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Vocational Guidance Education in Full-Time Compulsory Education in Europe

European Commission

VOCATIONAL GUIDANCE EDUCATION IN FULL-TIME COMPULSORY EDUCATION

GREECE

School year 2007/08

Education is compulsory for pupils between the ages of 5 and 15. It covers primary education (pre-primary school and primary school) of a duration of seven years, and the first cycle of secondary education *(gymnasio)* of a duration of three years. At the end of the first cycle of secondary education (end of compulsory education), pupils must decide whether to go on to non-compulsory upper secondary education *(lykeio)* of a duration of three years, choosing between general *lykeio*, vocational *lykeio* or another type of *lykeio* (e.g. artistic, musical, athletic, etc.).

After students have successfully completed the first year of *lykeio*, they must decide whether to continue their education in one of the abovementioned types of *lykeio*, or to continue focusing on a vocational specialisation in the vocational schools which operate under the auspices of the Ministry of National Education and Religious Affairs (YPEPTh) or other ministries. Therefore, the third year of *gymnasio* as well as the first year of *lykieo* are key moments in terms of the educational/vocational decisions of students.

LEGAL FRAMEWORK AND NATIONAL OBJECTIVES

The basic legislative and formal stages of vocational guidance were the laws of 1976 and 1985, as well as the latest law, No. 2525 of 1997. Based on this latest law, the aim of vocational guidance is ‘to provide the person with the appropriate scientific support and facilities to better him/herself, and to become aware of his/her identity, by developing and cultivating aspects of his/her personality that he/she wishes to develop, while at the same time preparing him/herself to face the outside world effectively, with the higher aim of being able to feel satisfied and complete in his/her daily life by pursuing his/her choices’.

RESPONSIBILITIES

1. **Ministry of National Education and Religious Affairs** (Directorate of Vocational Guidance and Education Activities/SEPED)
2. **Educational Institute** (vocational guidance sector)
3. **General Secretariat for Lifelong Learning**
4. **Vocational Training and Education Organisation** (OEEK)
5. **Ministry of Employment** (in relation to the vocational guidance of adults and young people aged 16 and over who are not part of the education system)

The main organisational structures are:

1. The **National Centre for Vocational Guidance** (EKEP), whose central aim is to provide scientific and technical support to the Ministry of National Education and Religious Affairs and the Ministry of Labour and Social Security, for the planning and implementation of a national policy in the area of vocational guidance. The EKEP has also been appointed to take charge of the certification of the structures and human resources which provide guidance services.

2. The **National Transition Observatory** (of lower secondary education graduates and initial vocational training in the labour market), under the responsibility of the Educational Institute, observes the extent of labour integration of secondary education graduates into the labour market as well as the frequency of attendance of students in compulsory and non-compulsory secondary education, in order to find out the reasons and issues related to early school leaving.

3. The **Vocational Development and Career Offices** (GEAS) at the Vocational Training Institutions (IEK) of the Vocational Training and Education Organisation (OEEK).

4. The **Guidance Centres** and **Centres for Promoting Employment** (KPA) (under the responsibility of the Ministry of Employment and Social Protection); the **Active Guidance Programme** for young people aged 16 and over has been set up in the past three years.

5. The **Observatory of Occupational Research and Information Technology** comprises one of the two subsidiary companies of the Greek Manpower Employment Organisation (OAED). Its main aim is to conduct research and studies on the labour market and to provide complete solutions for the computerisation and statistical observation of the actions developed by the OAED and its subsidiaries.

6. The **National System Linking Vocational Education and Training to Employment** (ESSEEKA) incorporates 5 auxiliary sub-systems of vocational education and training and operates as a coordinator of the entire institutional environment.

In addition, the new Operational Programme of the YPEPTh called 'Education and Lifelong Learning' (which establishes the national aims for education and training for 2007-2013), and more specifically, the second strategic objective of the programme, tries to achieve – through combined actions – the formation and consolidation of a positive climate of cooperation and participation of those directly involved in the education procedure (pupils, students), the labour market and the world of entrepreneurship. The more specific interventions which have been included for its achievement are:

- the institutional, organisational and operational expansion of the **liaison offices**;
- the expansion of traineeships within the framework of the curricula of the different levels and degrees of education;
- the promotion of youth entrepreneurship in order to develop a spirit of enterprise and familiarity with matters of research, technology and innovation;

- the re-planning and expansion of vocational guidance in all degrees and levels of education for the improvement of its quality and effectiveness. The foundation of management units/vocational guidance structures in the regional directorates of primary and secondary education, with support provided to existing and new structures. The establishment of *pupils' reports and CVs* and the promotion of *individual counselling.* The reform of the vocational guidance curriculum, development of the appropriate educational material and promotion of programmes for the academic and vocational training of teaching staff, with the possibility of earning a specialised master's degree.

VOCATIONAL GUIDANCE EDUCATION IN THE CURRICULUM

Vocational guidance education exists in a minimum form in the framework of the curricula:

- **in the third year of *gymnasio*** (1 hr/week for the entire duration of the school year);
- **in the first year of general *lykeio*** (1 hr/week in the second term of the school year);
- **in the first year of vocational *lykeio*** (2 hrs/week for the entire year in the technological course and in the services course).

For the application of vocational guidance in class, educational material has been produced under the responsibility of the Educational Institute for the third year of *gymnasio* and the first year of *lykeio*, which is addressed to pupils in the corresponding classes and to the educational staff who implement it.

Traineeships within the framework of the curriculum

Traineeship activities in compulsory secondary education have partly materialised in the form of pilot programmes (e.g. Leonardo). Traineeships in non-compulsory secondary education concern specialisations in vocational *lykeio* (e.g. auxiliary nurses), where traineeships are included in the official curriculum and are realised in the corresponding working areas (e.g. hospitals). Traineeships in the form of *apprenticeships* are implemented by OAED vocational schools which belong to the Ministry of Employment. Following a decision by the Minister of National Education and Religious Affairs, optional traineeships of a duration of 6 months have been established for students who have completed their studies at public and private IEKs.

OTHER TYPES OF ACTIVITY/GUIDANCE SERVICES

Guidance services at school

a. Services *incorporated* in school activities, such as:

i. The application of vocational guidance in class (referred to above).

ii. The implementation of vocational guidance in *gymnasio* and general *lykeio* courses.

b. *Additional* extracurricular services, such as:

b.1 Targeted activities

i. *Career training* programmes, which are carried out in the framework of extracurricular activities.

ii. *Career Days,* aimed at preparing pupils for the transition between different levels of education and/or from education to training or the labour market.

iii. *Library – vocational guidance* archives.

iv. *Visits to educational and work places* for pupils in classes which apply vocational guidance.

v. *Visits of professionals to schools* for pupils in classes which apply vocational guidance.

b.2 Structures of vocational guidance

i. Foundation and operation of **570 vocational guidance offices** (GRASEPs) at corresponding general and technical secondary schools. The vocational guidance offices support the application of vocational guidance at *gymnasio* and *lykeio*, and provide individual or group counselling to the entire school community.

ii. Foundation and operation of **132 labour market liaison offices for vocational guidance** (GRASYs) in the corresponding vocational *lykeio*, which, in addition to the characteristics of the vocational guidance offices, target the connection between education and the labour market by carrying out research into the local employment market (via networking with local businesses and others).

c. Services outside school

i. **81 Counselling and Guidance Centres (KESYPs)**. The KESYPs provide counselling and information on career matters. These centres target young people under age 25 who are or are not part of the school system, their parents and guardians, the teaching staff at schools and, in a broader sense, the local communities (with special emphasis on vulnerable social groups).

ii. Upgrading of the central administration service of the YPEPTh involved in the institution in the **Directorate of Vocational Guidance and Innovative Activities** (Law 2986/2002, article 8).

iii. Foundation and operation of the **National Centre for Vocational Guidance** (EKEP) (referred to above).

Guidance services outside school

a. In the Ministry of Employment

a. 1. OAED Centres for Promoting Employment (KPA)

a.2. Vocational Guidance Centres with the following organisational structures:

- **vocational Guidance and Information Centres (KEP)**;
- **vocational guidance offices** (at regional level);
- **employment services** as well as the **Centres for Promoting Employment** (at local level).

The OAED vocational guidance services aim to help citizens make the right vocational choices in the following different manners:

- **individual vocational guidance**, which mainly targets young people aged 14-18 who wish to be pointed in the right direction, and who visit the services on their own initiative;
- **active vocational guidance**, which is another way for the OAED to introduce vocational guidance to young people and especially to those who leave school after the 9 years of compulsory education. Active vocational guidance is a new progressive programme which addresses young people aged 15-18 once a year, and aims to inform them briefly about trade groups, so that they may evaluate their capacities and chose a profession, whilst being aware of the advantages and disadvantages of their choices.

b. In other public organisations in the broader sense and in the private sector

- **Local authority organisations** (e.g. offices for the promotion of women's entrepreneurship, etc.).
- **Non-profit organisations** which work with special groups in the population, under **public sector organisations apart from the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Employment** (e.g. therapeutic programmes for drug addicts, psychiatric patients, victims of abuse, etc.).

QUALIFICATIONS OF GUIDANCE STAFF

In the schools

The staff in vocational guidance structures (KESYP, vocational guidance offices, etc.) are secondary school teachers who, in addition to having the basic qualifications which allow them to be employed in education, may possess one of the following:

- a master's degree or a doctorate in vocational guidance;
- master's-level training in vocational guidance of a duration of one year;

- in-service training in vocational guidance of a duration of 1000 hours, under the supervision of the YPEPTh;
- in-service training in vocational guidance of a duration of 520 hours, under the supervision of the YPEPTh;
- in-service training in vocational guidance of a duration of 5 months.

In the services of the Ministry of Employment

a. Specialised counsellors

b. Professionals holding a University degree with or without a specialisation in the area of vocational guidance (who subsequently obtain a specialisation within the framework of in-service training organised periodically by the relevant Directorate of Vocational Guidance).

In other guidance services

The staff in other services have a background in social science (psychologists, social workers, sociologists, etc.) with or without additional education in vocational guidance.

COOPERATION BETWEEN SCHOOLS, EMPLOYERS, PARENTS AND OTHER STAKEHOLDERS

Parents and **guardians** are invited to the schools to be informed about the aims and targets of vocational guidance and the educational and vocational outlets for their children. Parents and guardians are informed about the possibilities for their children to continue their studies in secondary education, and the educational and vocational possibilities and outlets after graduating from secondary education.

Within the framework of these activities developed at school and the implementation of vocational guidance, a possibility exists for cooperation between schools and **social partners** and **organisations operating at local level.**

Furthermore, the **entrepreneurship programme** places special emphasis on employers' organisations and has been operating for the last six years on the initiative of schools in collaboration with the **Federation of Greek Industrialists** (**SEV)** and the **Educational Institute.**

ACCESS TO INFORMATION ON VOCATIONAL GUIDANCE

The ***Ploteus*** website (www.ploteus.net) provides access to information for professionals in the area of vocational guidance, as well as young people, pupils, students, those seeking employment, etc. in relation to educational and vocational opportunities at national and European level.

The vocational guidance structures (KESYP, GRASEP, GRASY) are connected and communicate with each other via the ***Nestor*** network, which is an internal intranet providing the staff who work in these structures exclusive access to organised information archives which are updated centrally on a regular basis.

In addition, the Educational Institute's website (http://sep.pi-schools.gr) provides access to recent educational information in electronic format to anyone who may be interested. The same Internet site offers the possibility to research study subjects at different levels by means of a keyword search, as well as vocational monographs drafted under the supervision of the Educational Institute. A complete list of the vocational guidance structures which operate throughout Greece is also provided along with useful links.

Additionally, the Directorate of Vocational Guidance (SEPED) website (http://seped.ypepth.sch.gr/) which targets pupils, parents and teachers, provides information on vocational guidance in secondary education, the vocational guidance office, the relevant legislation on vocational guidance in secondary education and, finally, the programmes carried out in the framework of EPEAEK II.

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Sources

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