Management and Control System, will be completed.

The developmental plan for Greece 2020 seeks to attain “the regeneration of the Greek economy with restoration and upgrading of productive and social fabric of the country and the creation and maintenance of sustainable jobs, having as a leading edge the outward-looking, innovative and competitive entrepreneurship and guiding principles social cohesion and sustainable development.”

To achieve this vision the following five funding priorities are selected and introduced to the Partnership Agreement 2014-2020:

- 1) Enhancing competitiveness and internationalization of enterprises (particularly SMEs), transition to quality entrepreneurship with innovation and higher domestic added value at the leading edge
- 2) Capacity building and development of human resources — active social inclusion

A well-designed policy framework for labor market that takes into account the structural nature of unemployment and combines active and labor market policies with a view to increasing the efficiency of job matching, the speed at which the manpower adapts to the

changing needs of the labor market and ultimately to establishing an adequate social safety net by targeting the welfare programs to those who need them the most. This priority includes measures for NEETs.

- 3) Environmental protection-transition to an environment-friendly economy
- 4) Development-Modernization-Completion of infrastructures for economic and social development
- 5) Enhancing institutional capacity and the efficiency of public administration and local self-government.

More specifically policies for school drop-out, education reforms, VET policies and improvement in the employment for NEETs are presented as follows based on the National Reform Programme (2015) of Greece:

Specific policies for school drop-out

Based on the *E.U. Position paper for Greece (11/2012)*, the European strategy 2020 for Greece, as it had been planned since 2012, included eight national objectives for all policy sectors. It should be emphasized that at least two out of the eight national objectives for Europe 2020 refer to education. One of these two objectives is the reduction of the Early School Leaving index to below 9,7% (the other one refers to tertiary education). Note that the target for the European average is fixed at 10%.

For the attainment of national targets-indices, eleven thematic objectives have been specified, of which the tenth refers to education and bears the following title: *“Investing in education, skills and lifelong learning”*. The tenth Thematic Objective is analyzed in four investment priorities, the first of which is *“Tackling and reducing early school leaving, upgrading of education quality and promotion of equal access”*. Moreover, for the Thematic Objective of education, the Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs has elaborated eight special strategic objectives directly associated with combating early school leaving; this fact highlights its paramount importance in the planning of the Ministry’s educational strategy.

The Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs, in view of the new programming period(2014-2020) is bound to develop and apply a reliable system for measuring school dropout, something which constitutes one of the prerequisites to ensure funding from the new operational programme (ex ante conditionality).

With Law 4186/2013 “Restructuring of Secondary Education and other provisions”, the Observatory was set up as a structural unit of the Institute of Educational Policy to record and tackle school dropout.

For issues of recording and dealing with school dropout, through the digital web application being designed in the context of the project “Self-evaluation of the Teaching Work” <http://aee.iep.edu.gr/>, the Observatory shall draw updated and valid data from the information system of myschool (<https://myschool.sch.gr/>). Myschool is a new information

system of the Ministry of Education & Religious Affairs geared towards the operational integration and extension of the IT applications of the educational community; it is a collection and analysis system of primary data at student level. It is a central-national information technology infrastructure aimed at supporting school units and the higher administrative structures of education.

The data to be drawn from the Observatory shall be subject to processing and qualitative analysis, in order to reach conclusions on the progress registered in Early School Leaving and formulate proposals for further actions.

The results shall be published regularly; to be more precise, they will be published on annual basis but it shall be possible to reach intermediate conclusions throughout the teaching year.

Results shall be presented at Municipality level but it shall be possible to adapt them to other levels of administrative division (prefecture, region etc).

The Observatory aims at presenting results that shall cover all levels of formal education and training and at suggesting measures to cope with ESL being specified in:

- preventive measures
- intervention measures
- offsetting measures

The Observatory intends to suggest possible interventions and support programmes at school level for individual “doubtful” students running a school leaving risk.

Therefore, the Institute of Educational Policy shall be able to combine the qualitative with the quantitative data, to be drawn from the two above systems of monitoring early school leaving, and plan further policies.

Policies for education and VET

- Quality and equality improvement in Primary and Secondary education through monitoring, evaluation and application of a quality assurance system.
- Improvement of teachers’ skills and professional development. Establishment of incentives and professional standards. The professional development of teachers constitutes an added value for the educational system and the students.
- Schools’ response capacity to the different ways of student learning and tools to assist teachers in satisfying the various needs of students. Curricula should be accompanied by a diversified educational approach.
- Use of “digital technologies” in all aspects of educational processes
- “Apprenticeship Programme of Technical Education Graduates for Work Experience”

- Increase participation in pre-primary, primary and secondary education with targeted actions and in favour of children with disabilities, as well as children who come from families with low income or/ and EKO
- Possibility for individualized and flexible learning procedures addressed to students who wish to learn “through practice” and for whom the active forms of learning constitute an incentive.
- Special initiatives for vulnerable target groups, such as integrations courses, support activities for students and families
- Design and develop accessible educational and teaching aids for students with disabilities
- Implementing activities of intercultural education in Secondary Schools by strengthening transnational cooperation, that refer to the operation of Reception Classes ZEP and Remedial Teaching Classes for pupils who come from socially vulnerable groups (foreign, repatriated, Roma, Muslims, etc.).
- Develop and implement the apprenticeship programmes for IEK graduates
- Improve the curricula, enhance the syllabus and elaborate the textbooks of all VET specializations
- Improve the relevance of VET systems with the labour market in close cooperation with stakeholders
- Redesign the Apprenticeship Programmes for 150 specializations/professions

Guidance policies

- Support of Eoppep’s “Ploigos” web portal. It is the national educational opportunities database, providing information about studies in Greece at all levels and in all types of education (general, vocational, initial vocational training, adult education, distance learning, etc.)
- Improvement of Teenagers vocational guidance portal to look for information about occupations, take skills and vocational guidance tests and create their own personal skills file.
- Information of young's about the electronic lifelong careers counselling forum with the codename IRIS, which is intended for public and private sector vocational guidance and careers counsellors and aims at encouraging supplementary actions by public and private sector counselling bodies and staff, nationally and in each region separately, and improving the quality of the services provided.
- Improvement of the decentralised structures of SEPED under the Ministry of Education, that offer in-school vocational guidance to students and parents (information about job and study possibilities, alternative pathways, risks that go with dropping out of school) through the

- Modification of the secondary school programme in order to include systematically a vocational guidance class, and vocational guidance as the focus of inter-thematic projects.
- Support of Manpower Employment counselling services that aimed at mobilising the unemployed and helping them enter the labour market. These services include:
 - (a) counselling and vocational guidance – career management, for first-time jobseekers with no clear occupational goal and people obliged to change their occupation;
 - (b) counselling for people looking for work who have qualifications that are in demand in the labour market;
 - (c) business initiative counselling, to encourage the development of business skills and help unemployed persons start businesses with enhanced viability prospects.

Policies for Employment Services

The Ministry of Labour in cooperation with the Greek Manpower Organisation is planning actions, which mainly include:

- Increase of the efficiency and effectiveness of the Public Employment Service
- Improving openness and service provided by the Agency
- Strengthening of mechanisms and tools to support and facilitate access of job seekers to the labour market
- Sustainable and sustained labour market integration of young people, both through apprenticeship programmes and through enhanced support to youth entrepreneurship
- Enhance resilience and mobility of job seekers so they can respond to changes in the working environment
- Developing collaborations and partnerships between the Employment Agency and private sector stakeholders, employers, social partners and other stakeholders in the fight against unemployment and
- Upgrading of design and evaluation processes of Active labour market Programmes, with measurable targets for improving efficiency and effectiveness.
- Creation of a permanent mechanism for the diagnosis of the labor market
- Adoption of a regulatory framework for mutual obligations of unemployed – employment services
- Youth-awareness and knowledge of new NEETs activities
- Visibility, awareness raising, information and publicity actions
- Focus and Intensification of the Personalised Approach process

- Apprenticeship Programme
- Experimental (Pilot) vocational training schools (PSEK)
- Internships lasting up to 6 months
- Interview Abroad (labour mobility program)
- Integrated Intervention actions: for a) training or b) employment (through creation of new jobs) or c) self-employment

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