

Hellenic Republic



MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, LIFELONG
LEARNING AND RELIGIOUS AFFAIRS



Ministry of Education and Culture

Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance

Republic of Cyprus

nfb *Nationales Forum Beratung in
Bildung, Beruf und Beschäftigung*

WP3 “Co-operation and co-ordination mechanisms in guidance practice and policy development”

Greece and Cyprus ELGPN Coaching / Twinning Activity

Athens April 28th 2011

FULL REPORT AND DOCUMENTATION

Meeting venue:

National Centre for Vocational Orientation - Euroguidance Centre of Greece

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The ELGPN WP3 Coaching – Twinning Activity Background

The proposal of the implementation of a coaching / twinning activity was first discussed during the WP3 meeting in Lisbon which was held during the ELGPN plenary meeting in Lisbon (22-23 September 2010). There was a long discussion about the further steps to be taken for the next ELGPN working period 2011 – 2012 and especially about the issue of the WP3 “Co-operation and co-ordination mechanisms in guidance practice and policy development”. All the WP3 members agreed that the work of this group should continue by investigating the most important points in establishing a Lifelong Guidance Forum and that all the participant countries should be supported in this procedure.

The implementation of twinning activities was encouraged in the framework of the new ELGPN work program 2011 – 2012. Greece and Cyprus WP3 participants (Fotini Vlachaki and Antonis Kafouros) immediately thought that such an activity would be ideal to strengthen and further facilitate the on going developments regarding the establishment of a LLG Forum, happening in both countries at that time. The common cultural background of both countries is also an additional advantage to ensure that the members in this activity would share a common understanding and could work together to find suitable solutions to common challenges and objectives. The idea of coaching was proposed by Greece to further enhance the twinning activity by using the experience of another member country that could provide expertise and know how to Greece and Cyprus.

Germany was a member of WP3 during the 2009 – 2010 ELGPN working period. The German colleagues (Bernhard Jenschke and Karen Schober) managed to establish and operate the LLG Forum in Germany, during that time. The LLG Forum in Germany demonstrated very interesting activities which motivated Greece and Cyprus WP3 participants to further examine its work, organizational structure and membership. Furthermore, both Greece and Cyprus needed to know more about the bottom up approach that was followed in Germany in contrary to the top down approach that both countries intended to apply in the process of the establishment of the LLG forum. The regional governmental administration of Germany and the possibilities of establishing such a forum at regional level seemed also very interesting for both countries. Germany decided not to continue participating at the WP3 in the ELGPN 2011-2012 work program because the German LLG Forum had been operating already. Nevertheless, the German colleagues were very enthusiastic to provide Greece and Cyprus with their support and expertise so they agreed immediately to work closely together on the issue and examine all the relevant details.

Greece and Cyprus (twinning), together with Germany (coaching) agreed to implement this activity aiming at:

- supporting both Greece and Cyprus in the LLG establishment procedure by motivating and involving all the relevant stakeholders and policy makers at national level
- examining in depth and in practice the several issues related to the establishment of a LLG forum
- deriving interesting outcomes to be used by the other members of the WP3 and also other interested ELGPN member countries
- using this activity as an additional working method of the WP3 group and the ELGPN in general

During the WP3 meeting in Budapest, after discussing some organisational issues with the ELGPN co-ordinator, the WP3 lead country, the WP3 consultant and the WP3 members, it was agreed that the coaching / twinning activity will be held in Greece (Athens, April 2011) before the WP3 field visit to be held later in Cyprus (Larnaca, May 2011) where the outcomes of the activity would be presented.

The coaching / twinning activity was held in Athens April on the 28th 2011. The participants were:

1. **SCHOBER Karen**, President of the German National Guidance Forum in Education, Career and Employment (Nationales Forum Beratung in Bildung, Beruf und Beschäftigung) and Vice – President of the International Association of Educational and Vocational Guidance (IAEVG/AIOSP)
2. **JENSCHKE Bernhard**, Vice – President of the German National Guidance Forum in Education, Career and Employment (Nationales Forum Beratung in Bildung, Beruf und Beschäftigung)
3. **Lena Nikolaou**, Cyprus WP3 ELGPN Representative, Ministry of Education and Culture
4. **Antonis Kafouros**, Cyprus WP3 ELGPN Representative, Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance
5. **Fotini Vlachaki**, ELGPN Representative Greece, Director of Programming and Development, EKEP - National Centre for Vocational Orientation
6. **Dimitris Gaitanis**, ELGPN Representative Greece, Manager of the Accreditation and Quality Assurance Department, EKEP - National Centre for Vocational Orientation

A full report of the activity along with education and guidance information for Greece and Cyprus can be found at the following pages.

We thank the colleagues from Cyprus and Germany for the fruitful cooperation and the successful meeting.

Fotini Vlachaki, ELGPN Representative Greece
Director of Programming and Development / EKEP - National Centre for Vocational Orientation



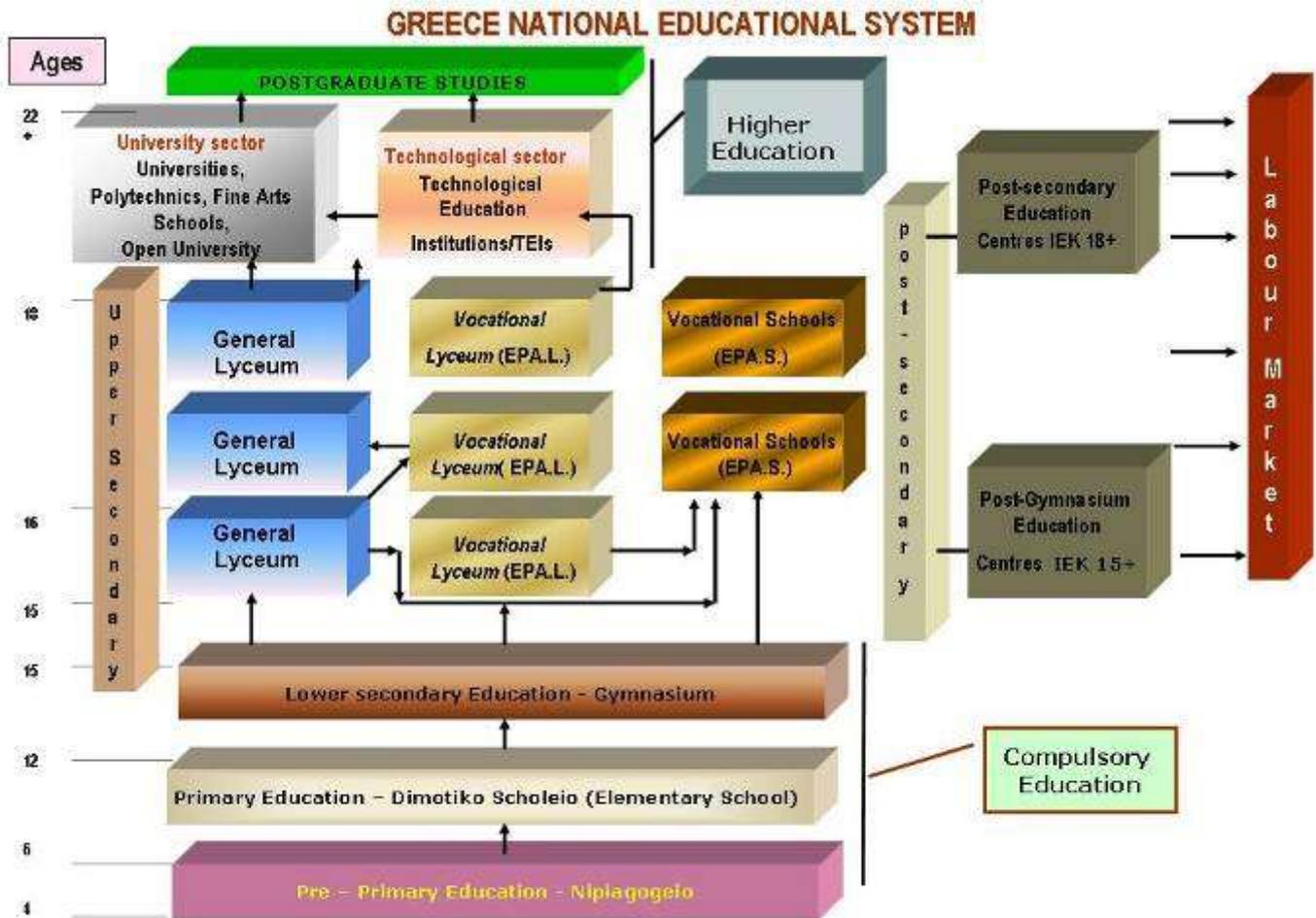
GREECE

A. National Educational System Overview and Ongoing Reforms

B. Description of the guidance and counseling system in Greece

***C. Perspectives for the development of a National Forum on Lifelong
Guidance in Greece – current situation and critical issues***

A. Greece - National Educational System Overview November 2010



1. Education population and language of instruction

At the beginning of the 2009/10 school year in public and in private compulsory education (primary and lower-secondary school levels) there were enrolled 1 051 297 and 75 828 students correspondingly. More generally, in January 1, 2009 the estimated population aged 0 to 29 years numbered 3 638 2000 individuals comprising 32.3 % of the total population.

The language of instruction at all levels of education is Greek. Concerning this Muslim community, there are minority schools in which the teaching of courses takes place in both the Greek and the Turkish language.

2. Administrative control and extent of public-sector funded education

In 2009/10 school year, 93.64 % of the students enrolled in primary and secondary education attended public schools. Private schools are not grant aided; they are fully self-financed. Private primary and secondary schools are under the supervision and inspection of the ministry of Education Lifelong Learning and Religious Affairs. The university level is comprised exclusively of state institutions.

Administrative control remains focused at the central level, while measures have been taken in recent years to devolve responsibilities to the regional level. The ministry of Education Lifelong Learning and Religious Affairs formulates and implements legislation, administers the budget, coordinates and supervises its decentralized Services, approves primary and secondary school curricula and appoints teaching staff. There are thirteen Regional Education Directorates under the Minister of Education implementing educational policy and linking local agents to central services and organizations. They are responsible for the administration and supervision of the other decentralized services in their area, as well as for the coordination of local School Advisors. At the next level of the administrative structure, Education Directorates (in each prefecture) and district Offices provide administrative support, supervise operation of area schools and facilitate coordination and cooperation between schools. School Directors serve as the administrative and educational heads of their school unit; they coordinate and guide teachers in their work and make provision for in-service training.

Teachers' Councils implement program and curricular regulations and monitor student attendance and discipline. School Committees, which include parent and local representatives, manage budgets for heating, lighting, maintenance, equipment etc. The Education Directorates and Offices are responsible for monitoring the operation of schools within their area. According to current legislation, evaluation of schools is to be carried out at the local level with the Teachers' Councils drawing up a self-evaluation report and regional centres conducting an appraisal of school operations in their area; these reports will then be analyzed at the national level by the Education Research Centre (K.E.E.).

Higher education institutions are funded by the State. They are self-governed under the auspices of the ministry of Education.

3. Pre-primary education

Children aged 4 years may attend public or private kindergartens (*nipiagogeia*). Kindergarten attendance is compulsory for all 5 year olds; it remains optional, however, for four year olds. Public state-run kindergartens do not charge any fees. Parents pay full tuition fees for their child to attend private kindergartens. Children enrol in *nipiagogeia* according to the family's place of residence. Administratively, *nipiagogeia* are considered part of primary education. They follow national curricula for the kindergarten level that have been developed by the Pedagogical Institute. The maximum class size is limited to 25 pupils. The pupils have a 9 month school year (11 Sept. to 15 June) and a daily program lasting from 8:15 to 12:15; unless they attend all day kindergartens (*Oloimera Nipiagogeia*) where children may arrive as early as 7:00 and leave as late as 16:00. *Nipiagogeia* operate from 1st of September till 21st of June.

Education and care for children 4 years of age and under is provided at child centres (*paidikoi stathmoi*) and at 'infant' centres (*vrefonipiakoi stathmoi*) – the latter from 6 months of age – that are municipal, i.e. public, or private. Attendance is optional for this age group. Municipal/community child centres are run by the local municipalities and communities. Parents pay a small fee for these child centres, though fees can be waived for certain categories of families. Private child centres charge full fees.

During the 2009/10 school year, there were 146 250 youngsters enrolled in public kindergartens and 11 658 in private ones. Of children attending public kindergartens, 36.3 % were 4 years old and 51.2 % boys. In private kindergartens, 21.7 % of the pupils were 4 years old and 47.8 % girls.

4. Compulsory education

(i) Phases

Education is compulsory for the age cohort 5-15 years and is divided into the following levels:

<i>Nipiagogeio</i> (pre-primary education)	5-6 years of age
<i>Dimotiko scholeio</i> (primary education)	6-12 years of age
<i>Gymnasio</i> (lower secondary general education)	12-15 years of age

There are also 3 years of lower secondary education provided by Evening Gymnasia (*Esperina Gymnasia*) that are geared to the needs of working students and enrol students from the age of 14 years. In addition operate Ecclesiastic, Minority, Cross-Cultural, *Peiramatika* (Experimental), Music, Special Education *Gymnasia* etc.

(ii) Admissions criteria

Granted a kindergarten certificate, enrolment in public primary education is based solely on the pupil's place of residence. The same rule applies to the lower secondary school level, with the prerequisite that the student has obtained a school-leaving certificate from primary school.

Education in Greece for all levels of public education is provided free of charge and all costs (transportation, books etc.) are covered by the state budget. Families may choose to enrol their children in private schools where full tuition fees are charged. Increases in school tuition fees by private schools are negotiated with the General Secretariat for Commerce.

(iii) Length of school day/week/year

The school year is comprised of 175 days from the 11th of September to the 15th of June for primary schools and the 31th of May for lower secondary schools. Schools are open five days a week for 35 weeks per year. Instructional hours per week are from 23 to 35 depending on the grade or level. Each instructional hour lasts from 40 to 50 minutes. The number of instructional hours for the two first grades of primary education is 25 per week, reaching 30 hours in the next four grades and 35 hours for all three grades of lower secondary education.

(iv) Class size/student grouping

According to Ministerial Decisions, primary classes may have up to a maximum of 25 students; at the secondary education level, classes may have up to 30 students. Students are grouped by age, thus creating six grade levels in primary education and three in secondary. All schools are mixed gender.

Primary classes have one teacher for all subjects, with the exception of physical education, foreign languages and music which are taught by subject specific teachers. Secondary education students have different teachers for each subject.

(v) Curriculum control and content

The national curricula for primary and secondary education are developed by the Pedagogical Institute and approved by the ministry. The current Cross-Thematic Curricular Framework for compulsory education and accompanying subject syllabi reflect a more inter-disciplinary approach to knowledge. At the primary school level the national curriculum covers religion, Greek language, mathematics, history, environmental studies, geography, science, social and civic studies, arts studies (music et al.), two foreign languages and physical education. The program also includes a 'Flexible Zone' for the development of cross-curricular themes and creative activities.

The above subjects, except for environmental studies, are included in the lower secondary school curriculum which also covers ancient Greek, chemistry, biology, information and computer technology, home economics, technology and school vocational guidance.

Teachers are required to follow the national curriculum and to use the approved textbook for each subject; taking into account, however, the particular needs and features of their classes as far as teaching methods are concerned. At the beginning of each school year, the Pedagogical Institute issues directions for teachers on teaching approaches and aims according to subject area. The school textbooks, written according to the criteria set in Cross-Thematic Curricular Framework, are evaluated by the Pedagogical Institute and recommended to the ministry of Education for final approval.

(vi) Assessment, progression and qualifications

At the primary school level, students are assessed by their teachers throughout the school year. Periodical and annual assessments are descriptive and also include letter grades from the third year of primary school. Students are generally promoted to the next grade, except in cases of insufficient attendance. In the rare case where a student might need to repeat a grade – based on teacher assessment – a strict process of consultation precedes this outcome. Students completing the sixth grade (end of primary school) receive the primary school leaving certificate (*Apolytirio Dimotikou*) which serves for admission to lower secondary school (*Gymnasio*).

In lower secondary schools teachers assess students based on daily work, written tests, assignments and end-of-year written review examinations, *Graptas Anakefalaioitikes Exetaseis*.

Promotion is based on achievement. Students who achieve an overall passing grade, at the end of the third year of lower secondary school receive a school-leaving certificate (*Apolytirio Gymnasiou*), which grants access to senior high school.

5. Post-compulsory education/upper secondary and post-secondary level

(i) Types of education

<i>Geniko Lykeio</i> – G.L. (general upper secondary schools)	15-18 years of age
<i>Epangelmatiko Lykeio</i> – EPA.L. (vocational upper secondary schools)	15-18 years of age
<i>Epangelmatikes Scholes</i> – EPA.S (vocational training schools)	16-18 years of age
<i>Instituta Epangelmatikis Katartisis</i> or I.E.K. (Post-secondary non-tertiary institutes)	18 + years of age

Lyceums (*Lykeia*) offer a three year course and are of two types: the *Geniko Lykeio* (G.L.) that provides general/academic studies and the *Epangelmatiko Lykeio* (EPA.L.) that combines general education with technical-vocational studies. In 2007/08 of all first and second year *Lykeio* students, 23 % enrolled in vocational *Lykeia* and 77 % in general *Lykeia*. There are also evening lyceums (*Esperino Geniko Lykeio* and *Esperino Epangelmatiko Lykeio*) that offer a 4 year part-time course (15-19 years of age) and in 2007/08 enrolled about 5 % of *Lykeio* students.

The *Epangelmatikes Scholes* (EPA.S.) offer a two-year course organized according to occupational area, which may extend to three years if on-the-job training is provided. Other Ministries besides the ministry of Education also operate such vocational training schools providing courses in their area of responsibility.

The post-secondary *Instituta Epangelmatikis Katartisis* (I.E.K.) offer 4 semesters of initial vocational training, or in the case of vocational education graduates who followed a similar course, 2 semesters of further training. Certain courses of the I.E.K. can also enrol *Gymnasio* graduates.

Currently there are 114 public I.E.K. (no fees) and 53 private I.E.K. (fee paying). At the same time, private institutions offering services at post-secondary level ("Post-secondary Education Centres") are classified as belonging in the informal post-secondary education and training realm according to the relevant Law 3848/2010. For their establishment and operation, licenses are required that are granted by the ministry of Education Lifelong Learning and Religious Affairs while the study or other certificates they provide are not academically equal to those granted within the framework of the Greek post-secondary system of formal education, (e.g. Universities, Technological Education Institutes and the above mentioned I.E.K.). The provisions governing the establishment and operation of "Post-secondary Education Centres" are stipulated in Law 3696/2008 and 3848/2010. The abovementioned laws provide ground for *Laboratories of Liberal Studies* which offer non-typical vocational studies of a shorter period.

(ii) Admissions criteria

Holders of a lower secondary school-leaving certificate (*Apolytirio Gymnasiou*) may enrol in a *Geniko* or an *Epangelmatiko Lykeio* according to catchment area. Students who have successfully completed the entry year of *Lykeio* may then enrol in the first year of *Epangelmatikes Scholes* (EPA.S.); while *Epangelmatiko Lykeio* students can also opt to enrol in a school outside their catchment area when it offers a special field they are interested in. Students are also able to transfer between *Geniko* and *Epangelmatiko Lykeio* at the beginning of year two.

Graduates of any type of post-compulsory secondary school, including vocational training schools, may enrol in the post-secondary *Instituta Epangelmatikis Katartisis* (IEK). Adult graduates of compulsory education may also enrol in an *IEK*, but only for certain courses.

(iii) Curriculum control and content

The Pedagogical Institute sets national curricula for all upper secondary schools. The curriculum for the *Geniko Lykeio* includes general education subjects (modern and ancient Greek language and literature, history, mathematics, sciences, religion, a foreign language, technology, social sciences, physical education) as well as electives and specialization subjects from year two which depend on the 'stream' followed (theoretic, scientific, technological). The curriculum of the *Epangelmatiko Lykeio* includes general education subjects similar to the above, as well as technical – vocational subjects that vary according to stream followed (technological, service, and maritime).

EPA.S. (Vocational School) curricula include technical – vocational subjects and workshop courses. Class size in vocational education is limited to 25 students. The curricula of the *Instituta Epangelmatikis Katartisis* (IEK) include both theoretical and practical components and emphasize new methods and skills that broaden the occupational options of adult students. Course offerings are the result of an ongoing process of consultation with social partners and are based on the recommendations of the Tri-party Consultative Committees of OEEK (the Organisation for Vocational Education and Training), comprised of representatives of OEEK, employers and employees, that consider regional labour market needs and trends.

(iv) Assessment, progression and qualifications

Geniko and *Epangelmatiko Lykeio* students are assessed by teachers on the basis of their participation in daily classroom work, their performance on tests and on end of the year final examinations. To be promoted and to receive a Lyceum Diploma (*Apolytirio Lykeiou*), an average general mark of 9.5 out of 20 is required.

Besides the Lyceum Diploma, a prerequisite for admission to tertiary education is achievement score on the 'Certificate' (*Vevaiosi*) which includes grades in six general education and 'stream' subjects that are examined at the national level. The general achievement score on this Certificate takes into account final year school grade, school level evaluation and grades on the six subjects of the national level examinations.

Epangelmatiko Lykeio graduates acquire, in addition to the above, a level 3 vocational education certificate (*Ptychio Epangelmatikis Ekpaidefsis, epipedou 3*) based on school level examinations. Assessment for promotion and graduation from the *Epangelmatikes Scholes* is conducted at the school level, and upon successful completion of their course, students receive a level 3 vocational education certificate (*Ptychio* as above), which in addition to employment, allows them to enrol in post secondary IEK. Trainees at IEK (Post Secondary non-Tertiary Education) are assessed by their instructors during and upon completion of their training. Students who successfully complete an IEK course are awarded an Attestation of Training (*Vevasi Epangelmatikis Katartisis*) and then participate in external examinations conducted by the competent national or local committees to obtain a postsecondary level Diploma of Vocational Training (*Diploma Epangelmatikis Katartisis, epipedou metadeuterovathmias epangelmatikis katartisis*).

6. Higher education

(i) Structure

According to law 2916/2001, higher education consists of two parallel sectors: the University sector (Universities, Polytechnics, Fine Arts Schools and the Open University) and the Technological sector (Technological Education Institutions/TEIs and the School of Pedagogic and Technological Education).

The law 3549/2007 regulates issues concerning governance of higher education along the general lines of increased participation, transparency, accountability and increased autonomy. The establishment of the International University of Greece aims at facilitating student mobility and increasing the number of places offered in higher education, especially to foreign students. This University will also offer distance learning courses.

The Hellenic Open University provides distance undergraduate and postgraduate education and adult education by developing and using appropriate educational materials and teaching methods. There are also State Non-university Tertiary Institutes, such as the Higher Ecclesiastical School or the Merchant Marine Academies, offering vocationally oriented courses of shorter duration (2 to 3 years) which operate under the authority of other Ministries.

(ii) Access

Entrance to the various Schools of the Universities (*Panepistimio*) and Technological Education Institutions (*Technologiko Ekpaideftiko Idryma* – TEI) depends on the general score obtained by Lyceum graduates on the Certificate, as described above (subsection 5.iv), on the number of available places (*numerus clausus*) and on the candidates' ranked preferences among schools and sections.

(iii) Qualifications

Students who successfully complete their studies at Universities and TEIs are awarded a *Ptychio* (first cycle degree). First cycle programmes last from four years for most fields to five years for engineering and certain other applied science fields and six years for medicine. The *Ptychio* leads to employment or further study at the post-graduate level that includes the one year second cycle leading to the second degree, *Metaptychiako Diploma Eidikefsis* – equivalent to the *Master's* degree – and the third cycle leading to the doctorate degree, *Didaktoriko Diploma*.

Recent legislation on quality assurance in Higher Education, the Credit Transfer System and the Diploma Supplement defines the framework and criteria for evaluation of university departments and for certification of student degrees. These measures aim at promoting student mobility and contributing to the creation of a European Higher Education Area.

7. Special needs

Law 3699/2008 established the compulsory nature of education for students with disabilities and special educational needs, affirming that it is an integral part of public free education and trying to promote the principle of integrated education.

Education for students with disabilities and special educational needs is provided in either mainstream or special schools and extends from the preschool years to the age of 23.

Diagnosis and assessment of special educational needs is provided by the interdisciplinary staff of the local Centres for Differential Assessment, Diagnosis and Support of Special Educational Needs (KEDDY) who are also responsible for recommending the most appropriate schooling type for students and drawing up an individualized educational program. The staff of these Centres cooperates closely with teachers of special needs students and provide a range of support services for the students and the schools.

According to the above assessment on the type and the degree of disability that a student has, they may be enrolled in: a) mainstream schools attending either the regular classroom with parallel support or special sections/classes of the school, or b) Special Education Schools. The Special Education Schools cover pre-school, primary and secondary education levels including vocational education.

During the 2008/09 school year in School Units of Special Education and Training of all levels and types there were 6 701 (28.40 %) pupils, in special sections of regular schools 16 645 (70.53 %) and in regular classrooms of regular schools 253 (1.07 %) pupils with special education needs.

8. Teachers

Pre-primary and primary school teachers are degree (*Ptychio*) holders from a four-year university level course, primarily from Pedagogic Schools. Lower and upper secondary education teachers hold university degrees, *Ptychia*, in their specialist subject after completing a four-year course and take a three-month introductory teacher training course upon appointment. Access to teaching posts in the state sector (pre-primary to secondary level) is determined by competitive examinations administered by Supreme Council for Civil Personnel Selection (ASEP). Teachers at all levels of the state sector are civil servants.

9. Ongoing reforms and policy initiatives

A – Ongoing reforms and policy initiatives related to 'ET 2020' strategic framework

1. Making lifelong learning and mobility a reality

– Lifelong learning strategies

As part of an effort focusing on citizen's needs aiming at decreasing social inequalities by overcoming educational deadlocks, a new law 3879/2010 on lifelong learning has been in force since September 2010. It is titled "Development of Lifelong Learning and other provisions" (http://www.hellenicparliament.gr/Nomothetiko-Ergo/Anazitisi-Nomothetikou-Ergou?law_id=6434ed52-6016-4d0c-9644-b403a44daf57) and its goal is the development of lifelong learning via alternative educational paths as well as the association of lifelong learning bodies with those of quality assurance so as to successfully connect lifelong learning with occupation and to provide these type of education beyond the formal educational system. This specific framework has clear principles setting up qualitative and quantitative realistic targets as well as establishing specific political proposals for carrying out these targets. It also responds to the current needs of changing the educational model and of focusing the state's interest on student's benefit.

– European Qualifications Framework

The ministry of Education Lifelong Learning and Religious Affairs in 2010, as part of its new policy on lifelong learning, proposed the establishment of the National Qualifications Framework in accordance to the European Qualifications Framework. This effort was developed because to date there was not any unified system as to qualification recognition and accreditation including all types of education, training and professional experience. The goal of organizing a unified National Qualifications Framework is the association, recognition and accreditation of all types and levels of formal, informal and non-formal learning on the basis of an agreement certifying quality and mutual trust between the state and social partners. In this context, the National Qualifications Framework will enable transparency in vocational qualification, it will facilitate access and progress in lifelong learning processes and it will support in a better way the relationship between education/training and employment. The planning and establishment of National Qualifications Framework will take into account from the beginning all social bodies contributing in any way in education and training in Greece: accreditation bodies, agencies for recognition of academic titles and professional qualification, quality assurance bodies, social partners and of course the citizens. The creation of a National Qualifications Framework was completed within 2010. The public consultation on NQF started in the beginning of March and ended in the beginning of September 2010 and the law 3879/2010 established it.

– Expanding learning mobility

Specific information not available.

2. Improving the quality and efficiency of education and training

– Language learning

The improvement of state foreign language education is carried out in cooperation with the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens with a goal of forming a single comprehensive plan and of designing the necessary studies (http://www.minedu.gov.gr/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=402&Itemid=785&lang=el&limitstart=3). A new study program will be formed for all modern languages included in the curriculum. It will abide by the rules of the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) for language learning of the Council of Europe (CoE), which sets a six grade scale of assessment and has been adopted by the State Language Certification. Therefore, this programme will point out what is needed of every Greek user of a foreign language at every level – from A1 (breakthrough) to C2 (mastery). From September 2010, the pilot English language programme will begin in 60 primary education schools (*Dimotika*) and 30 lower secondary education schools (*Gymnasia*) in different prefectures of the country. The proposition is graduation from primary schools to lead to an A2 or a B1 certification and graduation from lower secondary education schools to a B2 certification.

– Professional development of teachers and trainers

Aiming at completing the program within three years time, the ministry of Education starts the in service training of all teachers in September 2010. This process will try to take advantage of the progress of Information and Communication Technologies. The in-service training focuses on: a) discipline, b) teaching methods, c) new technologies and d) the guidance and administrative staff of education. The training programs comprise: a) a basic seminar, b) distance learning and c) a feedback seminar. The duration of in-service training will be 200 hours, of which 50 hours are viva voce and 150 are distance learning. The process will be specialized and bound to the forthcoming changes of the curricula which teachers are called to implement but also to contribute to form their final content. Respectively, there will be training in relation to the educational practices accompanying those programs. This training will commence at least six months before the pilot implementation of the new curricula and according to the rate the latter are effectuated.

The ongoing process of improving the staff involved to education comprises a change in the selection of the administrative staff of education. The equal access of teachers in the selection process for such posts as well as the widening of the basis of candidates is attempted through law 3848/2010. Selection process takes into account knowledge and competences acquired via professional experience. Training with the contribution of the National Centre for Public Administration and Local Government (E.K.D.D.A.) in issues connected to administration of education is also obligatory. The formation of a framework of the administrative staff professional progress is served by the same law. Prerequisite of selection will be the participation in selfevaluation programmes and, at a second stage, in evaluation programmes. Except from the aforementioned law, a public consultation took place in June 2010 as part of a national teacher's in-service training strategy.

– Governance and funding

Specific information not available

– Basic skills in reading, mathematics and science

Through the new approach to the operation of primary and secondary education, the ministry of Education encourages the Pupil: a) to acquire better competence in speaking and writing the Greek language b) to get in touch with literature, theatre, music, history and, in general, culture c) to have a cognitive efficiency in the handling of mathematic concepts applied to everyday life d) to develop mathematic logic and abstractive ability e) To acquire respective knowledge and skills in sciences and in technology.

Starting from the current school year, changes in the curricula and in the teaching methods as well as relative training of teachers aim at reaching these goals.

– 'New Skills for New Jobs'

Actions taking into account labour market skills needs in education in Greece have been taken by the National Accreditation Centre for Continuing Vocational Training (EKEPIS), the Greek Manpower Employment Organisation (OAED) and the Organisation for Vocational Education and Training (OEEK). These organisations, by using the Greek education and training system for developing new competences, respond to the labour market needs. For more information on this topic please see respectively: <http://www.ekepis.gr/main/Aboutus/tabid/124/Default.aspx>, <http://www.oaed.gr/> and <http://www.oEEK.gr/>. Please see also the point devoted to the priority area 'Lifelong Learning strategies' of the first strategic objective 'Making lifelong learning and mobility a reality'.

3. Promoting equity, social cohesion and active citizenship

– Early leavers from education and training

Please see the pilot program of the School Network on Educational Innovation described under the priority area 'Innovation friendly institutions' of the strategic objective 4 'Enhancing creativity and innovation, including entrepreneurship, at all levels of education and training'. Please also see: http://www.minedu.gov.gr/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=402&Itemid=785&lang=el&limitstart=3

– Pre-primary education

Concerning social cohesion law 3518/2006 safeguards access to pre-school education even from the age of 4 years old for all children irrespectively of national, socio-economic or religious background of their families. From 1997, law 2525 established the All-Day pre-primary schools for serving working parents with their children.

– Migrants

Please see the pilot program of the School Network on Educational Innovation described under the priority area 'Innovation-friendly institutions' of the strategic objective 4 'Enhancing creativity and innovation, including entrepreneurship, at all levels of education and training'. Please also see: http://www.minedu.gov.gr/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=402&Itemid=785&lang=el&limitstart=3

– Learners with special needs

In the field of special needs education, the basic principles of the ministry of Education policy aim at social integration of the disabled pupils and are as follows:

- No child with disability or special educational needs will face problems in enjoying the benefits of education. For this reason, all disabled pupils or pupils with special educational needs are monitored. They acquire 'pupil identification number' and are integral part of pupil population in a school.
- Constitution of a special committee for the harmonization of the Greek educational legislation with the UN convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (December 2006) as well as the Greek Constitution in order to move towards the elimination of discrimination and social exclusion.
- Use of all staff specialists in this field in order to respond to the growing demand for special needs education teachers.
- Forwarding physical accessibility and e-accessibility by developing specialized educational material.
- Establishment of proficiency certification procedure for blind and deaf children in Greek sign language and the creation of a certification mechanism of the Braille system.
- Mapping, monitoring and evaluation of special needs education. The qualitative and quantitative mapping is the base for the systematic monitoring and evaluation of all educational actions and structures.
- Establishment of the annual 'preparation and publication report of conclusions' following the appropriate methodology. The report will refer to the situation in special needs education with measurable evaluation of policies and measures implemented.

4. Enhancing creativity and innovation, including entrepreneurship, at all levels of education and training

–Transversal key competences

Specific information not available.

– Innovation-friendly institutions

The pilot program of the School Network on Educational Innovation will be applied in the 2010-2011 school year with innovative educational practices as part of the positive distinction logic. The innovative practices fight social inequalities by helping to reduce inequalities in educational outcomes and by improving general educational level. The system first will be applied for a year to

schools of three regions and, after evaluation, to schools of 10 regions until 2013. In parallel, the educational support to vulnerable social groups will be carried out directly through three specific programmes (after public consultation a notice of competition has been already released): a) education of the Muslim minority in Thrace children; b) education of foreign and repatriated children and c) education of Roma children.

– Partnership

Specific information not available.

B – Other important ongoing reforms and policy initiatives at national level

School Education

All-day primary schools plan

Gradually, all primary education schools are becoming all-day schools with a unified educational program. Pupils in those schools will attend foreign language classes leading to certification, they will do sports and they will become familiar with the arts or other creative activities. Study (single or collective) in the first grades, takes place within the working hours of the school. For the 2010 – 2011 school year a plan for direct interventions is forwarded. The details of the plan refer to:

- The reduction of the educational contents,
- The expansion of the compulsory working hours,
- The focus on Greek language and on mathematics,
- The aiming at foreign languages,
- The priority to ICT and
- The augmentation of hours for teaching culture and literature.

The 'new school' plan

The ministry of Education Lifelong Learning and Religious Affairs seeking to confront problems related to the operation of schools and to the education offered to pupils suggests measures according to the 'pupil first' principle. Yet, it does not ignore other parties involved in the education system. The Ministry having incorporated the European Commission priorities on the Improvement of Competences for the 21st century (July 2008), and having taken into account the Primary and Secondary Education Council conclusions (November 2009) as well as the evaluation studies conducted by the Pedagogical Institute aims at creating 'the new school', so that new generations to be able to:

- Firmly step upon values and principles,
- Continue their effort to learn throughout their lives,
- Participate successfully in economic life and to have opportunities to upward social mobility,
- Act as responsible citizens and
- Be active citizens.

Within the 'new school' the common in the European Union strategic educational objectives will be served: a) development of lifelong learning, b) education quality improvement, c) social cohesion and active citizenship and d) innovation, creativity and entrepreneurship.

The priorities previously described regarding lifelong learning, all-day primary education schools, use of ICT in in-service training of teachers, the enhancement of educational administrative staff role, the improvement of pupils' competence in the Greek language, the foreign languages pupils are taught and special needs education are parts of the reform taking place for the constitution of 'the new school'.

On the basis of the aforementioned, teachers, pupils, parents and citizens were informed of the principles, the framework and the initial propositions on this issue. After public consultation in May 2010 the law 3848/2010 was ratified by the Greek Parliament regulating issues of 'the new school', and other wider educational issues concerning:

- a) The process of teacher appointment (proceeding of the competition, appointment in the new posts) whether the case of permanent staff or part-time staff, in both state and private education.
- b) The selection of other primary and secondary education staff such as School Advisors, heads of the Directorates of Education (Prefecture) and of the Education Offices (Province), the School Principals (prerequisites and selection criteria) and the councils choosing the specific staff.
- c) Issues of official alterations (transfers, detachments, transferences) and of teacher evaluation.
- d) The modernization of the university sector institutes of higher education including the selection of the instructional personnel, the distribution of books, access to higher education, research and soon. It also regulates issues of 'Quality Assurance Agency in Higher Education' (ADIP).
- e) Religious education (ecclesiastic schools of lower and upper secondary education) and its staff.

f) Finally, the Post-secondary Education Centres (former Colleges) and the General Secretariat for Research and Technology (the latter since the end of 2009 has been affiliated by the ministry of Education).

The specific law can be found at: http://www.minedu.gov.gr/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=596%3Anomo-3848-19-05-10&catid=103%3A-2010&lang=el

Higher Education

Wide reforms take place regarding higher education and the Bologna Process. Law 3794/2009 harmonized the operation of the university and technological sectors of higher education and put at the same level Universities and Technological Education Institutions (TEIs) (<http://career.duth.gr/cms/?q=node/35103>).

Youth

In 2010 the General Secretariat for Youth via the programme "Support of Initiatives for Youth 2010" attempts to support actions, programs and initiatives for youngsters, based on three thematic priorities: a) labour relations, employment, combat of unemployment, b) social integration – combat of social exclusion and c) environmental awareness, green growth, climate change, environment. For more information about the principles of this new program you can visit the web site of the General Secretariat for Youth: <http://www.neagenia.gr>

Research and technology

A major reform in the research area is ongoing in Greece. It is commonly accepted that the increase of the outlay on scientific research is the necessary prerequisite for the improvement of Greece's international competitiveness. For this reason and by taking into account the EUROPE 2020 strategy, the action plan for research in Greece sets the objective of 2 % until 2020 for the expenses for research and technological development, that is the tripling of the expenditure for research as a percentage of GNP approved until now.

An action plan for the enhancement of research, technological development and innovation has been submitted in public consultation by the Greek Ministry of Education, Lifelong Learning and Religious Affairs in the official site of the Greek government (www.opengov.gr). The objective of the action plan is towards a new architecture of the Greek system of research and towards the unification of the research area, which is now cut up, as mentioned above, in various scientific areas.

The newly elaborated National Strategic Framework for Research and Innovation (2010-2015) constitutes a turning point of the reform of the legislative framework of research in Greece and will have the form of a Programme-Framework for Research, comprising 5 different axes, research funding included. The so-called axes are the following: i) axe of targeted scientific/research works ii) axe of direct support of the innovation iii) axe of unified research area iv) axe of research infrastructure v) axe of research work staff.

Information provided by the Greek Eurydice Unit. For more detailed information on education systems in Europe, you may consult the EURYDICE data base, EURYBASE (http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/education/eurydice/eurybase_en)

B. Description of the guidance and counseling system in Greece

Introduction

In Greece, the responsibility for managing, maintaining and developing information, guidance and counselling services lies with the Ministry of Education Lifelong Learning and Religious Affairs, which is responsible for the provision of career information, guidance and counselling to students in the sectors of education and training, and the Ministry of Labour and Social Security, which is responsible for the provision of guidance and counselling services in the employment sector.

COUNSELING AND CAREER GUIDANCE IN EDUCATION

- Greece has a human - centered educational system, which is based on equal opportunities and the principle that everybody is entitled to free education regardless of his/her origin, gender or religion. The ultimate goal is to create a competent and creative generation, equipped with the necessary skills to face the challenges of the 21st century competitive society.
- The educational system comprises three educational levels: Primary education, Secondary (lower and upper) education and Tertiary education.
- Nowadays, in the Greek educational system vocational guidance is implemented following the contemporary developmental model of Counseling and Career Guidance. This model emphasizes the holistic human development. Career counseling for students is focused on the following areas.
 - ✓ development of positive self-esteem
 - ✓ empowerment of self-awareness
 - ✓ decision making process
 - ✓ transition to the labour market
 - ✓ dissemination and organization of information about studies and jobs

Implementation of Vocational Guidance in Secondary Education

- The first attempt to include vocational guidance in the Greek educational system was made by a royal decree and the lesson of vocational guidance was firstly taught at secondary general schools, at the teachers' post-training school in the University of Athens and at the Training College.
- School career counseling was introduced in secondary schools by law 309/1976 but its implementation was gradual and it was fully incorporated in the school curriculum of the third class of lower secondary education in 1979.
- Article 37 of law 1566/85, defines the aim of school career counseling as: enhancing students' personal development, providing information about careers, jobs and educational opportunities and accommodating for students' needs in the transition from school to work. Gradually, vocational guidance provision was extended from the first class of lower secondary education (Gymnasium) up to the second class of upper secondary education (in all types of Lyceums)
- The role of vocational guidance has been re-determined by law 2525/97. During that time Career Counseling Centers (KESYPs) and School Bureaus of Educational and Career Counseling (GRA.S.E.Ps) in the field of secondary education were created.
- The Administration of Career Guidance and Educational Activities - Department A' School Career Guidance, Ministry of Education Life Long Learning and Religious Affairs, has the following responsibilities: dealing with issues regarding Counselling-Career Guidance, providing educational and career information, coordinating the activities undertaken by Career Counselling Centres (KESYPs) and School Bureaus of Educational and Career Counselling (GRASEPs), as well as being the responsible body for the administrative supervision, organisation and support of the above structures' actions. It is also the responsible body for the process management of actions regarding the creation and/or restructuring of Vocational Guidance structures as well as the responsible body for the organisation of in-service and pre-service training courses for Guidance Counsellors.
- The School Vocational Guidance Sector of the Pedagogical Institute has designed and carried out projects in Guidance Counseling, such as:
 - ✓ Development of school manuals for career guidance and other related material.
 - ✓ Design and implementation of the Pan-Hellenic Network "Nestor" involving the Communication and Information of the Counselling and Guidance Services in Education, and the provision of information to every Guidance Counselor and any other person interested in Guidance Counseling.

CAREER GUIDANCE SERVICES IN THE FIELD OF EDUCATION

Career Guidance services in Secondary education

- **81 Counseling and Guidance Centers (KESYPs): services provision include** Counseling and Career Guidance at prefecture level. The target group is students and young people up to 25 years of age and also their parents

- **570 School Career Counseling Offices (GRASEPs): Services provisions include** Counseling and Career Guidance in schools of secondary general education throughout the country. The target group is students and their parents

Career Guidance services in Post-Secondary education

- Career Liaison Offices in the **Organization of Tourism Education and Training (OTEK)** in Athens, Thessaloniki, Crete and Rhodes. These offices provide services to O.T.E.K's graduates in order to promote their employability and/or help them in their educational development in the field of tourism.

Career Guidance in Second Opportunity Schools

- Counselling and Career guidance offices operate in Second Opportunity Schools all over Greece. Their mission is to support students in their personal, social, educational and professional development. A Guidance Counselor and a Psychologist staff these offices. The provision of services offered, at individual and/or group level aim to: a) link education with the labour market, b) provide up-to date educational and professional information, c) enhance the cooperation with other services in the employment sector. Target groups are students, graduates, their parents and/or families.

Career Guidance in Tertiary Education

- Career Liaison Offices in Universities and Technological Educational Institutions support students and graduates in the transition phase from education to employment. Services offered by the Career Services Offices include:
 - liaison services regarding linking Universities-Technological Educational Institutions with the labour market (i.e. acting as contacts by forwarding CVs to companies, organizing Career Days, mediating in students' internship where appropriate).
 - provision of information about postgraduate studies and scholarships in Greece and abroad
 - individualized and group counselling to facilitate the smooth entry of students – graduates into the labour market

CAREER COUNSELING IN EMPLOYMENT

- The official public authority responsible for Counselling and Vocational Guidance in the employment sector, is the Greek Manpower Employment Organization (OAED). The aim of OAED is to implement governmental policies about employment and to combat unemployment, to facilitate people's access to the labour market, to protect them from unemployment, to promote career education and linking it with employment.
- In 1953 the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection introduced Career Guidance in the field of employment but its implementation did not begin until 1957. The first vocational guidance practitioners were educated at a relevant school which was founded in 1954 and operated only for two years.
- Since then, OAED was responsible for the educational development of counselors: three courses have been held in 1971, 1973 and 1983 respectively.
- In 2001 (by law 2956/2001) some of the Public Employment Services have been reestablished as Employment Promotion Centers (K.P.A) aiming at linking labour market with job demand. KPA Centers are staffed with career counselors and they provide services such as individual support to the unemployed, employment, career and entrepreneurship counseling, promotion to employment and training opportunities, job search techniques programs etc.
- Vocational Guidance and Information Centers, operating in Athens and Thessaloniki provide career guidance services to:
 - Young people aged 14-18 who wish to gain self-awareness, understand their capabilities and aptitudes get informed about the world of employment so as to choose a profession matching their individual personality traits.
 - Mature unemployed people wishing to enter the job market that need support to build up their professional profile and choose the profession or business activity that suits them.
 - Mature unemployed people that need to choose a new profession in order to re-enter the job market.
- OAED is also the National EURES Service of Greece and has appointed specially trained Euro-advisers in the largest cities of Greece.

OTHER SERVICES FOR CAREER DEVELOPMENT AND INFORMATION

- Information Centers for the Employed and Unemployed of the Greek Workers' Confederation (GSEE) operate at municipality level. They provide services to the unemployed since 2000, and these include uploading unemployed persons' CVs into the Offices' CV database, giving information about job vacancies, job market trends, employment and vocational training programmes. Employers have free access to the offices database of unemployed people so as to search for possible candidates. The Information Centres for the Employed and Unemployed are subdivided into the following Offices: Immigrants' Office, Information Office for the Unemployed and Business and an Employment Office.
- General Secretariat for Youth (G.G.N.G) It is a governmental institution with the primary task of shaping, monitoring and coordinating the government policy for youth and its connection with society and social agencies. It develops a set of

activities and programmes aiming at the core of youth policies and more specifically, at the following sectors: Participation, Information, Leisure, and Entrepreneurship.

- Portal for the Interconnection of the Unemployed and Business in the Vocational Training Center of the Hellenic Confederation of Professionals Craftsmen and Merchants (GSEVEE) The primary aim of this service is to assist the unemployed and/or those currently employed in finding appropriate job places and secondly to assist employers in finding the appropriate candidates. The target groups are both employers and the unemployed.
- Employment & Enterprises Staffing Services Office in the Vocational Training Center of Athens Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ACCI) Offers e-recruitment services through the new ACCI portal. In this portal enterprises interested in recruiting appropriate candidates, can post job advertisements and job seekers can post relevant job applications and upload their CVs. Furthermore, the new service has a data matching system, automating job seeking and offering procedures. Services are offered both to the member-entrepreneurs of the Athens Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ACCI), who want to find staff for their businesses and to the unemployed, who are looking for job in relevant fields.

COURSES IN THE FIELD OF COUNSELING AND CAREER GUIDANCE

Counselling and Career Guidance services are offered in Greece by specialised practitioners who work in the relevant public bodies of guidance and education. From the beginning of its implementation until today, training in Counselling and Career Guidance was offered to active practitioners in the sectors of employment and education by the relevant Ministries and bodies responsible for the implementation of counselling and career guidance in education and employment. University departments also run specialisation programmes and postgraduate studies programmes in the field of Counselling, Career Guidance and other related areas. These programmes address tertiary education graduates, who upon completion of their specialisation studies fill vacancies for specialised personnel, mainly in the private sector.

COURSE TITLE	Institutions
Postgraduate Course (MSc): "Counseling and Career Guidance" Requirement: University Degree	University of Athens - Department Philosophy, Pedagogy & Psychology – Faculty: Pedagogy www.cgc.ppp.uoa.gr
Postgraduate Course (MSc) in Education Sciences with a major in Counseling and Career Development Requirement: University Degree	University of Patras - Department of Primary Education www.elemedu.upatras.gr
Postgraduate Course (MSc): "Counseling on Special Education, Education & Health" Requirement: University Degree	University of Thessaly, Special Education Department, www.sed.uth.gr/sed/index.php
Diploma in Counseling and Career Guidance Requirement: University Degree	ASPETE, School of Pedagogical & Technological Education PESYP, www.aspete.gr
Postgraduate Course (MSc): "Counseling Psychology and Counseling in Education, Health and Employment" Requirement: University Degree	University of Athens, Faculty of Early Childhood Education Democritus University of Thrace, Department of Social Administration http://www.ecd.uoa.gr/simvouleftiki%20psycologia/pms%20all.htm

C. Perspectives for the development of a National Forum on Lifelong Guidance in Greece – current situation and critical issues

COORDINATION AND COOPERATION MECHANISMS FOR LIFE LONG GUIDANCE: CURRENT LEGAL FRAMEWORK

THE NATIONAL CENTER FOR VOCATIONAL GUIDANCE (EKEP)

The **National Center for Vocational Guidance** (EKEP) is a legal entity under private law, established under Law 2224/1994 and 2525/1997. It operates since 2000 under the supervision of the Ministry of Employment and Social Protection and the Ministry of National Education and Religious Affairs, pursuant to Presidential Decree 232/29-07-1998 (Government Gazette 179A), as modified by Presidential Decree 44/9-2-2004 (Government Gazette 37). EKEP is the competent national coordination body in designing and implementing a National Policy on Guidance and Counselling in the field of education-training and employment.

Since 2010 EKEP stands under the supervision of the Ministry of Education Lifelong Learning and Religious Affairs (Presidential Decree 24 -Government Gazette A 56/15.4.2010).

In the framework of the new policy in relation to Lifelong Learning, EKEP has been placed in the National Network of Lifelong Learning, as one of the administrative bodies for lifelong learning regarding its responsibilities that are linked to counseling and vocational guidance in the lifelong learning framework (Law 3879 "Development of Lifelong Learning and other provisions" Government Gazette A' 163 21/9/2010). Counseling services and/or Vocational Guidance services providers are also part of the National Network of Lifelong Learning as the relevant bodies providing lifelong learning services.

At national level, EKEP is the competent national coordination body responsible for:

1. providing scientific and technical support to the relevant stakeholders in the Ministries of Education and Employment in designing and implementing a National Policy on Guidance and Counselling,
2. the development of communication and coordination of actions taken by private and public counselling and guidance service providers, aiming at the improvement of existing services,
3. the education, initial and continuous training of counselling and guidance practitioners, in collaboration with/or supplementing those provided by current training services in the relevant Ministries of Employment and Education,
4. defining the conditions and rules under which guidance and counselling services should operate, the relevance and adequacy of counselling and guidance practitioners' qualifications and keeping the relevant registers,
5. establishing a National Information Network to be used by all relevant stakeholders and individuals regarding matters of education, training and exchange with other E.U countries,
6. developing criteria and human resource assessment standards regarding education and training,
7. designing and implementing projects that are relevant to EKEP' s mission either by the Center's own structures or in collaboration with other private or public structures in the context of national, European and international programmes,
8. conducting and commissioning surveys, research and projects to achieve its aims,
9. the cooperation in issues relevant to its responsibilities with organizations, centers and other key actors in Greece or abroad in order to achieve its aims,
10. organizing conferences, meetings and other events relevant to its aims.

At European level, EKEP is:

- the National Euroguidance Center, member of the Euroguidance network, with the support of the Lifelong Learning Program.
- the national body representing Greece in the European Lifelong Guidance Policy Network – ELGPN, established by the European Commission in 2007.

EKEP designs and carries out projects, according to EU guidelines for the development of common principles, aims and practices in Counseling and Career Guidance, in the following actions' framework:

1. Networking and Training of Guidance Practitioners.
2. Compiling scientific and information material-tools.
3. Setting up electronic information and networking tools.

Target Groups benefiting from EKEP's work:

- Counseling and vocational guidance practitioners, career development practitioners in education, training and employment in public and private sectors.

- Public and private stakeholders providing counseling and vocational guidance services in the areas of education, training and employment.
- Interested citizens (school and university students, parents, the unemployed, professionals etc.) that seek information about counseling and vocational guidance services and learning, employment and mobility opportunities.
- All members of the Greek society as potential beneficiaries of quality counseling and vocational guidance services, at regional and national level.

SELECTIVE PROJECTS CARRIED OUT BY EKEP IN COMPATIBILITY WITH EUROPEAN PRIORITIES

- **Accreditation of counselling and guidance practitioners' qualifications and determining the conditions of operation of the relevant structures.** Based on the results of a relevant report (2002), EKEP designed the relevant statutory framework, which was signed into Law 3227, Government Gazette 31, Issue a', 9-2-2004 and specifies the conditions and rules governing private counselling and vocational guidance services providers. Furthermore EKEP prepared a draft paper setting rules and conditions regarding the assessment and certification of counselling and guidance practitioners' qualifications and the creation of the relevant registers. Discussions with all the relevant public and private sector actors are still in progress for this issue..
- **Quality Assurance Management System for Guidance Services in Greece.** EKEP, aiming at upgrading the quality of counselling and guidance provision in Greece, in 2007 prepared a report on **"International Quality Management Systems in Counselling and Guidance services"**. In this report, international and national quality assurance systems in general (ISO 9000, EFQM Excellence Model) and in the career guidance and counselling field in particular were reviewed (a relevant study conducted by CEDEFOP, the Canadian model BLUEPRINT for life/work designs, the British Matrix standard, the British model Investors in Careers). At the same time, a Quality Assurance Management System was developed, that is appropriate to be implemented in the counselling and vocational guidance services in our country, including the mechanisms underlying it and the requirements for its implementation. Finally, a training programme on international quality management systems in counselling and vocational guidance services and structures was materialized. Executives from EKEP and other relevant structures from the Ministries of Education and Employment that would be involved in quality management in counselling and vocational guidance in Greece attended the programme.
- **National Counselors' Network – Web Forum "Irida"** <http://irida.ekep.gr/> (2008) The setting up of the National Counselors' Network – Web Platform "Irida" by EKEP aims at networking, at national level, institutions and providers offering counselling and vocational guidance services in secondary and tertiary education, vocational training and employment.
- **EKEP's specialized library in Counselling and Vocational Guidance** <http://library.ekep.gr/> The lending library of EKEP, comprises of 3.693 Greek and foreign sources on counselling and vocational guidance and related topics, and it is accessible to guidance practitioners and everyone interested .The library's webpage contains information on the resources available.
- **National Database of Learning Opportunities "PLOIGOS"** <http://ploigos.ekep.gr> (2009) The Database provides information on all educational levels in Greece and is linked, through the European Commission General Directorate of Education & Culture, to the European Information Portal on Learning Opportunities "PLOTEUS" II.
- **Meetings/Conferences:** EKEP systematically organizes educational meetings, conferences and seminars at local and regional level for Guidance practitioners working in education, training and employment settings, aiming at coordination, networking and support of structures and providers offering counselling and vocational guidance services in Greece.
- **Scientific & Information Material:** EKEP systematically compiles scientific manuals, handbooks and guides in counseling and vocational guidance in order to support guidance practitioners in their work, but also citizens in issues related to career development, which are available to the guidance community and every interested citizen through the center's website www.ekep.gr

EKEP's CURRENT PROJECTS IN RELATION TO COOPERATION & COORDINATION

"COMMON ACTION PLAN FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF VOCATIONAL GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING SERVICES IN EDUCATION, INITIAL TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT" (NSRF 2007-2013)"

The NSRF (National Strategic Reference Framework) 2007–2013 constitutes the reference document for the programming of European Union Funds at national level for the 2007–2013 period. EKEP has developed a "Common Action Plan for the development of vocational guidance and counselling services in education, initial training and employment" to be funded jointly by

the responsible Ministries of Education and Labour, aiming at streamlining counselling and vocational guidance services in Greece and harmonizing their provision with the European and National Education and Employment Policy. Moreover:

- in the context of the NSRF 2007-2013 Operational Programme “Education and Lifelong Learning” of the Ministry of Education Lifelong Learning and Religious Affairs, is responsible for redesigning and expanding School Vocational Guidance in the areas of secondary education and initial vocational training.
- in the context of the NSRF 2007-2013 Operational Programme “Human Resources Development” of the Ministry of Labour and Social Security, is responsible for materializing actions regarding the implementation of guidance counselling systemic interventions in the framework of lifelong learning.

Strategic Goals - Priorities:

- Quality assurance of guidance services.
- Raising Access to guidance services.
- Promoting Career management Skills and motivation of citizens in relations to lifelong career development issues.
- Coordination and Networking of LLG services.
- Use of ICT in guidance provision.
- Guidance human resources development.

Indicative actions include the following:

- Accreditation Of Counselling And Vocational Guidance Practitioners.
- Accreditation Of Private Counselling And Vocational Guidance Providers.
- Implementing the EKEP’s National Quality Assurance Management System for Guidance Services.
- Designing And Publishing A Counselling And Vocational Guidance Code Of Ethics.
- Setting up of a National Lifelong Guidance Forum.
- Developing And Disseminating Scientific Material On Counselling And Vocational Guidance.
- Initial And Continuing Training of Guidance Practitioners.
- Implementation of Individualised Counselling and Guidance Projects in schools and at regional level.
- Creation of Guidance ICT Tools for students and adults.
- Activities for raising public awareness on the issues of lifelong career development.

Currently Running Guidance Projects Funded By NSRF 2007-2013

1. **Pilot study on the quality criteria followed by the guidance services in the field of education and initial training.**
(Aim: to lead to the implementation of the National Quality Assurance Management System for Guidance Services in Greece.)
2. **Interactive multimedia guidance internet portal for adolescents** (Greek Real Game, Video job profiles, E – portfolio, on – line self evaluation questionnaires etc.)
(Aim: raising adolescents’ access to information and career development services)

Future Projects in Progress

1. Establishment and operation of a Lifelong Guidance Forum in Greece.
2. Multimedia guidance internet portal for adults.
3. Assessment, training and Accreditation of Counselling and Vocational Guidance Practitioners.
4. Implementation of pilot innovative lifelong guidance services at regional level. (individualised services / e-counselling services).
5. Implementation of career educational projects for students in secondary and technical vocational education.

CHALLENGES – CRITICAL ISSUES FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A LIFELONG GUIDANCE FORUM IN GREECE

Needs and new perspectives

- The context of the new regional administration and local government (decentralization system) KALIKRATIS provides a grater potential towards the provision of integrated lifelong guidance services to citizens of all ages through the enhancing cooperation, networking and joint efforts and resources in the fields of education and lifelong learning.
- Further systemic interventions and additional legal framework for the provision of LLG services is of great importance in order to achieve a unified National Policy on Guidance and Counselling.
- EKEP is the executive body of System 6 of ESSEEKA “System of Counselling, Vocational Guidance and Connection with the Labour Market” (Law 3191/2003) which provides a basic legal framework for the operation of a Forum as an Executive Committee of all guidance stakeholders. Thus we need to examine the necessity of a new legal framework for the establishment and operation of a Lifelong Guidance Forum in Greece.

Possible Areas of Intervention for the LLG Forum in Greece

- Platform for dialogue and consultation on issues relating to the unified organization of guidance system in Greece.
- Promotion of more effective networking of guidance services at national, regional and local level.
- Promotion of synergies and complementarity of actions and services targeted to citizens of all ages.

Possible Activities of the LLG Forum in Greece

- Conduct open consultations and exchange of know – how - Indicative issues for consultation:
 - Guidance Services Code Of Ethics.
 - Legal framework for the Accreditation of Counselling and Vocational Guidance Practitioners.
 - Legal framework for the Implementation of the Quality Assurance Management System for Guidance Services.
- Implementation of networking activities and joint coordination meetings at regional and local level (e.g. Ad hoc reports, studies and policy proposals on lifelong guidance issues).
- Implementation of joint events and public raising awareness activities at local and regional level on the issues of lifelong guidance and career development. (e.g. Career Fairs, Job festivals etc).

Implementation Methodology

EKEP will be the steering body of the LLG Forum and responsible for the Executive committee and secretariat.

Efforts will be made to establish also regional lifelong guidance forums at the 13 prefectures – regions in Greece.

The National Forum will support the regional forums with guidelines and know – how and also funding for the implementation of regional activities after submitting annual action plans to the Executive committee.

Possible Partners of the LLG Forum in Greece

- Administrative representatives of guidance services in the field of education, training and employment.
- Representatives of guidance practitioners' associations.
- Representatives of Social partners.
- Representatives of important bodies dealing with guidance for different target groups.
- Representatives of the guidance academic community.
- Representatives of the guidance end users (students, youth, adults, disabled, at risk groups).
- Representatives of the parents' associations.
- Representatives of the educational community.
- Representatives of the private guidance institutions' associations.

Tools of the LLG Forum in Greece

- Use of the National Counselors' Network – Web Forum "IRIDA" (technical upgrading and further promotion of "IRIDA" is scheduled).

Funding

The activities and operation of the LLG Forum will be initially covered by the EKEP's "COMMON ACTION PLAN FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF VOCATIONAL GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING SERVICES IN EDUCATION, INITIAL TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT" (NSRF 2007-2013)". EKEP will fully undertake the costs of the LLG Forum after 2013.



Ministry of Education and Culture

Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance

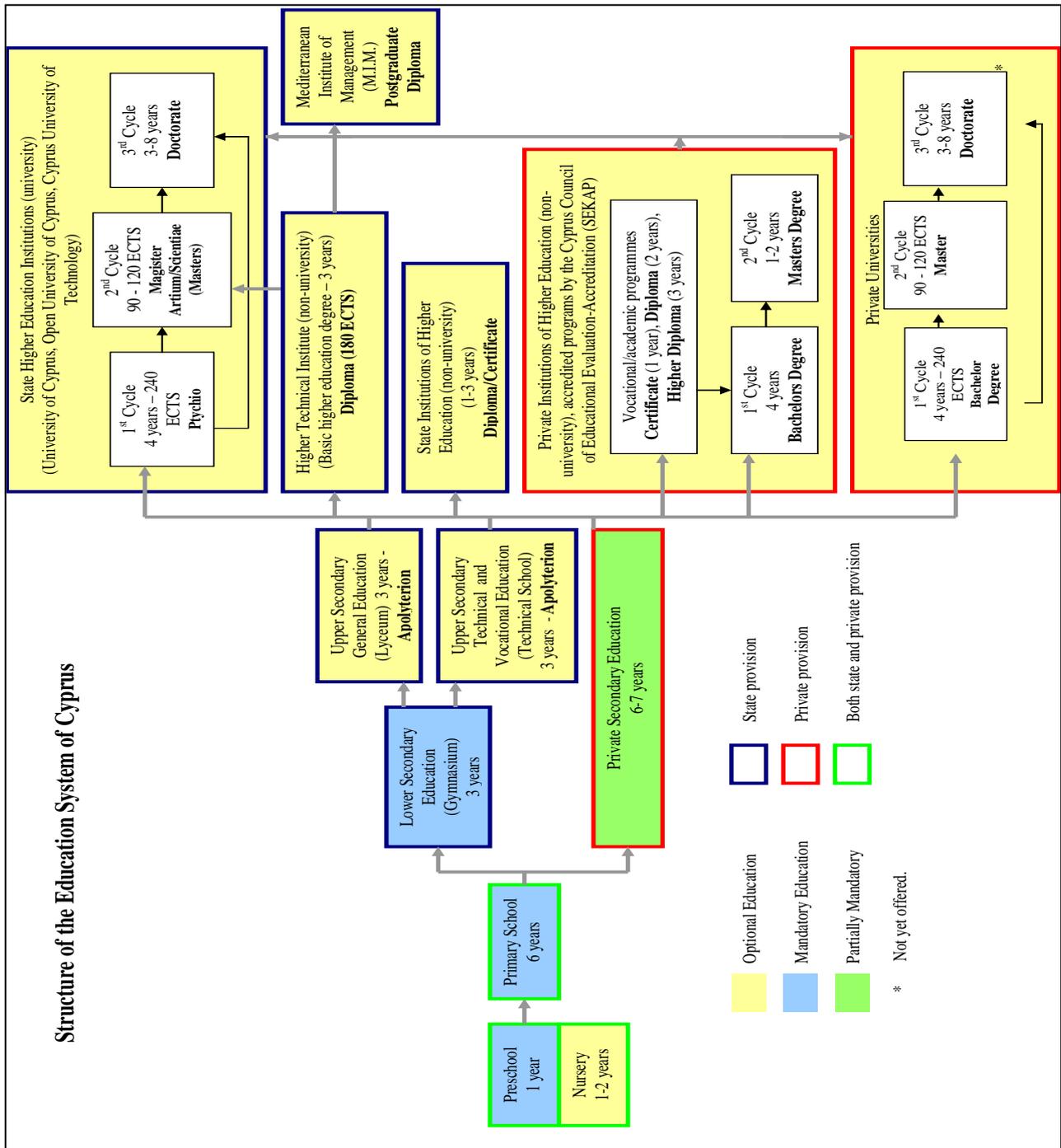
CYPRUS

A. National Educational System Overview and Ongoing Reforms

B. Description of the guidance and counseling system in Cyprus

**C. Draft Proposal for the Ministerial Council - Establishment and Operation
of the National Forum for Lifelong Guidance**

A. CYPRUS - National Educational System Overview and Ongoing Reforms OCTOBER 2010



1. Education population and language of instruction

In 2008, in the government controlled areas, the number of people aged 29 or under was 326 797 (41.0 % of the total population). The number of children of compulsory school age (6-15) was 95 626 (12.0 % of the population). The official languages of instruction are Greek and Turkish and they are taught in separate institutions.

2. Administrative control and extent of public-sector funded education

Most pupils in primary and secondary education (87.5 %, 2008/09) attend public-sector schools, which are set up and funded by the government. Private-sector schools are mainly self-funded. Those which are recognized as 'non profit-making associations' can be co-funded by the government and other organizations or individuals.

The Ministry of Education and Culture is responsible for the administration, organization and all decisions concerning the use of financial resources by schools. A number of post-secondary institutions offering specialized professional training remain under the authority of various ministries: Labour and Social Insurance, Agriculture, Natural Resources and the Environment, Justice and Public Order, Commerce, Industry and Tourism, and Health.

The inspectorate of the Ministry of Education and Culture has the overall responsibility for supervising the proper functioning of the schools.

3. Pre-primary education

<i>Nipiagogeia</i> (kindergarten)	3 to 4 years and 8 months
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Pre-primary education is part of Basic Education, which includes kindergartens (*nipiagogeia*) and primary schools (*dimotika scholeia*). It falls, in general, into the same legislative frame as that of primary schools with the exception of specific regulations governing the operation of community kindergartens and those of the private sector.

According to the legislation of 1 September 2004, children aged 4 years and 8 months to 5 years and 8 months are obliged to attend either public kindergartens, or community or private schools which are however, registered and approved by the Ministry of Education and Culture. Younger children aged 3 years to 4 years and 8 months take up vacant places in public kindergartens and pay fees as set by the Ministry of Finance. A number of children are released partially or fully of the educational fees. The State is responsible to cover all expenses for the introduction of this innovation; while at the same time will continue to subsidize the functioning of community kindergartens.

In 2004, the Ministry of Education and Culture took over the responsibility of implementing the Building Programme which began in 2001. According to this, the Ministry of Education covers the operating expenses of all pre-primary schools as well as the expenses for building new nursery schools, providing the schools' equipment and upgrading the existing premises. Moreover, the support of buildings against earthquakes and the upgrading of Pre-Primary Schools are still under effect. During 2009/10 the building of four new Pre-Primary Schools was completed.

4. Compulsory education

(i) Phases

Education in Cyprus is compulsory from 4 years and 8 months until 15 years old or from 4 years and 8 months until the completion of general lower secondary school, whichever of the above comes first.

<i>Prodimitiki</i> (kindergarten) provided at <i>Nipiagogeia</i>	4 years and 8 months – 5 years and 8 months
<i>Dimotiko Scholeio</i> (primary school)	5 years and 8 months – 11 years and 8 months
<i>Gymnasio</i> (general lower secondary school)	11 years and 8 months – 15 years

(ii) Admissions criteria

The age of the pupil is the only admission criterion. Admission to public-sector schools is free of charge for all pupils. Admission to *Gymnasia* is based on the primary school leaving certificate.

(iii) Length of school day/week/year

The school year is divided into three trimesters. In the 2009/10 academic years, it comprised approximately of 180 days at primary level and 161 regular working days at lower secondary level. The periods (35, lasting 40 minutes for pupils at primary level and 45 minutes at lower secondary level) are spread over five days a week. The annual number of hours of teaching in primary and secondary school is an average of around 840 respectively.

The extension of schooling time for children was fully implemented in the school year 2004. This has to deal with the problem of functional illiteracy. This is confined to pupils of both young and older age through the emphasis given to the objectives regarding the language, mathematics and science subjects as well as the equal treatment of the children of grades 1-6 and the rational staffing of schools.

(iv) Class size/ student grouping

In 2009/10 the number of pupils (primary education) per teacher was 15.4. (public 15.4, private 11.0) The average class size for public primary education was 21.9 and for public lower secondary education, 21.6. The law specifies the number of pupils per class as a maximum of 25 pupils for grade 1 and 30 pupils for grades 2-6. The Council of Ministers (Decision No. 65.536/16.5.2007) decided that the maximum number of children in all primary schools should not exceed 25. According to the Decision of the Council, the implementation of this decrease should take place gradually, starting from 2007/08 and ending by the school year 2010/11. In lower and upper secondary education, the maximum number of pupils per class is 25 for all grades.

The classes are mixed and made up of pupils of the same age. In smaller schools at the primary level, several classes can be grouped together.

At primary education level, the same teacher usually teaches all the subjects (except in some cases for Music, Art, Physical Education, Home Economics, Design and Technology, English and Science). At lower and upper secondary level, education is entrusted to specialists.

(v) Curriculum control and content

The Curriculum and the timetable for primary and general lower secondary education schools are scheduled by the Council of Ministers following suggestions given by the Ministry of Education and Culture. It is common for all schools at the same level, but the time allocated to each subject varies, in accordance with the school type (number of teachers).

Religious education, Modern Greek and Mathematics occupy a prominent position in compulsory school. All pupils also study History, Geography, Science, Environmental Studies, English, Art, Music, Physical Education, Design and Technology/Home Economics and Free Activities totalling to 35 teaching periods.

As far as the teaching methods are concerned, these are decided by the teachers in cooperation with the inspectors of the Ministry of Education and Culture. Finally, there is no freedom to choose textbooks, since these are chosen by the Ministry of Education. The textbooks are the same for all primary schools and they are sent to schools at the beginning of each school year.

(vi) Assessment, progression and qualifications

Teachers are encouraged to adopt a systematic policy in assessing pupils' abilities. Pupil evaluation relies to a great extent on teachers themselves who are expected to use a variety of techniques such as written tests, observation, communication and pupils' self-evaluation.

Pupils progress to the next class automatically. Nevertheless, for very special reasons (such as immaturity, learning difficulties, etc.) and in very rare occasions, children may repeat a class only once during the six years duration of primary education and if the classroom teacher decides so, after the approval of the responsible inspector of the school. It must be mentioned that children can take suspension of attendance once during pre-primary education as well. For general lower secondary education, the practice of repeating a class still exists.

At the end of the sixth year, the pupils receive the primary school leaving certificate (*apolytirio*) which is required for enrolment at the gymnasium (*Gymnasio*). The final internal examinations of the *Gymnasio* (*telikes exetaseis*) are compulsory for all pupils. The certificate awarded at the end of compulsory education is based on the pupil's results in these examinations and on continuous assessment.

5. Post-compulsory education/upper secondary and post-secondary level

(i) Types of education

<i>Eniaio Lykeio</i> (comprehensive upper secondary school)	15-18 years of age
<i>Esperino Gymnasio</i> (evening upper secondary education classes)	15-19 years of age
<i>Techniki Scholi</i> (technical and vocational upper secondary school)	15-18 years of age
<i>Systima Mathiteias</i> (Apprenticeship Scheme)	14-18 years of age
<i>Esperini Techniki Scholi</i> (evening technical and vocational upper secondary school)	For adults after the age of 20

(ii) Admissions criteria

The certificate awarded at the end of compulsory education is an entrance requirement for upper secondary education. Pupils can attend the school of their choice within their catchment area. Pupils who have not completed compulsory education successfully can enter the labour market or enrol in the Apprenticeship Scheme (*Systima Mathiteias*).

(iii) Curriculum control and content

In schools that offer courses leading to the leaving certificate (*apolytirio*) the general compulsory subjects are the same for all pupils: Greek, Maths, History, Religion, Foreign Languages, and Physical Education. But each one of the 3 grades of upper secondary education has also its own additional compulsory subjects.

The STVE (Secondary Technical and Vocational Education) curricula (scheduled by the Council of Ministers following suggestions given by the Ministry of Education and Culture) offer balanced programmes of general education, technological education and workshop practice subjects. The subjects can be classified into the following six categories: Common Core Subjects; Related Subjects; Elective Subjects; Technological and Workshop Practice Subjects for the Branch; Technological and Workshop Practice Subjects for the Specialty; Industrial Placement.

The Apprenticeship Scheme (*Systima Mathiteias*) provides practical and theoretical training alternately. Practical training takes place in industry, where apprentices are remunerated for their work, for three days per week. Theoretical training is provided on the premises of Technical Schools for two days per week.

(iv) Assessment, progression and qualifications

In *Eniaio Lykeio* assessment is the same as in compulsory education. At the end of the final year, there are final Pancyprian compulsory examinations organized by the Ministry of Education and Culture in specific examination centres. The pupils are awarded a leaving certificate (*Apolytirio*), which allows them to enter the job market or to be accepted at various schools (colleges and universities) in Cyprus and abroad. The pupils are also awarded a certificate according to which they are ranked based on their marks, which allows them to enrol to the public higher education institutions of Cyprus and Greece.

The assessment procedure at Secondary Technical and Vocational Schools (*Technikes kai Epaggelmatikes Scholes*) is similar to that employed at Secondary General Education Schools (*Eniaio Lykeio*). Criteria to assess pupils include class participation, workshop and laboratory work, written assignments, projects, quizzes, revision tests, class tests and final examinations. Pupils take written examinations at the end of the year in Modern Greek, Mathematics, Physics, Technical Drawing and specialized classes in technology.

The apprentices who complete the Apprenticeship Scheme successfully are awarded a professional certificate, which entitles them to enter the labour market as semi-skilled workers. This certificate is not equivalent to the Leaving Certificate (*Apolytirion*) awarded to graduates of upper secondary education (general or technical/vocational) and does not entitle apprentices to pursue further studies at Institutions of Higher and Tertiary Education.

6. Higher education

(i) Structure

Higher Education in Cyprus is provided by different types of state and private institutions at university and non university level.

1. Universities (*Panepistimia*)

A. State Universities offer programmes of study at the first (*Ptychio*), second (*Masters*) and third (Doctorate) cycle level. The ECTS (European Credit Transfer System) is applied to all programmes of State Universities.

B. Private Universities either of a profit or non-profit character are established according to the provisions of Law 109(1) of 2005 approved by the House of Parliament of the Republic in July 2005. Currently, private universities offer 4-year undergraduate courses that lead to the award of Bachelors qualifications (i.e. Bachelor of Arts (BA), Bachelor of Science (BSc) and 1-year to 2-year postgraduate programmes of study that lead to the award of Masters qualifications (i.e. Masters of Arts (MA), Masters of Science (MSc)).

2. Non-University Institutions (*Mi-Panepistimiaka Idrymata*)

A. Public Institutions of Higher Education (*Dimosies Scholes Tritovathmias Ekpaidefsis*), none of which has university status, are funded by the state and offer vocational programmes of study with a duration ranging from one to three academic years. These programmes do not provide access to second cycle programmes.

B. Private Institutions of Higher Education (*Idiotikes Scholes Tritovathmias Ekpaidefsis*) offer a wide range of academic as well as vocational programmes of study. As regards to the vocational qualifications awarded, these vary depending on the length of studies (1 to 3 academic years). Private institutions of higher education offer 4-year undergraduate courses that lead to the award of Bachelors qualifications (i.e. BA, BSc) and 1-year to 2-year postgraduate programmes of study that lead to the award of a Masters qualification (i.e. MA, MSc).

(ii) Access

Access to the undergraduate programmes of study at the University of Cyprus, the Cyprus University of Technology and to the majority of public non-university institutions is granted upon success in the Pancyprian Examinations which are used to rank candidate students.

For overseas students, usually G.C.E (General Certificate of Education) or G.C.S.E (General Certificate of Secondary Education) credentials are taken into consideration. State Universities may set special examinations for international students. Private Universities and Institutions of Higher Education require a school-leaving certificate (*Apolytirio*) awarded by a six-year secondary school, and a good knowledge of the language of instruction.

(iii) Qualifications

Cyprus higher education system is based on three distinct cycles: the 4-year undergraduate cycle, leading to the award of the *Ptychio* or Bachelors, the 1 to 2-year postgraduate cycle, leading to the Masters Degree, and the third cycle leading to a Doctorate Degree – *Didaktoriko* Diploma.

Following the proposal of the Ministry of Education and Culture, for a 'common language' in qualifications, all private and public institutions of higher education have adopted the following framework of qualifications: 1-year, Certificate; 2-year, Diploma; 3-year, Higher Diploma; 4-year, Bachelor.

7. Special needs

Emphasis is placed on the education of almost all children with special needs within mainstream schools. Many factors have assisted integration, mainly the increased number of special educators and peripatetic teachers, public acceptance campaigns,

staff seminars, setting up of special classes in mainstream schools and employment of teaching aids. Special arrangements have also been introduced for pupils with special needs during the final, external examinations organized by the Ministry of Education and Culture. The percentage of students who fall outside mainstream education is 0.035 %. This percentage concerns only students who receive education at home.

8. Teachers

Teachers in state schools have civil servant status. Teachers who work in pre-primary and primary education are University graduates who attended four year studies. Teachers who work in secondary education are also University graduates who have completed their studies either abroad (the number of years depends on the country) or at the University of Cyprus (four years). Secondary school teachers have to attend a pre-service training programme.

Within the new in-service training program, new teachers are in a school, cooperating with a mentor-teacher during morning hours. The new teacher observes the mentor's classes, has time set aside for discussion between the two, shares ideas and materials and generally gets as much guidance as possible. The mentor-teacher is able to guide, assist and supplement the new teacher.

9. Current reforms and priorities

Basic Education

All-Day Kindergartens

Regarding Pre-primary education, the Council of Ministers approved the implementation of 20 All-Day kindergartens on a voluntary basis (decision No. 62.644 dated 28.9.05). In school year 2008/09, the number of All-Day kindergartens increased to thirty (30), while in 2009/10 the number increased to forty (40).

Promotion and Implementation of the All day Voluntary School

After years of careful study and decision No 48.695 (dated 18.11.98) of the Council of Ministers, the Ministry of Education and Culture proceeded with progressive implementation of the 'All-Day school' (*oloimero sholeio*). Between 2001 and 2006 there was a significant increase in the number of All-Day Schools which reached that of 150 schools in total. (126 for grades four, five and six and 24 for grades one to six). In 2008, the number of schools was 118. In school year 2009/10 the number of All Day Voluntary Schools was 121. These schools operate as All-Day Schools on a voluntary basis for grades 4, 5 and 6 and in some cases for grades 1 to 6. The All-Day schools function from October to May of each school year with three additional periods (until 4:00 pm), four times a week. Since school year 2009/10 children have been entitled to leave school, either at 15:00 or at 16:00.

The future aim is to increase the number of all day voluntary schools that will accept students from the 1st until the 6th grade (until today, 24 schools out of 120 have operated according to the above status).

All Day Compulsory Schools

The Ministry of Education and Culture in the academic year 2006/07 advanced in the reconstruction of the Voluntary All-Day School applying, on a pilot base, the institution of All-Day Compulsory School in nine public primary schools in all the districts of Cyprus. In 2007/08, the number of schools increased to fifteen (15). The pilot program lasted for three years and it was evaluated by a special Committee of Evaluation. Based on the comments of the Evaluation Committee, the Ministry of Education and Culture introduced an improved framework of All Day Compulsory Schools which will be adopted in 2009-10 by the schools already participating in the programme. The improvements have been approved by the Council of Ministers (Decision No 617/2009) and they will constitute the second phase of the pilot programme.

The second phase lasted for one school year (2009-10). During this phase, a special committee will decide about the final form of the institution and the way it will be expanded to the primary schools of Cyprus.

The main objective of the establishment of the All Day Compulsory School in primary Education is the gradual extension upon completion of the programme, to a considerable number of primary schools all over Cyprus.

Information and Communication Technology (ICT)

1. The Ministry of Education and Culture has obtained suitable educational software for standalone use when installed on school computers, while it has proceeded to prepare Digital Educational Content (DEC), for the DIAS project. The DIAS project promotes ICT in all schools. Under DIAS (Diadiktiako Scholeio-Internet School) a Learning Management System has been developed, which will cover all services for students, teachers and parents. More specifically, the following services will be provided: Digital Educational Content for all subjects, which will be accessible both from school and home; Personal e-mails and websites for students and teachers; Accessibility to parents for the educational progress of their children; Ethernet connectivity in all schools. DIAS began its pilot phase in November 2008 in eight schools and it will gradually expand in all schools until 2014.
2. Distance Learning for Lifelong Learning using ICT. This affects the Evening Secondary Schools and Evening Technical and Vocational Schools for Adults. The idea is to offer classes using ICT, so that adults can study at home and attend school less

frequently. This will make it possible for more people to attend evening schools. The ICT Distance Learning proposal may be included in the Cyprus proposal for Lifelong Learning for the period 2007-2013. A learning system will have been created by the end of 2009.

3. School Management System is at its initial stage. All procedures involving schools and the Ministry will be performed using ICT, aiming at decentralization, more efficiency and more accountability. Data Warehouse technology will be used. SMS is now in the process of tenders and is foreseen to begin operation by 2011.

Multicultural Education

In recent years, a growing number of pupils from other countries (mainly from countries of the former Soviet Union) have enrolled in primary education in Cyprus. The percentage concerning the above children was 8.8 % in 2008/09.

In July 2008 the Council of Ministers approved the 'Policy Report of the Ministry of Education and Culture for Multicultural Education'. According to the relevant suggestions of the Report of the Educational Reform and within the framework of the creation of a democratic school that will incorporate and include all students, the following measures, that aim towards the rapid and smooth induction of foreign students to the school system and the Cyprus society have been promoted:

- Parallel classes for fast acquisition of the Greek language through intensive instruction.
- In service training seminars of the teachers for teaching Greek as a second or/and a foreign language.
- Preparation of a test that will be used by all schools in order to rank and classify students to the appropriate level.
- Preparation on an induction guide for the new coming foreign students which is translated in eight languages, with basic information for the students and the parents about the educational system of Cyprus. The languages are: English, Turkish, Russian, Georgian, Bulgarian, Romanian, Ukrainian and Arabic.
- Addition of intercultural elements to the new Curriculum and the school textbooks that will be prepared within the framework of the changes on the structure and the content of education.
- Production and creation of appropriate educational and pedagogical material, as well as the usage of material that has been produced in Greece.

Other reforms

1. In 2008/09 a Scientific Committee was established and took over the design of the new National Curriculum which covers pre-primary, primary and secondary education. The production and creation of appropriate educational material was completed during the school year 2009/10. In service training seminars of the teachers for implementing the new material will be organised in 2010/11.
2. Expansion of the Zones of Educational Priority with one gymnasium, one primary school and one pre-primary school in the Nicosia district. This was applied in school year 2009/10.
3. Upgrade of the equipment and the infrastructure of special schools, special units and rooms of special education in order to meet the needs of students with special needs in a more effective way.
4. Introduction of the in-service training program of new coming teachers and mentors. Cyprus Pedagogical Institute continued for the year 2009/10 Induction Programmes for the newly qualified teachers (primary, secondary and vocational education). The aim of these Programmes is to enable the induction of newly appointed teachers by providing support to their personal/emotional needs; their professional and practical needs/solving problems and the development of their critical reflection in relation to their teaching practice. The satisfaction of the novice teachers needs is also succeeded through the support they get from their mentor who works with them at the same school. The mentors attend special training Programmes offered by the Cyprus Pedagogical Institute, in order to be able to meet the novice teachers' needs.
5. Improvement of school infrastructure: The Ministry of Education and Culture promotes the building of new school units in order to face the congestion of large school units.
6. Supportive instruction to illiterate students from 2nd to 6th class, through additional teaching periods.

Secondary General and Secondary Technical and Vocational Education

Upgrading and supporting of the practice of Form Teacher

The practice of Form Teacher has been expanded to cover the first grade classes of lower secondary education as of September 2008. Up to now the practice has been implemented for the third grade classes of the gymnasium and all classes of upper secondary education. The responsibilities of the Form Teacher include the surveillance of absences, performance and behaviour of pupils of each class. For every class a teacher is appointed as a Form Teacher, he/she gets a two hour release of teaching hours per week.

Integration Information Communication and Technology

The program aims to enhance the teaching and learning process. The Ministry of Education and Culture has undertaken the following actions towards this direction:

1. Providing schools with suitable equipment: An indication of the progress made towards this target is the ratio of personal computers (PCs) to the number of pupils. In secondary education, the respective ratio for 2008 was 1:4, 1 and the target set for 2010 is 1:3.
2. During the school year 2009/10 all second grade students were funded with €300 for the acquisition of a personal lab top.
3. Educational software: During the school year 2009/10, 11 titles of educational software for 11 different subjects of Secondary General Education have been distributed and installed in all gymnasiums. A number of teachers have been trained for the use of the above software.
4. Internet access: All schools have access to the internet.
5. Local Area Network: The structured cabling has been completed in 44 out of 120 schools
6. DI.AS: The educational portal DI.AS has been completed and its pilot phase at 4 Lyceums and 3 Technical Vocational schools has begun during the school year 2009/10.

Upper Secondary Technical and Vocational Education

Secondary Technical and Vocational Education in Cyprus is currently in the process of revising, modernizing and upgrading the curricula it offers, while at the same time modernizing the teaching and learning processes employed at Technical Schools. A study evaluating the organization of Secondary Technical and Vocational Education, which was co-financed by the European Social Fund with the amount of £348 000 (Measure 2.2.2 Improvement and Reinforcement of Secondary Technical and Vocational Education) was completed in July 2007. The STVE curricula were revised taking into account the conclusions reached by this study.

In addition to the above, a study evaluating the provision of the Apprenticeship Scheme was completed in July 2007. The study was also co-financed by the European Social Fund, with the amount of £980 000 (Measure 2.2.3 Reform of the Apprenticeship Scheme). The findings of the study will contribute towards the Reform of the Apprenticeship Scheme, which is currently underway.

Higher Education

Government policy regarding higher education aims to fulfil the local needs for higher education and to establish Cyprus as a Regional Education and Research Centre. In order to enhance access to Higher Education the Ministry of Education and Culture will take a series of measures to expand higher education provided in Cyprus. The following are the most important of these measures:

- Expansion of state universities.
- Ongoing registration of new programmes of study at private institutions of higher education (total number of registered programmes: 515).
- Ongoing Evaluation – Accreditation of new programmes of study offered by private institutions of higher education (total number of evaluated-accredited programmes: 175).
- Strategic measures for the gradual increase of students at public universities: In the academic year 2010/11 students at the University of Cyprus will increase by 11.6 % and students at the Cyprus University of Technology will increase by 4.04 %.

The Council of Ministers has proceeded with the establishment of the Cyprus Quality Assurance and Accreditation Agency for Higher Education with its decision No. 66010 dated 5 September 2007. Following this decision, a draft legislative decree was finalised and presented to the House of Parliament.

The Minister of Education and Culture has appointed a specialist committee of university professors and high rank administrators with the objective of proposing a new unified Law for Higher Education. The specialist committee has already submitted its recommendations and the new law will be submitted to the parliament by the end of 2010.

Information provided and drafted by the Eurydice Unit in Cyprus.

For more detailed information on education systems in Europe, you may consult the EURYDICE data base, EURYBASE (http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/education/eurydice/eurybase_en)

B. Counseling & Guidance Services in Cyprus

The purpose of this paper is to review the Public Counseling and Guidance Services in Cyprus. The goal is to implement our commitment towards creating a National Forum on Career Guidance in Cyprus.

The main stakeholders involved in the establishment of counselling and guidance services in Cyprus are:

- The Ministry of Education and Culture
- Adult Education Centers
- The Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance
- The Human Resources Department Authority
- Cyprus productivity Center
- The National Organization for Youth
- The University of Cyprus
- The Open University of Cyprus
- Educational and Work Unions, etc

2. The Ministry of Education and Culture:

2.1 The Counselling and Careers Education Service (CCES) operates within the public secondary education system of Cyprus and offers help to students and other young people through the Counselling and Careers Education Offices at schools and the central offices of the service at the Ministry of Education and Culture (MOEC).

2.2 The goal of the CCES is to provide specialised help to students and other young people through counselling in order to deal effectively with the personal, educational, vocational and social problems they face.

2.3 Importantly, the 'Careers and Social Education' course is included in the formal curriculum of the 3rd year of lower secondary school (*gymnasium*). The course is offered by the school counsellors once a week during the first term of the academic year and its educational objectives are described below:

Careers education (objectives):

After completion of the course the students will:

- realise the need for vocational guidance and counselling;
- know the goals of the Counselling and Careers Education Service;
- acquire the self-knowledge needed in order to make suitable educational/vocational choices;
- familiarise themselves with the world of work, the different professions, the scientific taxonomies of professions, work values, working conditions, the recent changes in the Cyprus and European labour market, etc.
- know the educational system in Cyprus with specific emphasis on the existing educational choices after the completion of lower secondary school (*gymnasium*);
- be informed about post-secondary education institutions in Cyprus, Greece and other foreign countries;
- develop the necessary decision-making skills so as to be able to make suitable educational/vocational choices.

Social education course (objectives):

After completion of the course the students will:

- acquire appropriate self-knowledge;
- develop self-approval;
- develop self-confidence;
- develop the skills needed for a normal adjustment to the school and social environment;
- develop self-resilience skills to protect themselves from different social dangers;
- develop problem-solving and social skills;
- develop decision-making skills;

2.4 During the 2nd year of upper secondary school (*lyceum*) students have a one-week traineeship in a job of their interest. This activity is organised and supervised by the schools in collaboration with the world of work. The school counsellors help the students in deciding on a suitable job setting according to their interests, skills and abilities. Additionally, students in technical education (students can choose to follow technical education after they complete lower secondary school, or *gymnasium*, ages 12-15) have traineeships according to the specialisation of their choice within the framework of their curriculum.

2.5 The Counselling and Careers Education Service (CCES) of the Ministry of Education and Culture (MOEC) organises different activities – specifically for pupils in the 3rd year of lower secondary school (*gymnasium*) and the 2nd and 3rd years of upper secondary school (*lyceum*) – with the goal of helping students get acquainted with the professional world become familiar with the

nature of different professions and university studies, as well as with the skills and interests needed to enter different professions, labour market demands in relation to different professions, etc. (An example of the abovementioned activities is the organisation of a four-day educational/vocational exhibition, where professional organisations are invited to help the students and other young people know more about the professions they represent. Another example is the production by the CCES of an informative educational film related to different professions.)

2.6 The CCES of the MOEC has the main goal to provide specialised help to students and other young people through counselling in order to meet the general goals of the Ministry of Education and Culture, which are the following:

- The healthy development of students' personalities;
- The development of problem-solving skills so as to deal effectively with their personal, educational, professional and social problems.

Specifically, the counsellors offer help to students and other young people in order to make effective personal, educational and vocational choices. The following areas are emphasised:

- Self-knowledge;
- Self-approval and self-confidence;
- Self-actualisation;
- Decision-making skills/problem-solving skills;
- Healthy adjustment to the school and social environment;
- Critical thinking and effective use of appropriate information.

2.7 The multiple socioeconomic and cultural changes caused by technological advances all over the world have increased the complexity of matters concerning young people (e.g. personal, educational, professional and social). As a result of these demanding changes, counsellors place special emphasis on helping students equip themselves with the necessary skills so as to make effective personal, educational and vocational choices through the following:

- Personal, group and family counselling;
- Administration of specialised tests offered during counselling sessions with an aim to help those interested to make an in-depth exploration of their personality, interests, abilities, work values, etc.
- Teaching of the Careers Education and Social Education course (offered in the 3rd year of lower secondary school);
- Organisation of seminars and conferences on vocational, educational and other related subjects;
- Production of careers education films;
- Publication of instructional and informative books.

2.8 Additionally, the CCES participates at a strategic level at the MOEC in different committees whose major goal is the strengthening of students' personalities, so as to deal effectively with the challenges of the modern world.

2.9 Additionally, based on the principle of providing equal opportunities to students with special needs to be educated along with other students of the same age in the public secondary schools of their community/neighbourhood, the counsellors provide personal and educational counselling to students with special needs and contribute towards the development of individual educational programmes for these students.

3. Adult Education Centres

3.1 The Adult Education Centers are run by the Ministry of Education and Culture. The aims of the centers are on the one hand to provide opportunities of "Life Long Learning" to all individuals, and on the other to assist in the personality development of each individual and the social, economic and cultural progress of society in general.

3.2 Every year more than 70 different subjects are offered by the centres (e.g. Greek language for foreigners, Computers, Dancing, Byzantine music, and Literature, Painting, Arts and crafts etc). Each year more than 20,000 participate in the programs.

4. The Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance

4.1 Since 2006 Public Employment Services offer individualized counselling at their District and Local Labour Offices. The aim of the Individualized Counselling is to facilitate the early placement of those job seekers who are not ready to enter the labour market.

4.2 Individualized counselling was originally used for «the hard to place job seekers» and for those falling within certain categories considered as vulnerable groups (e.g. disable, single parents, and long term unemployed). Due to the financial crisis and the increasing numbers of unemployed, individualized counselling is now available to all job seekers who wish to benefit from the service. In particular, depending on the assessment of the first line PES officer as regards prospects of accessing employment as well as on the job seekers consent, the individualized counselling can start either from the very first day of registration as unemployed or any time later.

4.3 The main phases of the individualized counselling are the *Profiling the Action Plan* and the *Follow Up*.

4.4 During the initial assessment the counsellor through a structured interview (usually last up to 40 minutes) and with the use of a specific form collects all necessary information relevant to the personal characteristics /situation, that will allow him to profile the needs and potentials of the job seeker and on the basis of which the counsellor will prepare together with the job seeker the *Individual Action Plan*. The information collected allows the counsellor to diagnose the level of intervention that the job seeker needs and constitutes the initial stage for the creation of an effective *Individual Action Plan*. Above all, an individual action plan is drawn up jointly with the job seeker. The advantage of this approach is that it ensures the active involvement of the job seeker in creating his own Individual Action Plan and in some respects his commitment to follow it. Another advantage is that their active involvement forces them to identify and establish clear targets and steps that they must follow in order to find employment.

4.5 IAPs include all actions that could take place in order to facilitate access and integration in employment for the job seeker. In particular contains:

- Counselling
- forming a cv,
- preparing for a job interview,
- improving self-esteem,
- empowerment,
- informing the job seeker of her/ his choices for training or job openings etc
- Vocational guidance
- obtaining work experience (assisting the job seeker in deciding the nature of the job),
- obtaining skills training (informing and assisting the job seeker in deciding on the specific training program), referring the job seeker to a job opening or to self employment schemes (informing and assisting the job seeker in deciding the job opening she/ he will apply for, informing and assisting the job seeker in deciding on self employment, accordingly assistance in filling out the necessary documents) and,
- Follow up - Following up the clients' progress at various intervals up to two years after the action plan has been implemented.

5. The Human Resources Department Authority (HRDA)

5.1 The Human Resource Development Authority of Cyprus (HRDA) is the national agency responsible for human resource training and development. HRDA's activities encompass five major areas:

- The formulation of an integrated vocational training and human resource development policy in accordance with the priorities of national socio-economic policies, on the basis of which appropriate training activities are promoted and training costs are distributed,
- The continuous assessment of the economy's needs for training on the basis of which an integrated training policy is formulated,
- The modernization of the training system with the creation of the necessary infrastructure, the systematization and certification of training, and the introduction of standards of vocational qualifications,
- The distribution of information to enterprises and the public in general, so as to raise their awareness to the need for continuing training and the provision of advisory services,
- The analysis in the training field and the promotion of actions for facilitating its adjustment and convergence to European systems and practices.

5.2 Through its training activities, HRDA seeks to achieve:

- The upgrading of management standards and the adjustment of enterprises to the new realities emanating from the imminent accession of Cyprus to the European Union
- The strengthening of enterprises with highly specialised management personnel in order to accelerate their upgrading and modernization
- The provision of special skills to employees in order to improve product and service quality, and to increase productivity
- The provision of skills and knowledge for the young people, in order to make them productively employable

6. The Cyprus Productivity Centre

6.1 Administratively, the CPC is a Department of the Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance. The Cyprus Productivity Centre (CPC) has its long-term objective "to assist private and public organizations to utilize their human and capital resources in the best possible manner, with a view to increasing their productivity".

6.2 Training is one of the major activities of this component. All people employed in technical trades have the opportunity to attend upgrading programs and adapt their skills to the business demand for development and modernization. This training is offered in specially equipped workshops in the following trades:

- Mechanical Fitting
- Machine Shop
- Welding
- Plumbing
- Plant Maintenance
- Building
- Woodworking and Furniture Making
- Auto Mechanics
- Electrical
- Design and Garment Making
- Telecommunications and Automation

6.3 Also, in cooperation with the Human Resource Development Authority, vocational training is provided to unskilled persons in industrial trades for which there are pressing needs in industry. Through these programs participants secure employment in industry.

6.4 In addition, CPC offers technical advice to organizations. These services aim to offer direct and practical assistance to industry for the enhancement of its competitiveness through the effective utilization of new technology, the modernization of the production processes and installations, the improvement of product quality, the reduction of costs, the exploration of the potential to develop new products, the rational use of energy in the working environment.

6.5 Another important role of the CPC is the management of the Apprenticeship System. The aim of the Apprenticeship System is to provide a learning pathway for young persons who withdraw from the education system early, so that they are able to learn how to learn, acquire and/or upgrade their skills, and become more employable and more able to progress in their career and, secondly, to increase the supply of labour with persons qualified to meet the needs of the economy, to ensure mobility between education, apprenticeship and employment, and to minimize the risk of social exclusion.

7. The National Organization for Youth

7.1 The National Organization for Youth is a semi-governmental organization. The Minister of Education and Culture acts as the liaison between the Youth Board of Cyprus and the Council of Ministers. The Board's budget is covered by State subsidy. The Youth Board of Cyprus aims at promoting progress and prosperity for all to the young people of Cyprus, regardless of religion, ethnic and racial origin. It also promotes young people's active participation in the social, economic and cultural development of our country.

7.2 The National Organization of Youth has the "Youth Information Centres" (KEPPLI). The Youth Information Centres operate based on European standards and provide young people with general information and counselling services on issues that interest youngsters. The information is provided in both printed and electronic form by the personnel of these Centres, through activities and by offering free access to the internet. At the same time, in some Centres the «Proposition» programme is housed which consists of counsellors who provide support and advice to young people, couples and families on different issues. Other counselling services are offered in accordance with other agencies.

8. The University of Cyprus

8.1 The University of Cyprus is a State Institution of Higher Education and it was established in 1989. It was founded in response to the growing intellectual needs of the Cypriot people, and is well placed to fulfil the numerous aspirations of the country.

8.2 Admission for the majority of undergraduate students is by entrance examinations organized by the Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Cyprus, and the competition for places is approximately 10 to 1. A number of places are reserved for students with special needs or circumstances. Every effort is made to offer practical solutions to students facing specific problems, be it access to University facilities, or assistance on academic issues

9. Careers Office

The careers offices offers free individual counselling to all students in terms of their studies and help them identify the best way to forward, whether this means further study or professional employment. In addition, the Careers Office helps students and graduates make career decisions, develop skills through work experience, and understand the graduate recruitment market and make effective applications for work or further study. In particular they offer:

- Careers advice to help students decide what to do next
- Part-time and vacation jobs on and off campus
- Graduate vacancies
- Help with CVs, Personal Statements and applications
- Interview preparation
- Information on occupations, study abroad, postgraduate study abroad, scholarship opportunities, graduate job vacancies and employers
- Employer fairs and presentations
- Use of computers with internet access
- Transcripts in English

10. The Open University of Cyprus

10.1 The Open University of Cyprus is a State Institution of Higher Education that offers undergraduate and graduate courses, as well as training and vocational programs using a certain style of learning which is called “open and distance learning”, the purpose of which is to satisfy the demand for lifelong learning and continuing education.

10.2 The Open University of Cyprus style of teaching is called “open and distance learning”. More specifically, students have the opportunity to learn in their own time without having to be present at the premises of the University in order to be able to attend lectures, seminars or labs, as it is the case with conventional universities.

10.3 The Open University utilizes a variety of media to help students learn no matter how distant from the premises of the University. The following techniques and methods are being employed:

-By means of course material in digital form, received either from the internet or through CDs and DVDs, or from printed course material,

-By attending lectures via the internet and, in the near future, using subscription television, at fixed timetables, specified by the teaching personnel,

10.4 By using the Electronic Gate in order to:

-Find relevant information concerning Thematic Units that is the basic operational unit of each course

-Contact professors or lecturers using synchronized and non-synchronized technologies such as chat, videoconferencing, and forums.

-Exchange ideas, thoughts and opinions with other students who are studying the same Thematic Units.

-By directly communicating with the teaching personnel over the telephone at fixed times.

Evidently, knowing how to operate a personal computer aids considerably the studies of a particular course.

10.5 In regular time intervals, the students of each course will have to attend Group Advisory Meetings that will take place at a fixed time and place. The final examination also takes place at a fixed time and place, and requires the physical presence of the student. When possible, both Group Advisory Meetings and final exams will take place at the students’ home towns.

10.6 The monitoring and support of the students’ progress is assigned to a particular member of the Academic Personnel of the Open University. Students will receive details of their tutor around the course starting date and s/he will be able to communicate with them regularly.

11. The Technological University of Cyprus

11.1 The Technological University of Cyprus (TEPAK) is a State Institution of Higher Education and it is the third public institution that is established and it is located in Limassol. It was, again, founded in response to the growing intellectual needs of the Cypriot people, and is oriented towards more technical majors.

11.2 Admission for the majority of undergraduate students is by entrance examinations organized by the Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Cyprus, and the competition for places is very high. Like the University of Cyprus a number of places are reserved for students with special needs or circumstances. Every effort is made to offer practical solutions to students facing specific problems, be it access to University facilities, or assistance on academic issues.

C. Progress Report on the Development of the National Forum: Draft Proposal for the Ministerial Council - Establishment and Operation of the National Forum for Lifelong Guidance

The Council of Ministers at the meeting of the day 3/6/2009 and after discussion of the joint proposal under No 603/2009 of the Ministry of Education and Culture and the Ministry of Labor and Social Insurance on the above subject, decided to authorize the Ministers of Education and Culture, Labor and Social Insurance to study the issue of setting up and running National Forum for Lifelong Guidance and submit a new proposal to the Ministerial Cabinet about the format, composition and responsibilities of the Forum. The Minister of Education and Culture and the Minister of Labor and Social Insurance, together, confirm the necessity of setting up such entities as a result of increasing social demands which make the individual's needs diverse and varied depending on the current stage of life. The need to develop specific policies in all EU Member States noted in the resolutions of the Council of Europe in 2004 and 2008 while reporting for Lifelong Guidance in a Commission communication (COM (2010 - 2020) «Europe 2020 - A strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth, and the Draft Conclusions of the Council promoted this time for "New skills for new jobs." The Ministers of Labor and Social Insurance, Education and Culture after studying the work of the Joint Committee of officials set up on 14.12.2009 for preparation of the Offer, requested the Cabinet to decide on the establishment of the National Forum for Lifelong Guidance and to adopt provisions for the operation.

1. Establishment of Forum: The National Forum for Lifelong Guidance will be composed by the Ministerial Committee, the Council and the Service Commission.

2. Ministerial Committee Composition

- Minister of Education and Culture
- Minister of Labor and Social Insurance

3. Membership of the Council Board chaired by the Director General of Ministry of Education and Culture and the Permanent Secretary Ministry of Labor and Social Insurance:

- Representative of the Ministry of Education and Culture
- Representative of the Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance
- Representative of the Human Resource Development
- Representative of the Cyprus Youth Organization
- A representative of Higher Education
- A representative of employers' organizations
- One representative of labor organizations
- Representative of the educational organizations

4. Membership Committee Staff

- Head of Counseling and Vocational Education, Ministry of Education and Culture
- Director of the Department of Labor, Ministry of Labor and Social Insurance
- Officers CCES, MOEC
- Officers DL MLSI

Enlarged session of the registered organization may include all stakeholders, eg Public and Private Higher Education, all labor organizations, organized parents, etc.

5. Responsibilities / Role of the Body

- The Forum will be an advisory body to the Government and will have the role to promote a common national policy on lifelong guidance. Final decisions will be taken by the two ministers.
- The Forum will act as a platform to exchange information, views and positions on the issue of lifelong guidance.
- The Forum will contribute suggestions to the creation of policies, systems and practices by promoting lifelong guidance through the proposals and initiatives.
- The Forum will be involved in European projects on the subject and will participate in working groups / networks, etc.
- The Forum will manage European funds on the issue of lifelong guidance.

6. Objectives of the Body

- Coordination and communication between services that provide guidance.
- The creation of a national system of quality mentoring.
- Increased/widening public access to guidance services.
- The promotion of research into mentoring.
- Quality assurance and evaluation services that provide guidance.
- Representation of Cyprus at meetings and working groups at European and international level on lifelong guidance.

7. We suggest: The coordination of all activities to be made by the Ministry of Education and Culture. The secretarial and other logistical support will be provided to the Forum by the Ministry of Education and Culture – certain provision was requested.

8. Cost: The National Forum Costs will be covered by existing funds of the two Ministries in the annual budgets.

9. The Minister of Education and Culture, as well as the Minister of Labor and Social Insurance, who will present the proposal will invite the Cabinet to approve the establishment and operation of the National Forum for Lifelong Guidance as set out in paragraphs four and five of the proposal.

Preparation of the Coaching – Twinning Activity

The **preparation of the activity** on behalf of the hosting organisation EKEP included:

- Official invitation to the German ELGPN Experts and Leaders of the German LLG Forum: Bernhard Jenschke and Karen Schober
- Official invitation to the Cyprus ELGPN Representatives
- Organization of the papers to be send and exchange of relevant information before the activity

The papers and presentations describing the educational and counselling system in Greece and the current status of the LLG Forum establishment process were prepared by Fotini Vlachaki, Greek ELGPN WP3 Representative, National Centre for Vocational Orientation - EKEP, Ministry of Education Lifelong Learning and Religious Affairs.

The leading questions raised at the coaching activity on behalf of Greece were:

- How can we achieve the most selective participation?
- Who would be the strongest champion to support its work?
- How can we better motivate the regional stakeholders to support the establishment of the LLG Forum at regional level?
- How can we achieve acceptance of the forum at policy level and also on behalf of all guidance stakeholders and the general public?
- Do we need more connection to the government than EKEP being a ministerial national authority?
- How can we encourage interagency cooperation and coordination of specific activities among different actors in the field of guidance?
- How can we measure the effectiveness of the activities and tasks undertaken by the forum?

The papers and presentations describing the educational and counselling system in Cyprus were prepared and the current status of the LLG Forum establishment process by:

- Lena Nikolaou, Career Counseling and Education Service, Ministry of Education and Culture
- Antonis Antoniou, Career Counseling and Education Service, Ministry of Education and Culture
- Stalo Papageorgiou - Afxentiou, Career Counseling and Education Service, Ministry of Education and Culture
- Antonis Kafouros, Department of Labor, Ministry of Labor and Social Insurance

The leading questions raised at the coaching activity on behalf of Cyprus were:

- Power Play: How do we overcome the power games? How is it decided who leads the National Forum? Who are the major stakeholders? The major decision makers?
- Communication: How is the communication done at all levels? Among European level, Ministries, Departments?
- Outcomes: How the decisions are made and who decides what? Who does the research? Who is responsible to write reports, set targets and develop and implements a strategic plan?

Papers prepared by the German Experts and sent to the participants before the meeting as following:

- Description of Educational and Guidance System in Germany
- Mission Statement of the German National Forum for Guidance in Education, Career and Employment
- Presentation for the German National Forum for Guidance in Education, Career and Employment
- How to establish a forum Checklist

The process of the Coaching – Twinning Activity

The Coaching – Twinning Activity was hosted at premises in Athens on the 28th of April 2011.

The coaching / twinning activity was held in Athens April on the 28th 2011. The participants were:

1. **SCHOBER Karen**, President of the German National Guidance Forum in Education, Career and Employment (Nationales Forum Beratung in Bildung, Beruf und Beschäftigung) and Vice – President of the International Association of Educational and Vocational Guidance (IAEVG/AIOSP)
2. **JENSCHKE Bernhard**, Vice – President of the German National Guidance Forum in Education, Career and Employment (Nationales Forum Beratung in Bildung, Beruf und Beschäftigung)
3. **Lena Nikolaou**, Cyprus WP3 ELGPN Representative, Ministry of Education and Culture
4. **Antonis Kafouros**, Cyprus WP3 ELGPN Representative, Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance
5. **Fotini Vlachaki**, ELGPN Representative Greece, Director of Programming and Development, EKEP - National Centre for Vocational Orientation
6. **Dimitris Gaitanis**, ELGPN Representative Greece, Manager of the Accreditation and Quality Assurance Department, EKEP - National Centre for Vocational Orientation

The procedure and content of the Coaching – Twinning Activity included presentations and discussions on the following:

- Educational and Guidance System in Germany
- German National Forum for Guidance in Education, Career and Employment
- Educational and Guidance System in Cyprus
- Development of a National Forum on Lifelong Guidance in Cyprus – State of play
- Educational and Guidance System in Greece
- Development of a National Forum on Lifelong Guidance in Greece – Perspectives, current situation and critical issues

The participants from Greece and Cyprus were asking questions during the process and received feedback from the German Experts and vice versa. This procedure helped the participants to acquire a high level of understanding for the current situation in the three countries, to clear out the picture and to identify similarities, differences, good practices and possible solutions to several issues regarding the establishment of a LLG Forum.

The “How to establish a forum Checklist” prepared by the German Experts along with the leading questions from Cyprus and Greece were used to facilitate a common dialogue and reflective conversation which resulted to the **Working Process Report – Critical Issues on how to establish a National Guidance Forum.**

WP3 “Co-operation and co-ordination mechanisms in guidance practice and policy development”

Greece and Cyprus ELGPN Coaching / Twinning Activity Athens April 28th 2011

Participants:

SCHOBER Karen, President of the German National Guidance Forum in Education, Career and Employment (Nationales Forum Beratung in Bildung, Beruf und Beschäftigung) and Vice – President of the International Association of Educational and Vocational Guidance (IAEVG/AIOSP)

JENSCHKE Bernhard, Vice – President of the German National Guidance Forum in Education, Career and Employment (Nationales Forum Beratung in Bildung, Beruf und Beschäftigung)

Lena Nikolaou, Cyprus ELGPN Representative, Cyprus Ministry of Education and Culture

Antonis Kafouros, Cyprus ELGPN Representative, Cyprus Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance

Fotini Vlachaki, ELGPN Representative Greece, Director of Programming and Development, EKEP - National Centre for Vocational Orientation

Dimitrios Gaitanis, ELGPN Representative Greece, Manager of the Accreditation of Guidance Practitioners and Guidance Quality Assurance Department, EKEP - National Centre for Vocational Orientation

Working Process Report – Critical Issues on how to establish a National Guidance Forum

	Topics of Discussion	Cyprus Proposal	German Experts comments
1	Structure of the Forum		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bottom up or top down structure 	The Cyprus proposal for the creation of the new Forum suggests a top down structure with strong influences from the two main ministries involved.	There is no right or wrong answer to any approach, as long as the forum acts as a body, their members cooperate with each other, there are strong communication channels between the top and bottom level and also between the members.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Membership 	It will not be open to everybody. Membership to the forum will be restricted to the basic providers of guidance that can shape policies.	The German experts suggested that the representatives in the Forum should also be experts on guidance provision in order to bring new policies closer to the needs of the guidance community
2	Aims and policy Definition		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aims 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Forum will be an advisory body to the Government, 	

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It will have the duty to promote a shared national policy on lifelong guidance. • All final decisions will be made by the two ministers. • The Forum will act as a platform to exchange information, views and positions on the issues of lifelong guidance. • The Forum will contribute with suggestions to the development of policies, systems and practices • It will have the responsibility to promote lifelong guidance through proposals and initiatives. • The Forum will be involved in European projects and will participate in working groups / networks, etc. • The Forum will manage the European funds of lifelong guidance 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mission 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No mission has been developed by the Cyprus technical committee for the creation of the National Forum. The Mission statement is left to be decided at a later stage between the members of the forum. 	The mission is of most importance. It should be clear and easily understood and accepted by all members. It should also have the recognition of the government (of both main ministries providing guidance).
3	Objectives		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concrete Actions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordination and communication between the main services that provide guidance in Cyprus • Development of a national system of quality mentoring. • Increased public access to guidance services. • The promotion and implementation of research in counseling. • Quality assurance and evaluation of the services that provide guidance. • Representation of Cyprus at meetings and working groups at European and international level on lifelong guidance. 	The German experts suggested that one very important action not included in the Cyprus proposal is the development or the adaptation of a code of Ethics. The forum could either develop its own ethical standard to be followed by all guidance practitioners or adapt already existing standards to the Cyprus reality.
4	Methods of Work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issue of Advice papers, comments on legislation, proposal papers • Organisation of Workshops, Seminars, Conferences • Production of research papers, evaluation reports etc • Development of projects via outsourcing 	
5	Organisation		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chair 	The Cyprus proposal is that the forum is going to be chaired by the two Permanent Secretaries of the Ministry of Education and Ministry of Labour	The German experts suggested that it is better if a person who is universally recognised for his/her work in the field of guidance and counselling take the lead of the forum. This way we avoid any power play games between the different providers

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Membership 	<p>Members of the Cyprus Forum</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Education and Culture • Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance • Representative of the Ministry of Education and Culture • Representative of the Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance • Representative of the Human Resource Development • Representative of the Cyprus Youth Organization • Representative of the Higher Education • Representative of the employers' organizations • Representative of the labour organizations • Representative of the educational organizations 	<p>There are two major comments made from the German Experts:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The representatives should be experts in guidance in order to produce policies catered for the guidance practitioners 2. Cyprus should take into consideration the absence of two major key players in guidance: the end users and the actual guidance practitioners. Their suggestion is that in the forum a representative of the Association of Counsellors and a representative of the consumer association should be included.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Secretariat 	<p>The Cyprus Technical Committee had suggested that the Secretariat (called the Executive Committee) will be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Head of Career Counselling and Education Service (CCES) (Ministry of Education and Culture) • Director of the Department of Labour (DL) (Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance) • Counselors of CCES, • Officers of the DL 	<p>The German Experts had two major concerns:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The two Ministries should indicate experts on guidance issues to be involved in the execution of the Forum. The staff is better if they are permanent, but this is something that may be discussed. 2. The work should be done according the directions of one person. (the head of the Forum) in order to avoid overlapping work and power games 3. The cost of the secretariat can be divided by both ministries 4. However, the physical identification of the Secretariat is very crucial and should be taken seriously by the Government of Cyprus.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Financing of the Forum 	<p>Jointly done by the two Ministries</p>	<p>It is better if the Forum has its own Offices in order to give substance to it.</p>

	Topics of Discussion	Greece Proposal	German Experts comments
1	Structure of the Forum		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bottom up or top down structure 	<p>Top down structure and also efforts for Bottom up approach is the Greek proposal.</p> <p>The National Center for Vocational Guidance (EKEP) under the supervision of the Ministry of Education Lifelong Learning and Religious Affairs is the competent national coordination body</p>	<p>The existence of basic legal framework and the operation of EKEP as a coordination body is an asset in the process of establishing the National Lifelong Guidance forum mostly based at the top down approach.</p>

		<p>in designing and implementing a National Policy on Guidance and Counselling in the field of education-training and employment. In the context of the National Network of Lifelong Learning, EKEP is one of the administrative bodies for lifelong learning regarding its responsibilities that are linked to counselling and vocational guidance in the lifelong learning framework (Law 3879 "Development of Lifelong Learning and other provisions" Government Gazette A' 163 21/9/2010). Counseling services and/or Vocational Guidance services providers are also part of the National Network of Lifelong Learning as the relevant bodies providing lifelong learning services.</p> <p>EKEP is the executive body according to its statutory role for the operation of an Executive Committee of all guidance stakeholders. There is a need to examine the necessity of additional legal framework for the establishment and operation of a National Lifelong Guidance Forum in Greece.</p>	<p>EKEP being a ministerial national authority provides enough connection to the government. There has to be a balance between the linkage to the government and the freedom of the forum to voice an independent view on government policies and initiatives.</p>
		<p>The new regional administration and local government (decentralization system) KALIKRATIS provides a greater potential towards the provision of integrated lifelong guidance services to citizens of all ages through the enhancing communication, cooperation, networking and joint efforts and resources in the fields of education and lifelong learning. In this context efforts will be made to establish regional lifelong guidance forums at the 13 prefectures – regions in Greece.</p> <p>The National Forum will support the regional forums with guidelines and know – how and also maybe funding the implementation of regional activities after submitting annual action plans to the Executive committee.</p>	<p>The establishment and operation of the National Lifelong Guidance Forum should be made independently and not strictly connected to the regional forums. It is important to strengthen the operation of the National Forum before initiating the process of establishing the regional forums. The regional forums usually need to be established bottom up otherwise may fail or be inactive. Further activities should be implemented aiming at motivating the regional stakeholders to support the establishment of the LLG Forum at regional level e.g. regional meetings, regional activities in cooperation with the National LLG Forum etc.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Membership 	<p>Invitations will be sent by EKEP to all major stakeholders in the guidance field (education, training, employment, guidance practitioners, guidance academic community and end users).</p>	<p>The participation of the representatives dealing with guidance of the relevant ministries should be ensured. Efforts should be made towards a selective membership including those who will be strongly committed to support guidance policies and possess a minimum guidance know – how and scientific approach.</p>
2	Aims and policy Definition		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aims 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Platform for dialogue and consultation on issues relating to the unified organization of guidance system in Greece. 	<p>Effective steps should be taken towards the operation of the forum so that to avoid being a</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promotion of more effective networking of guidance services at national, regional and local level. Promotion of synergies and complementarity of actions and services targeted to citizens of all ages. 	<p>forum in papers and a talk shop or a forum that supports the needs of services or organisations, sectoral interests, and potential conflicts based on such interests.</p> <p>Higher level of acceptance of the forum at policy level can be achieved by demonstrating the positive economic influence of guidance provision in relation to the unemployment, early school leaving and other social problems. This can justify the investment of adequate resources to guidance services especially in time of economic crisis.</p> <p>Provision of integrated guidance services would raise the acceptance and effectiveness of the forum to guidance practitioners and the general public, especially because the forum would ensure their active participation.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mission 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No mission of the National Forum has been developed so far. The Mission statement will be decided at a later stage between the members of the forum along with the forum's action plan on annual basis. 	<p>The mission is of most importance. It should be clear and easily understood and accepted by all members. It should also have the recognition of the government (of both main ministries providing guidance).</p> <p>All members must be committed to support guidance policies and practices and the work of the Forum, far away from the needs of services or organisations, sectoral interests, and potential conflicts based on such interests.</p>
3	Objectives		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Concrete Actions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct open consultations and exchange of know – how - Indicative issues for consultation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Guidance Services Code Of Ethics. Legal framework for the Accreditation of Counselling and Vocational Guidance Practitioners. Legal framework for the Implementation of the Quality Assurance Management System for Guidance Services. Implementation of networking activities and joint coordination meetings at regional and local level (e.g. Ad hoc reports, studies and policy proposals on lifelong guidance issues). Implementation of joint events and public raising awareness activities at local and regional level on the 	<p>Concrete activities should be assigned to the National Forum aiming at the technical support of the relevant ministries to implement lifelong guidance policies to meet citizens' needs.</p> <p>The outcomes of the activities implemented and the level of acceptance to its policy proposals on behalf of the ministries defines the success and effectiveness of the forum.</p>

		issues of lifelong guidance and career development. (e.g. Career Fairs, Job festivals etc).	
4	Methods of Work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of the National Counselors' Network – Web Forum "IRIDA" http://irida.ekep.gr The setting up of the National Counsellors' Network – Web Platform "IRIDA" by EKEP aims at networking, at national level, institutions and providers offering counselling and vocational guidance services in secondary and tertiary education, vocational training and employment. The National Counsellors' Network – Web Forum "IRIDA" will be used as the tool of the national LLG forum (technical upgrading and further promotion of "IRIDA" is scheduled). • Draft policy proposals, Advisory papers and reports. • Organise Workshops, Seminars, Conferences and joint activities. • Implement pilot projects via outsourcing. 	
5	Organisation		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chair 	EKEP will be the steering body and responsible for the Executive Committee of the National LLG Forum.	<p>It is important that EKEP should be the steering body. It is better if the National Forum is chaired by a person not tied to the EKEP's administration board because of the existing direct relationship to the government. In this case a person who would strongly champion to support its work should be ideal.</p> <p>The chair person should be far away from the needs of services or organisations, sectoral interests, and potential conflicts based on such interests.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Membership 	<p>Possible Members of the National LLG Forum in Greece</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administrative representatives of guidance services in the field of education, training and employment. • Representatives of guidance practitioners' associations. • Representatives of Social partners. • Representatives of important bodies dealing with guidance for different target groups. • Representatives of the guidance academic community. • Representatives of the guidance end users (students, youth, adults, disabled, at risk groups). • Representatives of the parents' associations. • Representatives of the educational community. • Representatives of the private guidance institutions' 	<p>There has to be a procedure ensuring that some selectivity will be applied.</p> <p>The major key stakeholders should be identified and invited to assign a representative in case they too many of them are involved in guidance. The member's list should be more specific in each category and define limitations to who can be assigned to this task so that representation closely related to guidance could be ensured.</p>

		associations.	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secretariat 	EKEP will be responsible for secretariat of the National LLG Forum	It is important to ensure adequate resources to support the work of the forum (e.g. staff,
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financing of the Forum 	The activities and operation of the LLG Forum will be initially covered by the EKEP's "COMMON ACTION PLAN FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF VOCATIONAL GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING SERVICES IN EDUCATION, INITIAL TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT" (NSRF 2007-2013)". EKEP will fully undertake the costs of the LLG Forum after 2013.	It is important to maintain the sustainability of the operation of the National LLG Forum and if possible ensure and manage its own resources. Some ideas would include membership fees and provision of profitable services e.g. accreditation of guidance practitioners, quality assurance of guidance services etc.

Conclusions and further steps for Greece: EKEP, which already is a coordinating and cooperating mechanism in the field of lifelong guidance involving the Ministries of Education and Labour, Social partners and other stakeholders. In this context, EKEP, is currently in the process of planning the establishment of the LLG Forum at national and regional level and soon will apply for funding. The coaching twinning activity highlighted several aspects that should be taken into account so that the whole project will be successful. The outcomes of the activity and the suggestions made by the German colleagues will be informed to the EKEP's Board of Directors and the Ministry. Most important comments apply to the membership selection procedure, the chairing of the forum and the strengthening role of EKEP for the sustainability of the forum.

Conclusions and further steps for Cyprus: Cyprus has already drafted the Proposal for the Ministerial Council regarding the Establishment and Operation of the National Forum for Lifelong Guidance. This mechanism will serve the aim of effective networking and cooperation between the two Ministries and will involve several stakeholders. The coaching twinning activity helped to clear out several issues regarding the existing draft proposal, especially regarding the membership and leadership of the Forum. Further discussions will follow among the guidance officers of both ministries to review and finalize the existing proposal which will be then submitted for ministerial approval.

Documentation – Attachments



WP3 “Co-operation and co-ordination mechanisms in guidance practice and policy development”

Greece and Cyprus ELGPN Coaching / Twinning Activity

Athens April 28th 2011

Meeting venue:

National Centre for Vocational Orientation - Euroguidance Centre of Greece
Parassiou 1 & Acharnon 99, 10440 Athens
Tel: +30 210-8233669
Fax: +30 210-8233772
<http://www.ekep.gr>

Draft Agenda

- 10.00 – 10.30 Welcome**
- 10.30 – 11.00 Development of a National Forum on Lifelong Guidance in Greece – Perspectives, current situation and critical issues**
Fotini Vlachaki, Greek ELGPN Representative, EKEP, Ministry of Education Lifelong Learning and Religious Affairs
- 11.00 – 11.30 Development of a National Forum on Lifelong Guidance in Cyprus – State of play**
Lena Nikolaou, Cyprus WP3 ELGPN Representative, Ministry of Education and Culture
Antonis Kafouros, Cyprus WP3 ELGPN Representative, Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance
- 11.30 – 12.30 German National Guidance Forum in Education, Career and Employment**
SCHOBER Karen, President of the German National Guidance Forum in Education, Career and Employment (Nationales Forum Beratung in Bildung, Beruf und Beschäftigung) and Vice – President of the International Association of Educational and Vocational Guidance (IAEVG/AIOSP)
JENSCHKE Bernhard, Vice – President of the German National Guidance Forum in Education, Career and Employment (Nationales Forum Beratung in Bildung, Beruf und Beschäftigung)
- 12.30 – 13.30 Coffee Break – Light Lunch**
- 13.30 – 15.30 Coaching / Twinning Activity – Discussion**
Establishing National Lifelong Guidance Forums in Greece and Cyprus:
investigating the opportunities and possible solutions to difficulties.
- 15.30 – 16.30 Coaching / Twinning Activity Outcomes – Preparing the report to be presented at the WP3 meeting in Cyprus**
- 21.00 Common Dinner**

Athens, 23rd March 2011.

To the German ELGPN Representatives

SCHOBER Karen, President of the German National Guidance Forum in Education, Career and Employment (Nationales Forum Beratung in Bildung, Beruf und Beschäftigung) and Vice – President of the International Association of Educational and Vocational Guidance (IAEVG/AIOSP)

JENSCHKE Bernhard, Vice – President of the German National Guidance Forum in Education, Career and Employment (Nationales Forum Beratung in Bildung, Beruf und Beschäftigung)

Subject: Greece and Cyprus ELGPN WP3 Coaching / Twinning Activity in Athens

As agreed at the WP3 meeting in Budapest, we officially invite you to participate at a WP3 Greece & Cyprus Coaching / Twinning Activity, which will be held in Athens on the 28th of April 2011 at the EKEP premises (1st Parasiou & Acharnon st).

Greece and Cyprus, member countries at the ELGPN Working Package 3 entitled “Co-operation and co-ordination mechanisms in guidance practice and policy development” are both interested and currently active in this issue.

Please accept our invitation to participate at the twinning activity as coaches to assist us investigating the opportunities and possible solutions to difficulties in the process of establishing a National Lifelong Guidance Forum in our countries. The results of the Coaching / Twinning Activity will be presented and provide feedback at the WP3 Field Visit to be organized in Cyprus on 10th/11th of May 2011.

ELGPN coordinator, Lead WP3 Representative and WP3 Expert are also invited to attend and contribute to the activity via web.

We also inform you that on the 28th of April 2011 EKEP will organize a seminar regarding lifelong guidance practices and instruments, in which you are invited as the keynote speakers, covering the following issues:

SCHOBER Karen: Lifelong Guidance: the international perspective and the work of the IAEVG

JENSCHKE Bernhard: Information, Media and ICT tool for Career Guidance in Germany

We are looking forward to welcoming you in Athens.

Sincerely,

Fotini Vlachaki
ELGPN Representative Greece
Director of Programming and Development
EKEP - National Centre for Vocational Orientation

Athens, 23rd March 2011.

To Cyprus ELGPN WP3 Representatives

Lena Nikolaou, Cyprus Ministry of Education and Culture
Antonis Kafouros, Cyprus Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance

Cc
Raimo Vuorinen, ELGPN Coordinator
Peter Hartel, Lead WP3 Representative
Peter Plant, WP3 Expert

**Subject: Greece and Cyprus ELGPN
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- o **SCHOBER Karen**, President of the German National Guidance Forum in Education, Career and Employment (Nationales Forum Beratung in Bildung, Beruf und Beschäftigung) and Vice – President of the International Association of Educational and Vocational Guidance (IAEVG/AIOSP)
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We also inform you that on the 28th of April 2011 EKEP will organize a seminar regarding lifelong guidance practices and instruments, in which Mr JENSCHKE and Mrs SCHOBER are invited as the keynote speakers. Please inform us if you wish to attend the seminar.

We are looking forward to welcoming you in Athens.

Sincerely,

Fotini Vlachaki
ELGPN Representative Greece
Director of Programming and Development
EKEP - National Centre for Vocational Orientation




**COORDINATION AND COOPERATION MECHANISMS
FOR LIFE LONG GUIDANCE:**
*Perspectives for the development of a National Forum on Lifelong
Guidance in Greece – current situation and critical issues*

**Fotini Vlachaki, Greek ELGPN WP3 Representative, National Centre for Vocational
Orientation - EKOP, Ministry of Education Lifelong Learning and Religious Affairs**

**WP3 "Co-operation and co-ordination mechanisms
In guidance practice and policy development"
Greece and Cyprus ELGPN
Coaching / Twinning Activity
Athens April 28th 2011**







Guidance Services in Greece

- **Career Guidance services in Secondary education**
 - ✓ **81 regional Counseling and Guidance Centers (KESYPs):** services to students and young people up to 25 years of age and also their parents
 - ✓ **570 School Career Counseling Offices (GRASEPs)**
- **Career Liaison Offices in Post-Secondary education institutes**
- **Counseling and Career Guidance offices in Second Opportunity Schools**
- **Career Liaison Offices in Universities and Technological Educational Institutions**
- **Career Guidance services offered by Public Employment Services - Employment Promotion Centers (K.P.A)**
- **Career Guidance services offered by the Social Partners**



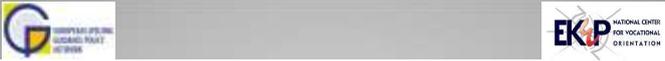




Training in the field of Guidance

- In service training by the relevant Ministries and bodies responsible for the implementation of counselling and career guidance in education and employment to active guidance practitioners.
- University postgraduate studies programmes in the field of Counselling, Career Guidance and other related areas.



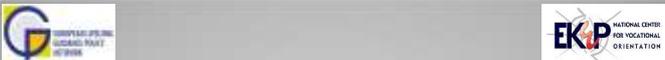
**COORDINATION AND COOPERATION MECHANISMS FOR LLG:
CURRENT LEGAL FRAMEWORK**

- **EKEP** - the competent national coordination body operating since 2000 under the supervision of the Ministries of Labour and Education.
- EKEP is the executive body of System 6 of ESSEKA "System of Counselling, Vocational Guidance and Connection with the Labour Market" (Law 3191/2003).

Responsibilities at national level:

- providing scientific and technical support to the relevant stakeholders in the Ministries of Education and Labour in designing and implementing a National Policy on Guidance and Counselling,
- the development of communication and coordination of actions taken by private and public counselling and guidance service providers, aiming at the improvement of existing services,
- the education, initial and continuous training of counselling and guidance practitioners, in collaboration with/or supplementing those provided by current training services in the relevant Ministries of Employment and Education,
- defining the conditions and rules under which guidance and counselling services should operate, the relevance and adequacy of counselling and guidance practitioners' qualifications and keeping the relevant registers.





**COORDINATION AND COOPERATION MECHANISMS FOR LLG:
CURRENT LEGAL FRAMEWORK**

At European level, EKEP is:

- the **Euroguidance Center of Greece**, member of the Euroguidance network, with the support of the Lifelong Learning Program.
- the **national body representing Greece in the European Lifelong Guidance Policy Network** – ELGPN, established by the European Commission in 2007.





**COORDINATION AND COOPERATION MECHANISMS FOR LLG:
Additional new legal framework**

- Since 2010 EKEP stands under the supervision of the Ministry of Education Lifelong Learning and Religious Affairs (Presidential Decree 24 -Government Gazette A 56/15.4.2010).
- **New Law 3879 "Development of Lifelong Learning and other provisions"** Government Gazette A' 163 21/9/2010):
 - EKEP has been placed in the National Network of Lifelong Learning, as one of the administrative bodies for lifelong learning regarding its responsibilities that are linked to counseling and vocational guidance in the lifelong learning framework.
 - Counseling services and/or Vocational Guidance services providers are also part of the National Network of Lifelong Learning as the relevant bodies providing lifelong learning services.





SELECTIVE COORDINATION PROJECTS CARRIED OUT BY EKEP IN COMPATIBILITY WITH EUROPEAN PRIORITIES

- Draft framework for the accreditation of counselling and guidance practitioners' qualifications.
- Legal framework for determining the operating conditions of the private counselling and vocational guidance services providers and structures.
- Quality Assurance Management System for Guidance Services in Greece.
- National Counselors' Network – Web Forum "Irida" <http://irida.ekep.gr/>.
- Specialized library in Counselling and Vocational Guidance <http://library.ekep.gr/>.
- National Database of Learning Opportunities "PLOIGOS" <http://ploigos.ekep.gr> connected to PLOTEUS" II.
- Meetings, conferences, seminars at local and regional level for Guidance practitioners in education, training and employment settings.
- Scientific & Information Material (manuals, handbooks and guides in counseling and vocational guidance)





EKEP's CURRENT PROJECTS IN RELATION TO COOPERATION & COORDINATION

- "COMMON ACTION PLAN FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF VOCATIONAL GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING SERVICES IN EDUCATION, INITIAL TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT" (NSRF 2007-2013)"

Strategic Goals - Priorities:

- Quality assurance of guidance services.
- Raising Access to guidance services.
- Promoting Career management Skills and motivation of citizens in relations to lifelong career development issues.
- Coordination and Networking of LLG services.
- Use of ICT in guidance provision.
- Guidance human resources development.





EKEP's CURRENT PROJECTS IN RELATION TO COOPERATION & COORDINATION

- **Currently Running Guidance Projects Funded By NSRF 2007-2013**

- **Pilot study on the quality criteria followed by the guidance services in the field of education and initial training.** (Aim: to lead to the implementation of the National Quality Assurance Management System for Guidance Services in Greece.)
- **Interactive multimedia guidance internet portal for adolescents** (Greek Real Game, Video job profiles, E – portfolio, on – line self evaluation questionnaires etc.) (Aim: raising adolescents' access to information and career development services)





EKEP's CURRENT PROJECTS IN RELATION TO COOPERATION & COORDINATION

- **"COMMON ACTION PLAN FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF VOCATIONAL GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING SERVICES IN EDUCATION, INITIAL TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT" (NSRF 2007-2013)"**
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 - **Interactive multimedia guidance internet portal for adolescents** (Greek Real Game, Video job profiles, E – portfolio, on – line self evaluation questionnaires etc.) (Aim: raising adolescents' access to information and career development services)





EKEP's CURRENT PROJECTS IN RELATION TO COOPERATION & COORDINATION

- **"COMMON ACTION PLAN FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF VOCATIONAL GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING SERVICES IN EDUCATION, INITIAL TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT" (NSRF 2007-2013)"**
- **Future Projects in Progress to be funded By NSRF 2007-2013**
 - Establishment and operation of a Lifelong Guidance Forum in Greece.
 - Multimedia guidance internet portal for adults.
 - Assessment, training and Accreditation of Counselling and Vocational Guidance Practitioners.
 - Implementation of pilot innovative lifelong guidance services at regional level. (individualized services / e-counselling services).
 - Implementation of career educational projects for students in secondary and technical vocational education.





CHALLENGES – CRITICAL ISSUES FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A LIFELONG GUIDANCE FORUM IN GREECE

Needs and new perspectives

- The context of the **new regional administration and local government (decentralization system) KALIKRATIS** provides a greater potential towards the provision of integrated lifelong guidance services to citizens of all ages through the enhancing cooperation, networking and joint efforts and resources in the fields of education and lifelong learning.
- Further systemic interventions and additional legal framework for the provision of LLG services is of great importance in order to achieve a **unified National Policy on Guidance and Counselling.**
- EKEP is the executive body of System 6 of ESSEKA "System of Counselling, Vocational Guidance and Connection with the Labour Market" (Law 3191/2003) which provides a basic legal framework for the operation of a Forum as an Executive Committee of all guidance stakeholders. Thus we need to **examine the necessity of a new legal framework for the establishment and operation of a Lifelong Guidance Forum in Greece.**





Possible Areas of Intervention for the LLG Forum in Greece

- Platform for dialogue and consultation on issues relating to the unified organization of guidance system in Greece.
- Promotion of more effective networking of guidance services at national, regional and local level.
- Promotion of synergies and complementarity of actions and services targeted to citizens of all ages.





Possible Activities of the LLG Forum in Greece

- Conduct open consultations and exchange of know – how - Indicative issues for consultation:
 - Guidance Services Code Of Ethics.
 - Legal framework for the Accreditation of Counselling and Vocational Guidance Practitioners.
 - Legal framework for the Implementation of the Quality Assurance Management System for Guidance Services.
 - Implementation of networking activities and joint coordination meetings at regional and local level (e.g. Ad hoc reports, studies and policy proposals on lifelong guidance issues).
- Implementation of joint events and public raising awareness activities at local and regional level on the issues of lifelong guidance and career development. (e.g. Career Fairs, Job festivals etc).





LLG Forum Implementation Methodology

- EKEP will be the steering body of the LLG Forum and responsible for the Executive committee and secretariat.
- Efforts will be made to establish also regional lifelong guidance forums at the 13 prefectures – regions in Greece.
- The National Forum will support the regional forums with guidelines and know – how and also funding for the implementation of regional activities after submitting annual action plans to the Executive committee.



Possible Partners of the LLG Forum in Greece

- Administrative representatives of guidance services in the field of education, training and employment.
- Representatives of guidance practitioners' associations.
- Representatives of Social partners.
- Representatives of important bodies dealing with guidance for different target groups.
- Representatives of the guidance academic community.
- Representatives of the guidance end users (students, youth, adults, disabled, at risk groups).
- Representatives of the parents' associations.
- Representatives of the educational community.
- Representatives of the private guidance institutions' associations.

LLG Forum in Greece

Tools of the LLG Forum in Greece

- Use of the National Counselors' Network – Web Forum "IRIDA" (technical upgrading and further promotion of "IRIDA" is scheduled).

Funding

- The activities and operation of the LLG Forum will be initially covered by the EKEP's "COMMON ACTION PLAN FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF VOCATIONAL GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING SERVICES IN EDUCATION, INITIAL TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT" (NSRF 2007-2013)". EKEP will fully undertake the costs of the LLG Forum after 2013.

LLG Forum in Greece

QUESTIONS INTERESTED TO INVESTIGATE AT THE COACHING ACTIVITY

- How can we achieve the most selective participation?
- Who would be the strongest champion to support its work?
- How can we better motivate the regional stakeholders to support the establishment of the LLG Forum at regional level?
- How can we achieve acceptance of the forum at policy level and also on behalf of all guidance stakeholders and the general public?
- Do we need more connection to the government than EKEP being a ministerial national authority?
- How can we encourage interagency cooperation and coordination of specific activities among different actors in the field of guidance?
- How can we measure the effectiveness of the activities and tasks undertaken by the forum?

Thank you for your cooperation and support!



Development of a National Forum on Lifelong Guidance in Cyprus

Lena Nicolaou, Inspector of Counselling
Career Counseling and Educational Service (Ministry of Education and Culture)
ELGPN Member – Cyprus
Antonis Antoniou, Counsellor
Coordinator (CCES) of the Committee for the Development of the National Forum for Career Guidance in Cyprus

Major Stakeholders

- **Career Counseling and Educational Service**
(Ministry of Education and Culture)
- **Department of Labor**
(Ministry of Labor and Social Insurance)



Establishment and Operation of C.C.E.S. Ministry of Education and Culture

- The Vocational Guidance as previously called, was founded in 1964 and it was renamed to Counseling and Career Educational Service in 1997.
- Since 1991 C.C.E.S. employs permanent qualified staff.

What we do at C.C.E.S.:

We Provide our Services to:

- Students of all ages mostly in Gymnasiums and Lyceums,
- Evening schools with adult population,
- Technical and Vocational Schools,
- Soldiers,
- University Students and graduates,
- Parents
- The General Public.

Description of C.C.E.S.

The C.C.E.S is designed to provide:

- Assistance to Secondary School students and other young people to discover and develop their abilities, to realize their personal needs, interests and aspirations, to acquire the necessary objective information on educational and professional issues that concern them and make decisions freely for their educational and professional future.
- Assistance to students / young people that face personal, family and social issues / problems.

C.C.E.S. refers to two main roles which are the Counseling and Vocational Education.

- The term **Counseling** refers to the science that seeks to provide a person with the necessary help and support so that he or she can effectively address the various problems / difficulties encountered in life.
- The term **Career Educational or Vocational Education** is the lengthy process that must begin in the early years of a person's life. Helps young people discover their personal needs, interests, inclinations and capabilities, as well as to learn to acquire the necessary skills and decisions regarding their educational and occupational choices.

Objectives of C.C.E.S.

- Self-knowledge (*knowledge of self detection- understanding of personal abilities, inclinations, interests, values, aspirations, etc.*)
- Confidence
- Self-realization (*use of personal abilities, inclinations, interests*)
- Adapting to the school and social environment
- Taking rational, personal, educational and occupational decisions



Description of D.E.

Ministry of Labor and Social Insurance

The Department of Employment:

- Operates since 2006
- Public Employment Services offer individualized counselling at their District and Local Labour Offices.
- The aim of the Individualized Counselling is to facilitate the early placement of those job seekers who are not ready to enter the labour market.
- The main phases of the individualized counselling are the *Profiling the Action Plan* and the *Follow Up*.

IAPs include all actions that could take place in order to facilitate access and integration in employment for the job seeker. In particular contains:

- **Counseling:** forming a cv, preparing for a job interview, improving self-esteem, empowerment, informing the job seeker of her/ his choices for training or job openings etc
- **Vocational guidance:** obtaining work experience (*assisting the job seeker in deciding the nature of the job*), obtaining skills training (*informing and assisting the job seeker in deciding on the specific training program*), referring the job seeker to a job opening or to self employment schemes (*informing and assisting the job seeker in deciding the job opening she/ he will apply for, informing and assisting the job seeker in deciding on self employment, accordingly assistance in filling out the necessary documents*) and,
- **Follow up:** Following up the clients' progress at various intervals up to two years after the action plan has been implemented.

Developing lifelong Guidance

"Lifelong learning comprises learning for all citizens regardless of age, educational attainment, employment or social status, and in all contexts, formal, non formal and informal. Demographic and labour market trends require education and training reforms to implement lifelong learning strategies. People need **guidance throughout life** so that they can make informed choices about lifelong learning".

CEDEFOP

2004 European Union Council Resolution on lifelong guidance

In May 2004, the European Union Council Resolution on lifelong guidance called for reforming guidance policies and practices to support learning at all ages and in a broad range of settings. Special attention is to be paid to:

- broadening access to guidance provision,
- improving quality assurance mechanisms,
- empowering citizens to manage their own career and learning,
- strengthening the coordination of guidance services and setting up structures for policy development involving key guidance stakeholders at national and regional levels.

2008 Council Resolution on better integrating lifelong guidance into lifelong learning strategies

Invites, among other things, the member states to:

- Strengthen the role of lifelong guidance
- Review guidance policies
- Support the lifelong career transition of citizens etc.

CCES

- Cedefop's **lifelong guidance** project reviews Member States' progress in implementing the Council resolutions on lifelong guidance (2004, 2008). C.C.E.S. cooperates with the Department of Labour towards the development of a **National Forum**, carries out research, participates in sharing events, utilizes the evaluation report of CCES and cooperates with the European Commission and Member States through the European lifelong guidance policy network (ELGPN).

The Council of Ministers

- at the meeting of 3 June 2009 and after discussion of the proposal of the Ministry of Education and Culture on the above subject, decided to
- authorize the Ministers of Education and Culture, Labour and Social Insurance to study the issue of setting up and running a National Forum for Lifelong Guidance and
- submit a new proposal to the Cabinet about the format, composition and responsibilities of the Forum.

The Ministers of Labour and Social Insurance & Education and Culture

- after studying the work of the Joint Committee of officials set up on 14 December 2009 for the preparation of the proposal,
- Will ask the Cabinet to decide on the establishment of the National Forum for Lifelong Guidance and,
- adopt all the provisions for the operation of the National Forum.

Establishment of Forum

- The main bodies of the National Forum will be:
 - the Ministerial Committee,
 - the Council and
 - the Executive Committee.

Ministerial Committee Composition

- Minister of Education and Culture
- Minister of Labour and Social Insurance

Members of the Council

- chaired by
 - Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Education and Culture
 - Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance
- Representative of the Ministry of Education and Culture
- Representative of the Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance
- Representative of the Human Resource Development
- Representative of the Cyprus Youth Organization
- Representative of the Higher Education
- Representative of the employers' organizations
- Representative of the labour organizations
- Representative of the educational organizations

National Forum on Lifelong
Guidance in Cyprus

16

Members of the Executive Committee

- Head of Career Counseling and Education Service (Ministry of Education and Culture)
- Director of the Department of Labour (Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance)
- Counselors of CCES, MOEC
- Officers of ED, MLSI

National Forum on Lifelong
Guidance in Cyprus

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Enlarged meeting of the National
Forum may include all stakeholders:

Public and Private Higher Education,
all labor organizations,
organized parents, etc.

National Forum on Lifelong
Guidance in Cyprus

18

Responsibilities / Role of the Forum

- The Forum will be an advisory body to the Government,
- It will have the duty to promote a shared national policy on lifelong guidance.
- All final decisions will be made by the two ministers.
- The Forum will act as a platform to exchange information, views and positions on the issues of lifelong guidance.
- The Forum will contribute with suggestions to the development of policies, systems and practices
- It will have the responsibility to promote lifelong guidance through proposals and initiatives.
- The Forum will be involved in European projects and will participate in working groups / networks, etc.
- The Forum will manage the European funds of lifelong guidance.

Objectives of the Forum

- Coordination and communication between services that provide guidance.
- Development of a national system of quality mentoring.
- Increased public access to guidance services.
- The promotion and implementation of research in counseling.
- Quality assurance and evaluation of the services that provide guidance.
- Representation of Cyprus at meetings and working groups at European and international level on lifelong guidance.

We suggest:

- The coordination of all activities to be under the Ministry of Education and Culture.
- The secretarial and other logistical support to be provided by the CCES at the Ministry of Education and Culture.

Cost

- The Costs of the National Forum will be covered by existing funds of the two Ministries – included in the annual budgets.

The Ministers

of Education and Culture & Labour and Social Insurance, who will present the proposal, will suggest to the Cabinet to **approve the establishment and operation of the National Forum for Lifelong Guidance** as it was explained above.

Final Comments

- It will most probably be established by the end of this year 2011
- By the first quarter we will inform all stakeholders about the Development of the National Forum
- Implement all targets through the development of a Shared Strategic Plan



The German National Guidance Forum A bottom-up approach

Greece and Cyprus ELGPN Twinning Activity
Coaching Meeting
28. April 2011, Athens

European context

EU Guidance Resolutions 2004/2008

Member states should consider to

- Develop national and regional mechanisms for co-ordination and co-operation of key stakeholders
- Link this to national lifelong learning and labour market strategies
- Support a partnership policy and local networking of services across sectors
- Develop a common guidance culture (e.g by means of quality assurance)



Dr. Bernhard Jenschke,
National Guidance Forum, Germany



Role of a guidance forum

- 3 main tasks of a guidance forum:
communication – co-operation - co-ordination
- Different ways of establishing a guidance forum - top down or bottom-up or combination of both
- Involvement of all key stakeholders – participation or at least recognition of government
- Regional and local forums important where responsibilities in education and labour lies on these levels
- If guidance provision is segmented co-operation across sectors is indispensable for easy access, effectiveness and greater transparency



Dr. Bernhard Jenschke,
National Guidance Forum, Germany



Development of the German Forum

- Participation in the Joint Actions Programme to create National Guidance Fora (2 projects each with 6 countries)
- 2004 National Guidance conference with concrete recommendations to government – Initial committee
- 2006 Foundation of a German National Forum for Guidance in Education, Career and Employment
- Representation of all stakeholders (government, society, economy, professional associations and experts, counsellor trainers, research, regions)
- Nationwide survey: Mapping of guidance services and development of quality standards



Dr. Bernhard Jenschke,
National Guidance Forum, Germany



Structure of the German forum

- Independent network of most stakeholders
- Mission statement with clear aims
- 2006 registered as association according civil law
- Currently 53 members - professional organizations, practitioners associations, social partners, Federal Training Institute BIBB, Federal Ministry of Labour
- Kuratorium as Advisory Council of representatives of Federal and Länder governments, social partners and research
- raise awareness of public and individual importance of LL guidance and give advice to policy makers
- participation in advisory councils, e.g. Innovation Committee CVET of the Federal Education Ministry (special guidance group) – project Local Learning – Regional Training Centres



Dr. Bernhard Jenschke,
National Guidance Forum, Germany



Aims of National Guidance Forum

Mission and aims of the forum

- common guidance definition
- better transparency and access
- consideration of citizen's needs in guidance provision
- public responsibility for guidance
- co-operation and networking between all actors and providers
- challenge: from political advice to co-ordination of policies
- quality standards and quality assurance
- professionalism– training and further training of counsellors
- support of research on various topics (e.g. impacts of guidance)
- concrete tasks of forum - action plan, workshops and lobbying



Dr. Bernhard Jenschke,
National Guidance Forum, Germany



Work activities and professional outcomes

- White Paper proposing reforms of the guidance system
- Publishing a Newsletter
- Maintaining a webpage with important information on guidance
- Organizing national workshops on quality development
- Project : Open co-ordination process for quality development and professionalism
- Co-operation with Education Ministry and participation in German delegation to ELGPN
- Brochure on the German guidance system
- Wide spread acceptance of the forum 's professional expertise



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Quality development project

Aims

- Catalogue of quality standards for career guidance delivery
- Competence profiles for guidance practitioners with recommendations for training and further training
- Quality development framework to support providers to implement standards in their quality management (guidelines and tools)
- Recommendations for a sustainable national implementation strategy for quality assurance (certification or accreditation)

Working methods: Cooperation with University of Heidelberg

- Open coordination process in 2 Working groups with, providers and practitioners – piloting of results
- Advisory Board: policy makers and stakeholders from federal and regional level



Dr. Bernhard Jenschke,
National Guidance Forum, Germany



Success factors of a forum

- Involve all stakeholders and providers across sectors (education, labour, youth, social sectors)
- Recognition of or clear relationship to government
- Define aims through a common accepted mission
- Consider the professional context and think in steps
- Find allies in politics, science and social society
- Look for sustainable funding (fees, paid projects)
- Work on concrete projects
- Active engagement and leadership



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Thank you very much for your attention

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National Forum for Guidance in Education, Career and Employment

Mission Statement

Adopted by the Initiative for a German National Guidance Forum on 5 December 2006

The National Guidance Forum is an independent network in which all institutions and organisations, relevant research and training institutions for guidance practitioners, governmental authorities and non-governmental agencies dealing with or offering or financing guidance and counselling as well as organisations of guidance users and consumers can collaborate. The Forum deals with guidance provided for individuals in education, vocational training and employment sectors. Psychotherapeutic and business consultancy of companies or organisations do not belong to the areas of activities of the National Forum.

The Forum understands itself as a platform of all stakeholders and actors in this area providing an opportunity for an exchange of knowledge and experience across all institutional sectors, for the discussion of common concerns and projects, and for the achievement of common aims.

Aims of the National Forum

- General aim of the National Forum is to promote the professional delivery of guidance in education, vocational training and employment sectors in Germany, to give stimulation for the (further)development of guidance services which meet the different needs of the users, to draft guidelines for quality and quality assurance, and to influence all partners to accepting and recognising them.
- Based on the EU Council Resolution on guidance throughout life¹ and with reference to the results of the various studies of OECD, EU and the World Bank² the Forum intends to contribute with its activities to the professional development of the guidance field in Germany. The work of the National Forum is guided by the definition of guidance of the European Union³ and takes account of internationally accepted Ethical Standards and Competencies for Practitioners⁴ while respecting the specific profiles of services and institutions in the different sectors.
- The National Forum intends to signal the importance of educational and vocational guidance for the development of skills and competencies of the individual as well as of the human capital of the society. Modern societies and the global economy depend for their well being on the mobilisation of the talents and strengths of their members. Guidance assists in discovering and developing these talents and strengths and thus contributes to the improvement of competitiveness, of economic wealth and social integration.
- The National Forum promotes all developments and activities integral to good and comprehensive guidance

¹ EU Resolution of the Council on Strengthening of Policies, Systems and Practices of Lifelong Guidance, 24.August 2004 (EU Document 928604 EDUC 89 SOC 234)

² CEDEFOP 2004, Synthesis Report by Ronald Sultana

³ "In the context of lifelong learning, guidance refers to a range of activities that enables citizens of any age and at any point in their lives to identify their capacities, competencies and interests, to make educational, training and occupational decisions and to manage their individual life paths in learning, work and other settings in which these capacities and competencies are learned and/or used." (EU Document 928604 EDUC 89 SOC 234)

⁴ IAEVG Ethical Standards 1995; IAEVG Paris Declaration 2001; IAEVG International Competencies 2003

- to enhance autonomous initiative, responsibility of the self and the competence of an individual to manage one's own education and career;
- to promote and increase the educational potential of individuals and their abilities to participate in social life and labour market;
- to maintain and improve the employability of individuals;
- to support citizens in using their basic legal rights according the constitution of the Federal Republic of Germany, especially the right of free development of the individual, of free choice of a career and employment, and to stimulate equal opportunities.

In doing so the active participation of the user in the guidance process is indispensable for the individual success and the social benefit of guidance.

- The National Forum is convinced that it is the task of public policy makers within the governmental education, labour market and social policies to set up an adequate framework for structuring an adequate and high quality guidance service in education, vocational training and employment sectors. Through its activities the Forum intends to support the responsible authorities in the Federation and the Federal States and in other public bodies in achieving these tasks. Thereby the Forum stands for the preservation of plurality and competition within the guidance scene. However, to guarantee transparency of and easy access to guidance services the Forum considers that better networking and co-ordination among actors in the different areas of guidance is indispensable.
- In Germany guidance is in general only offered at points of transitions (at the choice of initial training, education and studies, during unemployment and for decisions to further training). But the implementation of a strategy of lifelong learning needs a continuous and co-ordinated system of guidance services.

Fields of actions of the National Forum are in particular

- to facilitate access to quality guidance for all citizens who are in need of it through transparency and networking of guidance services and their development;
- to undertake advocacy particularly for special groups with special guidance needs (migrants; persons with disabilities; persons who wish to return to employment; older workers; disadvantaged youth with limited training and employment possibilities);
- to develop and promote the use of a range of methods according to different guidance areas and user needs, including ICT, stand alone instruments and self-use material;
- to develop guidelines for quality standards in guidance delivery and for the qualification of guidance personnel and to promote their use to the relevant actors;
- to assure the expectations and needs of the users and consumers and to increase the efficiency and efficacy of meeting their needs through the development of appropriate instruments for regular evaluation and quality control of guidance with special attention to be paid to the needs of the social partners;
- to contribute to the professional development of guidance through initiatives to promote relevant research, training and counsellor education, and through the development of comprehensive systems of information and communication for counsellors across all sectors.

To succeed in these aims the National Forum will elaborate a concrete program of actions in close collaboration with all who are responsible for guidance in governmental policy and in society. In doing so it will use European and international co-operation in the field of guidance for the improvement of guidance in Germany.

(Translated into English by Bernhard Jenschke)

Checklist – How to establish a National Guidance Forum

Initiating process

- Select participants – founding committee

Structure

- bottom up or top down or combination of both – committee, weak cooperation group , legal association, government body, advisory committee of policy makers or practitioners

Aims and policy definition

- Mission – the mission should be elaborated by all possible members and should have the recognition of the government/ or ministries of education, labour , youth social affairs
- Common language/culture

Objectives

- Which kind of concrete objectives help to achieve the more general aims
- Concrete actions or projects to be found in a discussion during the initial process

Methods of work:

- Advice papers – public announcements – comments to legislation – publications of research results/studies workshops – conferences – membership only meetings – glossary – training offers – developmental projects (as quality standards, curricula, internet media, network cooperation, mapping of guidance offers

Organisation

- Membership, appointment – permanent or changing; commitment of members to mission or financial contribution or...
- Statutes – legal entity - Board of Directors – Executive – Staff – Office –
- Possible activities. National guidance conference – target focussed workshops – Analyse and evaluate guidance system -
- Funding

Communication

- Web page – Newsletter – publications – press releases – presence at meetings of other important stakeholders