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Directorate-General for Education and Culture

Education
Lifelong Learning Policy Development

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Implementing Lifelong Learning Strategies in Europe:

**Progress report on the follow-up to
the 2002 Council resolution**

Reply to the Commission questionnaire

HELLAS

Commission Contact Persons:

Mr. Roger O’Keeffe (Roger.O’Keeffe@cec.eu.int)

Mrs. Luce Pepin (Luce.Pepin@cec.eu.int)

General Framework

1. Describe the legislative and financial framework in which lifelong learning strategies are implemented in your country. In the case of regional governments or decentralised decision making, please detail the responsibilities of the different levels of Government in this process.

The efforts of the Hellenic government are focused on the principle of an uninterrupted learning continuum. Lifelong learning strategies have been incorporated and institutionalised in the hellenic educational system according to the *Operational Programme for Education and Initial Training-EPEAEK*) along with the *National Action Plan for Employment* and the *National Action Plan for Social Integration*.

What has been widely recognized is that the longer the initial education, the greater the demand for lifelong learning and the more increased the employability. This leads to the conclusion that unless the formal education system is supported, any further efforts to combat unemployment may prove to be inefficient. It has also been understood that the management cost of training is reduced when the level of general education is high. The Ministries of Education and Labour are working together towards the promotion of new policies linking education, initial and ongoing training. The *General Secretariat for Adult Education and the Institute for Continuing Adult Education* of the Ministry of Education, according to Law 2909, are responsible for the design and implementation of lifelong learning programmes in Greece.

According to the National Action Plan for Employment the objectives until 2006 concerning education and training have to do with improving the quality of education and training so as to respond to contemporary needs as well as strengthening the role of the new technologies. Moreover, modernization of the Public Employment Services, involves the restructuring of the *Employment Agency* (OAED) into four operational Units one of which will focus on the area of Education and Vocational training.

In the implementation of employment policies, the 3rd Community Support Framework (CSF) assumes a critical role. The total cost of human resources-related policies in the 3rd C.S.F., European Social Fund (ESF) and national resources taken altogether, approximately amounts to 2.14 trillion drachmas (about 62.802.600 euros).

A Special Service for Horizontal Monitoring of E.S.F. actions has been established to coordinate actions in all 3rd C.S.F and monitor the progress and effectiveness of the interventions. The establishment of this service facilitates horizontal cooperation with regard to the actions of the E.F.S. aiming at maximizing the various synergies involved and to develop a comprehensive policy for the labour market and for the human resources in the context of the 3rd C.S.F.

A plan of legislative provisions for lifelong learning has been developed, to respond to the need of a coherent strategy towards increasing employability, economic growth, social inclusion and adaptation of skills, also according to the European Commission's Joint Report (on the member states' National Action Plans for Employment).

In the above context, the adoption of lifelong learning strategy involves:

1. Combating structural and functional illiteracy and discouraging students from dropping out of school
2. More participation of the general population in the whole spectrum of the formal education system
3. The introduction and adaptation of the lifelong learning implementation agencies to the broader complex of educational mechanism
4. Setting targets for quantitative and qualitative evaluation of the regulations adopted
5. Linking lifelong learning to the needs of the labour market

The Ministries of Labour and Social Security and the Ministry of National Education and Religious Affairs have designed two Operational Programmes (O.P) in the context of the priorities of E.S.F. and the lifelong learning strategies:

- *The O.P. for Employment and Vocational Training* (Ministry of Labour and Social Security) and
- *The O.P. for Education and Initial Vocational Training* (Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs).

The two Operational Programmes are closely connected, mainly because of the actions for the establishment and the functioning of the new system of connection between initial vocational training and continuing training. They are also connected with the *O.P. for the Development of Information Society* as concerns training and employment. They also respect the seventh Priority Axis of the C.S.F. and especially the areas concerning the "skills of the human potential and promotion of employment".

Provisions for Education, Initial and Ongoing training are also included in the *OP "Competitiveness"* and the *OP "Health and Welfare"*. Many other ministries and organizations, for example the Ministry of Agriculture, offer training courses in special domains.

2. Describe how your government ensures effective co ordination and coherence in policy between different Ministries and departments as far as the definition and implementation of lifelong learning policies are concerned.

The Ministries of Education and Religious Affairs and the Ministry of Labour and Social Security cooperate for the promotion of policies linking initial education and ongoing training. The aim is to create an integrated system which builds complementary links between education, vocational training, access to the labour market, lifelong learning and the continuous vocational improvement and professional development of the labour force. The basic objectives of this overall strategy of lifelong learning are:

1. The provision of basic knowledge and skills for all, at the level of basic school education, through the reformed educational programme, which provides for the development of the pupils' problem-solving skills and teaches them how to learn, so that the school acts as a foundation for lifelong learning.
2. The modernization of university education, at the level of further education and research, through developing closer links between education and production and fostering entrepreneurship.
3. At the level of initial and ongoing vocational education and training, the provision of a range of opportunities for young people, the encouragement of individualised learning, the encouragement of business and organizations to invest on the development of workers' skills and the promotion of high quality and flexibility in the training provided.

In this context, a new bill for *the National System of Connection of Vocational Education and Training with Employment* is being introduced by the Minister of Education and the Minister of Labour, to meet the new needs that have emerged due to the rapid development of education and training systems as well as the transformations in contemporary working settings. The Government has promoted a programme of innovative policies for education and employment, with the two Ministries undertaking its realization. The programme is an outcome of the dialogue with social partners, whose comments and views contributed to the finalization of the new bill. Within the provisions of the bill, a *National Council of Connection of Vocational Education and Training with Employment* is established, in which the Ministers and social partners will participate. The Council is a body that can formulate and coordinate national policies, set quantitative and qualitative targets, regulations and principles, monitor and evaluate procedures. For the first time, a complete and reliable system for researching the needs of the labour market is created, which will generate a basis on which to design strategies for education and training systems, and for lifelong learning in general.

Furthermore, the systems of Secondary Vocational Education, Initial Training and Ongoing Training are coordinated and complemented so that they do not overlap. The system of Technical Vocational Education in the context of secondary education designs programmes aiming at the combination of general knowledge with technical and vocational knowledge and skills. The system of Initial Vocational Training forms a new strategy to serve the needs of any adult, irrespective of age, who wants to make a fresh start in his or her professional life. The system of Ongoing Training in the context of lifelong learning, completes knowledge and skills acquired by other systems of vocational education and training or/and professional experience. An integrated system of accreditation is also promoted, with common principles and common regulations for all systems.

In the framework of the *National System of Connection of Vocational Education and Training with Employment*, there has been established the *Hellenic Organization for Vocational Education and Training* (OEEK), which has the responsibility for all the Institutes for Vocational Training (IEK) (both public and private).

A new measure to foster the desired coordination is the development of a computerized network between the Ministry of Labour and the *Centres for Vocational Training* (K.E.K.). The principle aim is to optimize the monitoring activities of the labour force training activities run by the K.E.K. and of the transition of K.E.K. trainees into employment.

BUILDING-UP PARTNERSHIPS

3. Local level partnerships. Describe measures taken in order to foster local level partnerships in the definition of actions or projects intended to promote lifelong learning for all.

The general objectives of the policies on the regional and local level involve:

Combating unemployment in regions with a particularly high level of unemployment
-Support for local initiatives

More specifically, the *Regional Operational Programmes* (P.E.P.) include training actions as well as actions to promote employment, with the Employment Agency taking the leading role. The P.E.P. measures aim at promoting equal opportunities for all, strengthen local employment initiatives and develop Human Resources, i.e. actions to provide specialised vocational training and to promote employment, which complement the implementation of the P.E.P. priorities.

There exist also additional actions funded from national resources and not incorporated in the P.E.P., concerning training actions implemented by the Employment Agency as well as Development partnerships within the Community initiative *EQUAL*.

A new measure for the success of the lifelong learning strategy is the development of a system for researching the needs for skills in the labour market. The principle agency responsible for the system will be the new *National Employment Observatory / National Labour Institute*. The aim is a dependable system, which will generate a sound basis on which to design strategies for education and training systems, and for lifelong learning in general. The intention is to fill the gaps in our knowledge of educational levels and of participation in formal and informal educational and training schemes and institutions, by constructing an individualised information monitoring system: a) combined utilization of administrative sources with new research and the Labour Force Survey
b) Lifelong Learning Observatory at the new *National Employment Observatory/ National Labour Institute*.

In the transitional stage before the full development of the scheme, a national study is being conducted using a representative sample of 12000 business, covering all the prefectures.

Adult Education Centres (K.E.E.)

Adult Education Centres, established by the General Secretariat for Adult Education and the Institute for Continuing Adult Education, are responsible for the coordination of the Adult Education Programmes within the wider region where they are situated. They promote lifelong learning and they facilitate co-operation between local bodies and organizations. The educational programmes cover the following thematic areas: Literacy, Family literacy, Numeracy, ICTs, Counselling of special groups, management of free time etc.

The K.E.E.s constitute an innovative approach in the context of lifelong learning. Aim of the programmes offered in K.E.E.s is the acquisition of new basic skills but also the up-grading and updating of the already existing ones so that the following will be ensured: better preconditions for the integration of the trainees in the labour market, reduction of social exclusion but also development of active citizenship through the acquisition and up-grading of basic social skills.

The organization of the Adult Learning within the Hellenic General Secretariat for Adult Education is not based on a centralized hierarchy. Rather, it is similar to an actor network, which is open to new methodologies and practices and where learners participate actively. The crucial nodes of adult networks are the local society, the national central supervising body, the General Secretariat for Adult Education and the European Network for Adult Education. These nodes are connected with the educational community, local societies, universities and research institutions.

The new structures-projects created by the GSAE could be regarded as local communities learning centers, which offer different education programmes to Adults. Their aim is to establish new locations-relations of learning in different areas, thus bridging the gap between non-formal, informal and formal learning. Moreover, they aim at a reconceptualisation of the school as a place of community building capacity and sociability.

4. Social partners. Describe how the involvement of social partners in the definition and implementation of lifelong strategy and policies is being ensured.

From the year 2001, the process of the contribution of social partners is being facilitated, allowing them to play a more important role than in the past. Law 2874/2000, introduced incentives for the social partners. Social partners participated in the planning of the "Operational Programme for Employment" and, for the first time, social partners (Confederation of Hellenic Industries, Trade Unions Congress, National Federation of Hellenic Commerce, Hellenic Confederation of Craftsmen, Manufacturers and Merchants, etc) were invited to participate in the process of preparing the National Action Plan for Employment. Social partners also participated in the Human Resources sub-committee.

More specifically, regarding Ongoing Training for the Unemployed, the social partners will participate in the working groups for the identification of the thematic fields for training programmes. The new calls for proposals for ongoing training programmes will be based in part on the conclusions that will be drawn from this process. The social partners share with the government the administration of the *National Centre for Vocational Guidance (EKEP)*.

Moreover, the *Fund for Employment and Vocational Training (LAEK)*, which collects contributions from employers and workers, was set up at the initiative of social partners. The LAEK mainly funds programmes of in house training and programmes to increase the employability of those out of work.

The social partners also make an important contribution to the creation of new structures in cooperation with local government agencies. They also have a valuable contribution in the design of individual programmes for employment, while they offer valuable input to the EQUAL initiative, since most of the EQUAL plans involve social partners in partnership relations.

According to the Guideline 15 "*Adaptability as an element in Lifelong Learning*" of the National Action Plan for Employment, the initiatives taken by the social partners are the following:

- Guidance and encouragement to the members of the Confederation of Hellenic Industries to disseminate the concept and practice of lifelong learning. To this end, and in order to promote the concept, the Confederation has committed itself to providing education each year to its staff, in the form of a pilot scheme.
- A joint proposal will be put forward, in association with the *Organisation for Arbitration and Mediation* for the documentation of special provisions regarding training and lifelong learning included in the company, occupational and sectoral collective agreements.
- The "Manual of Best Practices"- the study recently prepared by the European social partners with the support of the European Commission containing a synopsis of the most successful and original initiatives undertaken by the social partners in the EU member states will be translated and disseminated by the Confederation.
- Care will be taken by the Confederation to promote training of trainers within the context set by the Hellenic Institute for Health and Safety in the Workplace. The instructors will provide training to small businessmen as technical safety officers in their own business.

5. Schools and Universities. Describe specific measures aimed at fostering the participation of schools and universities in lifelong learning programmes and projects.

Programmes in schools include supplementary teaching, available to all students, as well as the operation of 400 admission classes and 550 extra coaching courses for the children of immigrants and Greek repatriates and 125 special preparatory courses for Roma children. At the same time, measures are being taken to promote alternative forms of learning, such as experience-based learning, interdisciplinary curricula and projects and learning connected with the local community. Extra curricula projects at schools concern areas such as: Health Education, Consumer education, theatre and civilization etc. Recently, innovative educational projects, incorporated in the school timetable, are implemented on the thematic areas of science education, maths and ICTs, inter-cultural awareness, self-evaluation etc. Moreover, emphasis has been placed on the reform of the curricula contents and the introduction of new educational material (new books, cd rom etc)

Another objective is to adjust the educational system to the requirements of the information, communication society. The effort is to achieve a greater use in technologies in education by establishing an electronic network link among schools, universities and the academic community, including the training of teachers and the development of digital educational material. These are also used to promote civilization, through documentation and promotion of our cultural heritage.

Concerning environmental education there are 16 Centres for Environmental Education where student groups participate in such programmes and a study on the incorporation of Environmental Education in the school curricula has been completed. 40 seminars have already taken place for teachers of primary and secondary schools.

The Pedagogic Institute of the Ministry of Education is responsible for the Programme for Youth Entrepreneurship, which is implemented in schools in cooperation with local enterprises and the programme "Flexible Zone", with emphasis on cross-thematic curriculum.

As for tertiary education, a new measure adopted recently is the *Lifelong Learning Institutes* at universities. These are intended to broaden, enrich and modernize the knowledge of the adult members of the population. They will operate within institutions of tertiary education, while their purpose is to facilitate the process of lifelong learning. Learning is based on the institution of the Lifelong Learning Programmes, which is organised in a way to ensure the flexibility of the content, so that the skills acquired will meet the economy needs.

In addition, the following interventions have been implemented in the tertiary education:

The Hellenic Open University (HOU)

In the operational framework of HOU there have functioned in the first phase 5 pre-graduate programmes, 9 post-graduate programmes and 3 post-graduate programmes of training. In HOU there are already studying around 5.000 individuals of different ages. Moreover, HOU has accomplished the production of educational material for 1 more pre-graduate programme, 7 post-graduate programmes and 5 post-graduate training programmes.

Extend University Programmes (EUP)

In the context of EUP there have been created 8 departments in Universities and 14 departments in *Technical Education Institutes (TEI)*, which cover a wide range of specialized items of science and technology. In these departments there are around 6.500 students of different ages.

The programmes of Open and Long- distance Education

16 Long Distance Programmes have functioned of 1.445 students. Technical knowledge has been acquired and conclusions have been drawn concerning methodology. Packages of educational material have been produced and tested as to their pedagogical role. These packages can be developed and improved further on the basis of their experience and application.

The Programmes of Supplementary Education

In the framework of the Supplementary Programmes, actions have been developed in Higher Education Institutes of diverse types and models, from the experience of which important conclusions can be drawn as to the formation of the Supplementary Education Programmes. There have been totally developed 19 Programmes of Supplementary Education, which have been attended by around 1.800 individuals.

Generally, tertiary education institutes are autonomous and participate in programmes such as Socrates, and in particular Erasmus, Tempus, Cordis etc.

6. Describe how your Government ensures that everyone has access to the basic skills that should be provided to all citizens as a necessary foundation for any further learning.

Primary and high school (gymnasium) attendance is compulsory in Greece, totally 9 years. Structural illiteracy is no longer a problem, but the same cannot be said for functional illiteracy as well as digital illiteracy. As a result, in the era of the knowledge-based society, the improved quality of education and the strengthening of lifelong learning acquire great importance. Structural and functional illiteracy are being tackled through the development of a series of programmes and actions intended to reduce the drop-out rate from school (which involves 0.5% of primary school children and occurs mainly among the weaker social cultural groups) and to provide an improved level of general education.

The priorities of the Ministry of Education are:

- the prevention of social exclusion through measures that give everyone equal opportunities of initial integration within the educational system, such preventing school failure and leakage through the acquisition of the necessary professional qualifications and

- the fight of social exclusion, via improving the employability of the persons, offering them the necessary educational supplement through a lifelong educational process. Even though the educational policy of the country does not discriminate against the groups of students, there are certain cultural, national or religious minorities that seem to have difficulty in their integration within the educational process. In the context of the actions of this priority, there will be a complete intervention for the support of these students, which aims at their stay in the educational system for as long as possible, at their constantly improving their educational performance and at being incorporated, as soon as possible, within the mainstream of students (mainstreaming).

Within these actions, there are also included several groups of students, each of which is treated with specialized actions. For vulnerable groups of students, which include students of low school performance, students who face learning difficulties, as well as students coming from economically weak families, there are special actions foreseen, which concern the empowerment and the filling-up of their educational knowledge and their personal skills.

In the context of this effort, new educational material has been developed, teachers have been further trained and projects on a limited number of students have been implemented in order for the outcome of the interventions to be assessed. At the same time, the necessary legal framework has been promoted.

The implementation of these measures gives the chance to those students who come from poor families and to the weak students to stay at school longer. At school they will be able, through the guidance of the educational staff to make up for their learning gaps and to come in touch with cognitive items and educational actions that will help them make progress as students, avoiding the risk of dropping out of school and facing social exclusion. There is an effort made, that is, both to prevent and to tackle with low school performance, before the students complete the secondary level of education. If prevention of the educational weaknesses takes place within the first years of the students' education, then intervention will be more effective and school drop-out will be prevented.

Implementation of the aims of the Measure will be realized through actions integrated within the following activities:

All day schools

Research and experience have shown that part of the school failure is due to the pedagogical methods applied and to the time devoted within school to the acquisition of knowledge and skills.

The implementation of "All day schools" is an innovative action for the Greek educational system, which is realized both in pre-school education and also in the primary education. It is also worth mentioning that *All day kindergartens* have also been introduced.

Assessment of the so far realization of the project has shown that the effort has been accepted by teachers and parents and it is not by chance that the All-day school is regarded as a best practice because it has been functioning on a prevention basis against school failure and leakage and because it has facilitated parents (especially mothers) so that they can work or improve their professional qualifications.

Educational aim of the All-day School is the improvement of the school performance of the primary education students in about 3500 selected schools (chosen out of 6.000 state primary schools). The criteria of the school selection reflect areas of low economic income and educational profile of the parents, areas of high indicators of unemployment of parents and high percentage of school failure or drop-out. The students of the aforementioned schools, who belong to socially vulnerable groups (immigrants, multi-member families, etc) are considered to constitute a group which is at high risk of drop-out, and therefore, they are in need of support so that they can tap satisfactorily the educational opportunities provided to them.

The fight against school failure in an All-day School is the result of all the school actions instead of a limited help given to those students of low school performance in the form of fostering teaching or additional teaching support. Consequently, the creation of special classes is not justified. Research has shown that such an action stigmatizes the children, bringing about totally opposite results from those expected.

Second Chance Schools

Facilitating the fight against illiteracy of adults, the General Secretariat for Adult Education implements programmes, through which adults who have dropped out of school will have the opportunity to improve their academic and professional qualifications, so that they can get easily integrated in the labour market or even return to the formal educational system for the continuation of their studies. This action is addressed to people who could not obtain the necessary initial education which would allow them to function effectively in the social space they live in and aims at providing these people with a second chance for the acquisition of a study certificate of the compulsory education with supplementary education as well as with specialized training connected with employability.

This is a flexible and innovative educational programme, which aims at combating the social exclusion of the individuals who lack the qualifications and skills necessary for them to meet the contemporary needs of the labour market. The programme provides individuals of 18 and over who have not completed the nine-year compulsory education with the possibility of obtaining a lower secondary education certificate and of well integrating into social, economic and professional life.

More specifically, the main objectives of the programme are:

- the re-linking of the individuals who have not completed the basic education with the educational procedure
- the creation of networks of cooperation between school, local community, business world and education

The curriculum covers the following:

- development of skills in language, mathematics and communication, with special emphasis on foreign languages and ICTs
- basic training and preparation for professional life in cooperation with the local authorities
- development of skills in the domain of the personal interests of the people being educated, such as, for example, sports, music, theatre, etc.

The programme lasts 18 months.

Today, 5 Second Chance Schools function in Greece (in Peristeri, Menidi, Patra, Thessaloniki and Iraklio), while the total number of the people being educated in these is around 500. More S.C.Ss will be created in the years to come so as to extend in all the regions eventually. Greek S.C.S.s are members of the European Network of Second Chance Schools.

Another example is the Employment Agency's *Alternating Vocational Training programmes*, which are being developed outside the basic training planning wherever a demand arises and consist of 3 phases. The first phase involves theoretical and practical training for those who failed to secure a place in the educational institutions. In the second phase practical experience is acquired in business and in jobs related to the field of training, The third phase involves the acquisition of real work experience. (see also questions 15-16)

7. Describe recent measures aimed at developing ICT skills for the general population or for specific groups of citizens, as a means to improve access to the knowledge society.

The equal participation of Hellas in the Information Society constitutes a major governance priority. In a moment when other countries move rapidly, lack of a wholesome strategy and delay in its implementation will confound/condemn us into the marginal areas of the European and global being.

The document "Information Society in Hellas: Strategy and Actions" is the plan of the State proposal for the development of the Information Society in Hellas within the years to come. Based on the work that has already been accomplished so far, it presents an integrated strategy, defines priorities and specific targets for the future, as well as, initiatives and mechanisms for their implementation.

The 3rd Community Support Framework will constitute a basic instrument towards the implementation of the actions for the Information Society in Hellas within the next years. In this context, the document «Information Society in Hellas: Strategy and Actions» constitutes the basis for the proposal which concerns the Information Society in the Regional Development Plan 2000-2006.

The Information Society is mainly a society of knowledge, and this necessitates the shift of the educational system. Towards the creation of an education adapted in the needs of the 21st century, the state promotes the familiarization of the students with the computers and the multimedia in all the educational levels, while supporting at the same time the in-service training of the teachers. In order to raise awareness of the citizens, there are being currently created information and new technologies laboratories, schools become networked with the global network of Internet, while at the same time the production of digital multimedia teaching material is being supported. Moreover, the infrastructure of the interconnection between the universities and the research institutes is being extended, thus facilitating the participation of the research community in the global search and dissemination of knowledge resources.

So as to ensure the equal participation of all in the Knowledge Society and to improve the position of our country within Europe and the whole world, the state policy on education and research is shaped around the following drifts:

- Teaching of the New Information Technologies as a basic subject, through the use of the new technologies
- Training of the teaching staff.
- Improvement of the infrastructure and the communication network in schools, universities and research institutes.
- Empowerment of the production and dissemination of the educational logistics and of the pedagogic content.
- Empowerment of the research, tapping of the new technologies in the research and dissemination of the scientific results.

Our age demands increased investments in human resources. As it happens with every transitional stage, there come forward opportunities, for all the countries, of improvement and empowerment of their position internationally. Those countries that will prepare, in due time and in the best possible way, their human resources, so as to be enabled to participate actively in a global Information Society, will acquire a significant advantage and will bring the best results. They will constitute the pioneers who will specify and define the priorities for the future.

Our country has to tackle this challenge, by tapping its brilliant heritage in the field of education and science, creating the appropriate conditions for progress and development in the context of a unified Europe. Within this framework, re-assessment and re-defining of our educational system, constitute an urgent need, taking into account the progress and the impact that the new technologies will have on that. Primary priority of the state is to ensure equal learning opportunities for the active and equal participation of all in the digital world.

Teaching of the New Information Technologies as a subject of basic education.

Sensitization of the human resources of the schools, teachers and students, in the use of the new technologies and provision of the necessary basic knowledge and skills to all, constitutes a primary and critical factor for their unobstructed access in the Information Society.

Teaching of the Information Technology in the context of the educational transform

In the context of the educational transform of the Hellenic Ministry of National Education and Religious Affairs, the curricula for High School and Lyceum have been reformed and the teaching of the Information Technology has been introduced in all the grades of the Secondary Education, providing the necessary basic knowledge to the total amount of the students. Inclusion of Primary Education constitutes a target, so that the acquisition of the basic knowledge, skills and competencies in the use of the new technologies can be ensured for the total amount of the future citizens, thus fighting the phenomena of social exclusion. In this way, it is ensured that the majority of the future citizens will be able to use the new technologies in their everyday life.

Teaching through the use of Information and Communication Technologies and of the Audio-visual mediums.

Its aim is the creation of a modern and attractive to its students school. The new technologies can contribute towards the qualitative improvement and re-defining of the learning process, thus transforming the school into a space of search and discovery of knowledge, of exchange of ideas and views and of creative activity. The students need to learn how to learn. The students need to acquire the skill to explore, to search, to discover, to collect and produce information. To be able to administer information, to elaborate it with a critical thought and methodology, to present it in the appropriate form and disseminate it. To learn to co-operate by developing a team spirit and social behaviour, at the same time bringing out their talents.

Emphasis on sensitization and training of the teaching staff.

The new technologies re-define and up-grade the teacher's role in the educational system. They offer the possibility, of not merely transferring dry knowledge to the students, but of being transformed into a significant instructor in their search, elaboration and production of knowledge. Central aim and critical factor of success is the continuous up-dating, training and familiarization of the total amount of the teachers with the use of the new technologies, so that they can use them in the educational process but also in their personal constant up-dating and search of knowledge resources. Aim is that the total amount of teachers to have been trained in the new technologies by 2002. A correspondent effort is also necessitated for the executives of the administration of the schools, as well as the Directorates, central and regional, that exercise and implement policies in the educational field.

In-service training programmes of the teachers

In the context of the in-service training of the teachers, there have been organised lots of seminars whose content is the new technologies (office automatization, multimedia, Internet). Moreover, in every prefecture, in the Curricula Directorates there are special departments operating, whose objective is the support of the schools in the subjects of the information technology.

In the context of the European research programme TRENDS, there has been created in the Pedagogic Institute a training centre for the teachers on a long distance basis. There have already been connected 20 schools, from different areas of the country, with this centre through ISDN. Also the centre is interconnected with 5 other similar centres of European countries.

The Ministry of Macedonia-Thrace is cooperating with the Aristotle University, the University of Macedonia and Dimocriton of Thrace and has implemented a pilot project of teachers' teletraining. The first four tele-classes are already operating in the cities of Florina, Kastoria, Xanthi and Edessa. In addition it provides these services to the schools of the expatriate Greeks in Munich, N. York and Boston.

Long-distance training.

The creation of a permanent mechanism for the provision of training and support of the teachers is necessary, by tapping the potential of long-distance training. Re-enforcement and development of similar training centres through the internet, will especially facilitate the needs for continuing training of the teachers and of the students in distant and hard-to-reach areas of the country as well as of the expatriate Greeks.

The Pedagogic Institute and the Curriculum Directorate of the Ministry of National Education and Religious Affairs contribute to this effort, as well as the Higher Education Institutes and the Institutes of the country, along with the private sector and the local agencies (municipalities, chambers, scientific associations).

8. What recent measures have been taken to promote learning at the workplace?

The objectives set for the period 2000-2006 concerning learning at the workplace concern the following areas:

- Enhancing Vocational training schemes and enriching their content
- Orientation of training and education to the requirements of the new economy
- Strengthening the role of the new technologies and information technology in education and training

The Hellenic Operational Programme for Employment and Vocational Training refers to actions in favour of the unemployed for the start up of new enterprising activities as well as in favour of the self-employed or the employed in enterprises or the Public Sector for the development of their skills.

The actions of this axis are included in four (4) Measures specified in the following:

- Training of self-employed persons in agriculture and of self-employed persons in the secondary and tertiary sector.
- Training of employed in enterprises.
- Training of civil servants as they enter the Public sector, but also for the whole duration of their service, in specialized issues of their competence.
- Special training actions in environment and culture issues, for civil servants.

Policy in the period 2001-2006 focuses on:

1. Horizontal Actions for employees in the public and private sectors in view of:
 - developing both basic ICT skills and advanced ICT skills
 - improving and developing management skills
2. Constantly renewing, improving and adapting employees' skills with special emphasis on facilitating access for small enterprises and the self employed.
3. Educating and training officers in the central Administration and the Local government, with emphasis on:
 - providing continuous training both before and during the period they exercise their duties
 - sectors involving the natural and cultural environment

4. Promoting the inclusion in collective negotiations and agreements between the social partners of provisions and commitments regarding employees' vocational training.

Training actions are targeted towards improving and developing skills that are not exclusively related to enterprises specific needs. Priority is given to the development of a range of basic skills, aimed at capacity building and enhancing adaptability to new, changing conditions in the contemporary working settings.

9. Have specific incentives (financial, fiscal, etc.) been recently introduced to help economic sectors and/or companies (in particular SMEs) to implement lifelong learning programmes and actions in your country?

At the level of initial and ongoing training there is an effort to encourage business and organizations to invest in the development of workers, skills and the promotion of high quality and flexibility in the training schemes.

Enhancing workers' access to increased training opportunities is of vital importance in building a strategy for Lifelong Learning. Emphasis is put on:

- Horizontal actions for developing both ICT skills as well as advanced ICT skills
- Facilitating access for small firms and the self-employed
- Educating and training officers in the Public Administration and the Local Government
- Promoting agreements and commitments in collective negotiations regarding vocational training opportunities for the employees.

The development of a modern business spirit and the promotion of an enterprise culture is a substantial factor which, from the standpoint of entrepreneurs, influences the improvement of the business environment. The entrepreneurial spirit must be promoted bearing in mind the latest and expected economic and technological developments, via increasing awareness and via the activation and participation of all the economic and social partners. Businessmen of the future, particularly the young, must be endowed with a differentiated culture of dynamic information and knowledge management and the development of enterprise.

According to the *Operational Programme Competitiveness "Measure 2.8: Encouragement of business initiatives in various population groups"*, the main objective of the Measure is to broaden the business base by supporting population groups that make a low contribution to business activity, with the aim of activating business initiatives.

The action relates to support for young people up to 35 years of age , women and people with special needs for the initiation of business activity in the sectors of processing and the provision of services directly related to processing. Within the scope of this intervention finance will be provided, among other things, for integrated business plans, including, study and advisory services, transfer of technical knowledge and training activities.

More specifically, the National Employment Agency (OAED) is carrying out programmes for training of self- employed young people, providing them with financial support.

10. Describe recent measures taken to support the role of learning facilitators (teachers, trainers, adult educators, guidance workers, etc.) and their adaptation to the needs resulting from the implementation of lifelong learning strategies and policies

The wide change of the curricula and the introduction of new educational approaches render the training of the educational staff quite necessary. Further training of the teachers of the secondary and technical education will include almost all the types of further training (supplementary, introductory, in-school, or of medium duration training) and will be either compulsory, or optional (within or beyond school hours). One of the aims of this activity is also the development of alternative types of further training focusing on the long distance further training. This approach will allow the tapping of the new technology (the aim is training of all teachers in multi media tools and Internet use), decrease in the long-run of the cost of implementation, limitation of the problems of disfunction spotted in schools and increase of further training of teachers.

It is estimated that by the end of 2006, 20.000 primary level teachers, 50.000 secondary level teachers, 4.000 technical education teachers and around 5.000 educational officers will have been further trained, so that they will be in position to both encourage the up-dating of the teaching approaches and be more effective in matters of administration and economic management. Thematology of the teachers' training, planning and organization of its implementation, will be defined by the appropriate new Organization of Further Training.

There is a trend towards the *modernisation of training services* in order to improve the quality of training and to ensure a better match of the labour force skills to the jobs available. Within this context, inter alia, provision has been made for the establishment of an Instructors' and Evaluators' Register and a plan is being drawn towards a system of monitoring and evaluation of the implemented training programmes. More specifically, the priority axis 3 of the OP for Employment and Vocational training: "Promotion and improvement of vocational training and consultative services" includes:

- Accreditation and continuous evaluation / monitoring of training structures and agencies
- Training and accreditation of trainers
- Establishment and keeping of a trainers register
- Establishment of standardized training programmes
- Accreditation of training programmes

In this context, the *Hellenic Organization for Vocational Education and Training* (OEEK) has undertaken the responsibility for the training of teachers of the Institutes for Vocational Training (IEK).

Towards the awareness- raising and further training (initial and continuing) of the trainers in Adult Education the following training actions contribute the most:

- 1 Training of the Second Chance Schools' Teachers (initial and continuing, on an annual basis)
- 2 Training of the trainers of the programmes in the Adults Education Centres: seminars of initial and continuing training of the teachers
- 3 Training of the teachers of the nine-year compulsory education that participate in "MELINA - Education and Culture" Programme (initial and continuing)
- 4 Training of the trainers of the Programmes for Immigrants, Repatriated and Refugees, and of the Programmes for Prisoners, Ex-offenders, Ex-addicts and Young People Threatened by Social Exclusion.

It is also worth mentioning that the Hellenic Open University as well many Pedagogic Departments of the Universities provide Adult Education programmes at a post-graduate level while Annual Programmes for further education of teachers have been launched at various universities around the country.(see also question 7 about training of teachers on the use of ICTs)

11. Has a target for investment in human resources been established by your Government and, in the affirmative, what is that target? What progress has been achieved so far as regards the achievement of this target?

The role of human resources is more and more designated as a major factor of survival and progress of the societies. The new environment demands that the educational system provide young people with education, thus enabling them to meet the new social needs, so as to be able to get integrated unobstructedly within the active life and workplace, using, tapping and expanding their knowledge in the context of lifelong learning. The current social needs due to their nature place emphasis on knowledge, adaptability and inventiveness. They demand development of skills, which have to do with communication, co-operation, prompt response to challenges, undertaking of initiatives, choice management. The educational system, basic structural element of formation of the future human potential, needs to be transformed gradually so as to meet the new needs and challenges. In Greece the Operational Programme for Education and Initial Vocational Training moves along with significant actions of institutional character in the domain of the human resource development. The priorities and the measures that are being developed are in relation with the general political development of human resources, the National Action plan for Employment, the educational policy and the directions of the European Union. They aim at:

- The improvement of the education provided and the capabilities of the young people for getting integrated within the social and productive web/network
- The promotion of the equality of opportunities
- The fight against social exclusion
- The sensitization on environmental matters
- The development and promotion of gender equality

Special emphasis is placed on:

- The quality of the planned interventions
- The continuous assessment of the actions
- The quality of the results
- Their connections with the needs and the perspectives of the labour market

The national policy for the development of the human resources and specifically in relation with employability and vocational training amounts to the following dominant aims:

- a) Prevention of the unemployment through personalised interventions
- b) Promotion of the opportunities of access to the labour market
- c) Empowerment and up-grading of effectiveness and the quality of the interventions in the labour market
- d) Promotion of entrepreneurship and adaptability of the human resources
- e) Improvement of the access and participation of women in the labour market

The government is addressing these challenges via, inter alia, the promotion of measures and policies of a structural nature (education, improvement of skills of the labour force, development of entrepreneurship, improvement of the legislative framework regulating the labour market etc).

The policies on this field have so far achieved:

- The implementation of a development agenda capable of strengthening infrastructures, productivity and both public and private sector investment.
- At the sectoral level, the investment programmes for Information Society, electronic commerce, telecommunications and small and medium-sized enterprises.
- Approximately 2.1 trillion drachmas from the 3rd CSF are to be invested in the labour force, which is the largest human-resources related investment the country has ever experienced.
- The introduction of a broad range of legislative measures in the field of employment

12. Has new funding been accorded to, or existing funding re-directed towards, new priority sectors (e.g. pre-school learning, non-formal and informal learning, adult education, etc.)?

Funding concerning lifelong learning and adult education in Greece has increased. The priority areas for funding within the OP for Education and Initial Training are the following:

- 1: Promotion of the equality of the opportunities of access in the labour market for all and especially for those at risk of social exclusion.
- 2: Promotion and improvement of education and of the initial vocational training in the context of lifelong learning.
- 3: Development and improvement of adaptability and entrepreneurship of the young
- 4: Improvement of the access of the women in the labour market.
- 5: Creation and re-inforcement of the infrastructure for the implementation.

The biggest part of the funding has gone to Priority 2, which aims at the development and improvement of the education and the vocational training in the context of a wholesome system of lifelong learning, which will allow the continuous renewal of knowledge, of the skills and of the potential for adaptation of the younger and the adults, by improving their employability.

More specifically, funding places emphasis on the reform of the curricula aiming at the closer connection of the education with employability and the creation of special programmes of both the initial vocational education and training and of the Higher Education, which will be directed towards the perspectives of demands for specialised human resources, according to the directions of the National Action Plan for Employment and will increase the potential for employability of the newcomers in the labour market .

Great part of the funding has been directed also towards improving access to basic skills (All Day Schools, Second Chance Schools), Adult Education, the quality of the education provided, based on the up-grading of the educational work, which will be brought about through the continuous training of the teachers, the evaluation of all the parameters of the educational work and the re-inforcement of the infrastructure and the teaching mediums.

13. Describe initiatives undertaken to stimulate private investment in education (e.g. public-private partnerships).

14. Give examples of private-public partnerships (PPP) in the field of lifelong education and training (e.g. joint funding to develop infrastructure and/or human resources).

(See question 4. More specifically, the role of the Vocational Training Fund -LAEK).

Public- private partnerships are planned within the framework of the sub-programme "*adaptability*" in the Community Initiative EQUAL, with the aim to support the adaptability of companies and their employees to structural economic changes and to the use of new technologies. Development Partnerships will implement basic actions aiming at supporting enterprises in promoting collaborations. The sub-programme aims at promoting lifelong learning and it is hoped that the learning culture will become part of the enterprises and that new technology in training will be exploited in an innovative way.

In the context of the funding of the Institutes for Vocational Training (IEK), the actions of the public IEK in cooperation with Non-Government organisations are also funded. In this context, a study will be elaborated on:

1. The way the private sector contributes to the registration of the needs of the labour market and the defining of the correspondent training and the practical exercise of the trainees and the tapping of those graduating from IEK by the enterprises.

2. The assumption of Initial Vocational Training programmes by private agencies in the context of EPEAEK and especially the defining of the terms and preconditions of the ways of their accreditation and the criteria of their participation.

Under the auspice of the Ministry of National Education and the General Secretariat for Adult Education, the Institute for Continuing Adult Education (IDEKE) was established in 1985 as Legal Entity under the provisions of the Law for Private Enterprises and is supervised by the General Secretariat for Adult Education. Its main scope is to design and execute education programs, educational material, organisation of educational distance learning systems, implementation of research and specialised pilot projects, and the introduction of new technologies in education.

The Organization of Teachers Training (OEPEK) is also a Legal Entity under the provisions of the Law for Private Enterprises since 2002 and is supervised by the Ministry of National Education.

A good example of private-public partnership in the field of lifelong education and training in Greece is the implementation of the YOUTHSTART-ECO-ORPHEUS Programme in the area of Evros. The regional authorities have established a formal territorial partnership to support the creation of new jobs. This cooperation involves regional authorities, municipalities, development agencies, young people's associations, the General Secretariat for Youth, the National Manpower Organisation and regional training institutions. A guidance and counselling system was set up through the creation of youth centres, which are directly managed by young people. The centres have also developed positive relationships with employers, thus producing a wide range of work placement options. 15 participants have acquired qualifications in organic farming and distribution. As a result of their work experience and entrepreneurship training, another 15 participants will set up their own business. Members of the association of lawyers and the chamber of commerce are acting as mentors to the participants, helping them in the business creation process. In the same context moves the project YOUTHSTART-DIKTYO in many areas of Greece (eg. Lamia, Larissa etc.).

FACILITATING ACCESS TO LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

15. Describe measures taken to improve access to learning, by removing the most important barriers to learning (age, social barriers, geographical barriers, motivation, etc.).

Co-funded by the European Social Fund and the European Fund for Regional Development, the Operational Programme for Education and Initial Training (EPEAEK) has incorporated lifelong Learning in the educational system combining european and national strategies for the development of human resources, the National Action Plan for Employment and the National Action Plan against Social Exclusion. One of the main targets of the EPEAEK is preventing and dealing with social exclusion by promoting equality for all and access to education for all.

More specifically, in the framework of EPEAEK the following measures have been taken

- Study on setting the Areas of Educational Priority to remove geographical barriers and on registering the special educational needs according to each area.
- Planning and implementation of programmes of supplementary teaching.
- Expanding the programmes of Supplementary Teaching in 127 school units aiming at combating school failure. Emphasis has been placed on primary schools and students of low performance.
- Programme of Additional Teaching Support
- Implementation of the "All Day School".
- Review of the teaching methods towards more individualized and participatory methods.

Expanding tertiary education

82 new departments have been established to cover new innovative domains. Emphasis has been placed on the periphery in order to respond to the regional needs for more access to tertiary education .

Institutes for Vocational Training (IEK)

A network of 135 Institutes for Vocational Training (IEK) has been established under the Organization for Education and Vocational Training (OEEK) covering all the country. On the whole 101.259 students were accepted and 45.337 have graduated. The specialties taught have been raised to 145 and 45.337 scholarships have been granted.

Other measures

Hellenic Open University

Second Chance Schools

Adult Education Centers

(See previous sections)

Programme of Parents' Education

The programme aims at familiarizing parents with psychological and pedagogical issues, in order for them to cope with:

- the psychological, social, mental and material needs of their children (of school age or adolescents)
- the children's efforts to meet Primary School and High School demands
- their communication with school and their co-operation with teachers
- the more effective provision of help to their children
- their communication with children

The project is being implemented in cooperation with Parents' Associations, Directorates of Primary and Secondary Education, agencies of Local Authorities, etc. The scientific responsibility of the programme is placed upon the Pedagogical Department of Primary Education of the University of Athens.

(see also question 6)

(For ageing population see question 18.)

16. Groups at special risk of exclusion. Describe measures addressed at promoting lifelong learning amongst groups at special risk of exclusion from the knowledge-based society (migrants, people living outside urban centres or in disadvantaged neighbourhoods, single parent women, etc).

According to the actions of EPEAEK for the promotion of equal opportunities for all in the labour market and especially those in danger of social exclusion the following priorities have been set:

- Improvement of conditions of inclusion of special groups in the educational system
- Programs of inclusion of people with cultural and language differences
- Second Chance Schools- Adult Education
- Early and systematic detection of children with learning and speech difficulties
- Improvement of education of people with special needs
- Combating school failure with alternative ways of teaching and learning

The target is the prevention of social exclusion and the provision of equal chances of access so as to combat failure and disappointment and promote employability through the lifelong learning process.

In the context of the actions there will be realised a wholesome intervention for the support of the students through cultural and religious particularities, with an aim at their stay in the educational system, constantly improving their educational performance and getting integrated within the mainstream of the students as early as possible. Moreover, cross-cultural schools have been set up, which guarantee equality of opportunity to every student in the country, while the cutting-edge approaches to teaching and learning utilised in these schools have a positive knock-on effect on the Greek educational system as a whole. The educators in these schools receive special training, and are selected on the basis of their knowledge on the subject of cross-cultural education and teaching Greek as a second or foreign language.

The Institute for Expatriate's Education and Cross-cultural Education (IPODE) is one of the organizations supervised by the Ministry of Education aiming at the educational incorporation of immigrant and repatriate students as well as students in danger of exclusion from the educational system.

For the vulnerable groups of students, which include students of low school performance, students who face learning difficulties, as well as students who come from economically weak families, there are foreseen certain actions of empowerment and filling-up of their educational knowledge and of their personal skills.

In addition, there are actions included through which those adults who have dropped out of school and have not completed the basic education will have the chance to improve their academic and professional qualifications, so that they can much easier enter the labour market or return to the formal educational system for the continuation of their studies. More specifically some of the actions for adult education organised by the General Secretariat for Adult Education are targeted at specific groups :

Programmes for Immigrants – Repatriated – Refugees.

They aim at immigrants' social inclusion via actions for:

- the learning of the Greek language and the development of social skills
- vocational (re)training
- the sensitization of the public and various agencies to issues related to immigrants in order for prejudices and stereotypes to be removed or whittled away
- the carrying out of studies and research
- the publication of educational material
- the training of trainers.

Programmes for ROMA

They aim at the social inclusion of ROMA via:

- EU projects which are being implemented at a regional level (e.g. Multi – Roma Action – Hellas)
- literacy projects for adults
- projects of vocational training
- production of audiovisual material for sensitization
- training of trainers working on projects of vocational training for ROMA
- conferences on issues related to ROMA
- publication of books, booklets and leaflets

*Programmes for Prisoners, Ex-offenders, Ex-addicts and Young People
Threatened by Social Exclusion*

It is a programme of education and provision of support to the aforementioned groups. They aim at the decrease in consequences of imprisonment and at the (re)integration of these groups into society via:

- education and training programmes
- provision of support and counseling
- organization of cultural activities and creation of theatre and music teams
- seminars of education and sensitization for employees working in agencies of correctional care and for guardians in Courts for Under-age People
- training of trainers working on projects of education, training and employment
- investigation of the possibilities of ex-offenders' re-integration into free labour market
- investigation and registration of the educational and professional career of ex-offenders and of under-age offenders

Moreover, the General Secretariat for Adult Education coordinates the Cooperation Network for the Support of Young People, which comprises 11 bodies (public and non governmental organizations) which are concerned with issues related to young people.

Tackling gender inequality in education and training

According to the national policies aiming at supporting women, the following actions have been taken:

- The operation of "Information and Counselling Units for Women" (Research Center for Equal Opportunities-KETHI) has been extended to more towns.
- Education and training in new technologies for women has been improved through actions funded by the LAEK.
- Educational interventions for women in areas such as e-commerce, management etc are planned funded by LAEK.
- The implementation of the Community initiative EQUAL is due to strengthen women participation in Education and Training.
- New measures are taken to reconcile work and family life. To this end particular importance is attached to the continuous improvement of child-care and elderly-care facilities.
- Single parent families: training actions within the Framework of the OP "combating exclusion from the Labour Market"

Drift of Priority 4 of EPEAEK aims at the empowerment of the educational preparation of the women, so that their professional career can be boosted and they can overcome the obstacles of access to the labour market. Moreover, a series of actions, in synergy with actions of other Activities, aim at the reduction of the reliance of the women on their families' responsibilities. In the Drift of Priority 4 there are included Measures whose actions concern the improvement of access and of the position of the women in the labour market. Also actions concerning the gender equality are included in all the drifts of the Operational Programme. The target of "improving women's access to the labour market" is realised through actions, which aim at:

1. the re-enforcement of women's participation in the technical and vocational education (TEE, IEK, TEI, Polytechnic Schools) by offering special motivation and by tapping the actions of career guidance,
- 2 the emancipation of the woman from her family obligations, which tie her up as to the working hours, the search for work or even her further education,
- 3 the introduction of the gender equality in the school education,
- 4 the increase of the entrepreneurship of the women and the fight against the women's hesitation to undertake higher administrative duties etc..

All the priority areas for combating social exclusion are set in the National Action Plan for Social Integration (Ministries of Labour, Education, Internal Affairs, Finance), the National Action plan for Employment (Ministry of Labour) and the OP for Education and Initial Training (EPEAEK- Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs).

All the priority areas for combating social exclusion are set in the National Action Plan against Social Exclusion (Ministries of Labour, Education, Internal Affairs, Finance), the National Action plan for Employment (Ministry of Labour) and the OP for Education and Initial Training (EPEAEK- Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs).

The Centre for Research for Equality Issues (KETHI) is a legal entity established in Athens since 1994 with departments in Thessaloniki, Patras, Herakleion and Volos under the auspice and funding of the General Secretariat of Equal Opportunities by the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Public Administration. The Centre for Research for Equality Issues conducts research in gender equality issues for the promotion of equal opportunities for women in the fields of political, economic and social life.

The operational programme “Competitiveness” includes projects for the “Support of Women’s Entrepreneurship.” The program is coordinated by the Hellenic Organization of Small and Medium Sized Enterprises and Handicraft S.A. (EOMMEX S.A.) which is a non-profit public Organization operating under the auspices of the Ministry of Development.

Concerning the students with disabilities, there are actions foreseen for their smooth integration within the educational system, as well as for their professional evolution. According to Law 2817/ 2000, education for people with special needs is provided at the level of basic, secondary and vocational education for the development of their special skills and their integration to mainstream education as well as for their professional training. Towards these tasks there are special provisions of relevant equipment and diagnostic procedures of identification and evaluation of special educational needs including pedagogical and psychological support, counselling, transport arrangements

Municipalities also organise training programmes for people with special needs such as the National Multidynamic Centre for Telework and Mass Media education in the City of Athens. Other programmes at city level, include the INTEGRA pilot actions for the integration of long term unemployed as well as for the social integration of homeless people. Furthermore, the 3rd ESF (2000-2006) supports the operational programme “Competitiveness” includes projects for the “Support of the entrepreneurship for people with special needs.” This program is also coordinated by the Hellenic Organization of Small and Medium Sized Enterprises and Handicraft S.A. (EOMMEX S.A.).

17. Youth. What specific measures address improving the participation in lifelong learning of young people, not covered by the formal systems of education and training?

Within the EPEAEK tasks several actions concern youth such as the following:

Pillar 3: Development and promotion of the entrepreneurship and adaptability of youth.

More specifically:

Action 3.1.1: Support of innovative ideas and applications for students of IEK and at initial vocational training.

Action 3.1.2: Implementation of programmes and courses of entrepreneurship in higher education.

Action 3.1.3: Invention of innovative products or services by students of higher education. Among other skills which are developed, there is special attention to the modernization of administrative procedures, development of entrepreneurship and human capital in research and technologies.

The supported education programmes will contribute to the effectiveness and flexibility of the participating youth for their entrepreneurship.

The General Secretariat for Youth conducts programmes for educational information for the youth such as projects in environmental education, education for young immigrants, music and cultural activities, students' competitions, and annual events. It also disseminates information bulletins on higher education abroad, assistance to students' mobility, at national and European level.

The Government is already implementing a complete programme of actions for Youth named: "Youth under 30". A collaborative committee of 6 Ministries and 14 members of the Government coordinated by the General Secretariat for Youth has the responsibility of this programme.

This programme constitutes a holistic policy concerning Youth and an actual national plan. Among other tasks, the following specific tasks concerning the youth are supported:

- Complementary actions for the development of programmes on health and consumer education
- Development and implementation of programmes on environmental education
- A pilot programme for 500 libraries equipment
- Support of schools' partnerships and students associations, and
- Renovation of school buildings.

The GSAE programmes in Adult Education Centres (K.E.E.s), Second Chance Schools as well as the OEEK/OAED institutes for vocational training have the youth as main target group improving their participation in lifelong learning.

18. Ageing population. Have specific measures been taken addressed at improving the participation in lifelong learning for mature workers and citizens who have not had the benefits of post-compulsory education and who need to upgrade their competencies to remain in the workforce, or senior citizens preparing for retirement?

District services for adult education (NELE) exist in most districts organize educational courses at local level for adults including senior citizens in several subjects of literacy, information technologies, professional training and counselling.

Municipalities organize course cycles of "Open Academic Lectures" for the general public of adults with no age limit. Lectures are academic volunteers on a term basis. Courses include general scientific subjects such as popular medicine, biology, psychology, history and arts.

19. How are guidance and counselling services being developed to meet the needs of specific target groups and to raise awareness of the benefits of learning?

A) The National Centre for Guidance Orientation (EKEP) provides technical and scientific support for the application of a national policy for Guidance Orientation under the auspice of the Ministry of National Education and the Ministry of Labour. It also coordinates actions and services of guidance and counselling at school level and develops communication between public and private services of guidance and counselling through the creation of a National Network for Information and Communication and through collaboration with relevant centres and guidance institutes and organizations.

EKEP supports a lifelong learning policy for guidance and counselling for the effective connection of education with the labour market. It ensures the dissemination of the importance of lifelong learning aiming at the development of the guidance and counselling services at a national level.

More specifically its actions incorporate the following: a) Individual guidance for organizations or citizens about education, training and employment. b) Information for guidance and counselling services and information about learning opportunities and continuing education in Greece and Europe. c) Promotion and participation in collaboration with other guidance institutes in Europe as a member of the EUROGUIDANCE network of 61 National Centres for guidance and counselling in 31 European countries. d) Organizing of seminars and conferences on education and training with reference to the promotion of guidance and counselling.

B) The Vocational Orientation Institution (V.O.) under the auspice of the National Employment Agency (OAED) has also an educational orientation that refers to the employability of manpower. The Directorate of V.O. is the main service of the organization, which consists of four departments and is responsible for carrying out this task in collaboration with the Local Services of the Organization which deliver Vocational Orientation services.

The role of the Directorate of V.O. is to define the strategies of implementation and to coordinate the local V.O. Services. In addition to this, it provides the V.O. Services with the necessary technical means for the delivery of V.O. and secures the quality of the services offered. As long as the local V.O. Services are concerned, they do not expand their activities to all Regions of the country for the time being.

Perceptibly, there are three kinds of Services, where someone can get help relatively with the V.O.:

a) V.O. and Information Services are the most advanced V.O. Units. Such Services exist in Athens, Thessaloniki and Hraklio. b) The V.O. Offices which correspond in regional level. The personnel of these services is specialised and is consisted by psychologists, V.O. Councillors and V.O. Supervisors. c) The Employment Services where V.O. is offered in local level, as well as in the new Employment Promotion Centres.(delivering Vocational and Training Orientation plus job-seeking techniques.).

The V.O. Services of O.A.E.D. aim at helping people to make the proper professional choices in individual level which mainly refers to young people between 14 - 18 years old and stimulates them to visit with their own initiation the Services. There, they can meet specialized V.O. counsellors, who can help them to know themselves, in this way discovering their own abilities and inclination and simultaneously to get used to the world of work. In this way, young people can maturely and with their own responsibility choose a profession. This service is also offered to the adults who are unemployed and they want to be re-orientated (that means to choose a new profession).

The professional and educational information is an important facilitation for young people who don't have the appropriate knowledge or experience of this subject. This is the reason why public information about the professions and educational training and employment opportunities, is a very important activity of the V.O. A lot of young people either alone or in organized groups (e.g.school classes) visit the V.O. Services of O.A.E.D. especially for this reason.

Moreover, the active V.O., is addressed at young people and especially to those who leave school after having completed 9 years of obligatory education or after having served in the army is also addressed to young people and adults without any Vocational Training, to young people who dropped out from school but would like to acquire vocational skills, to Long-term unemployed, to young and adults who need further training or updating of their vocational qualifications. It is also addressed to young people and adults, ex-drug addicts, handicapped people ex-prisoners or persons of Geek origin who are repatriating. The active V.O. is an innovative programme as well, which refers once a year, to young people 15-18 years old.

It aims at giving them brief information about groups of professions, to help them to discover their potential and to choose their profession, knowing which are the advantages and the disadvantages of their choice.

The GSAE /IDEKE Centres for Adult Education and KEK organize promotion and informative events annually to raise awareness of their programmes and courses for adults. These events are included and publicised in Mass Media such as the Press, Radio, T.V. spots, open days and meetings, conferences, etc.

V. CREATING A LEARNING CULTURE

20. Describe measures taken to promote positive perceptions of learning and raising awareness of its entitlements and benefits, at pre-school, school and higher education levels, as well as in youth organisations and among the adult population.

“All day schools” in primary education have been expanded to nationwide level. “reinforcing teaching” is offered at School level to classes in secondary education where students need extra teaching in specific subjects. For this purpose additional teachers are employed for supportive teaching in secondary and upper secondary level schools, as well as for the olympic education program in primary schools and high schools.

In youth organisations information on education and training is provided by the General Secretariat for Youth concerning matters of educational exchanging programs, study visits and fora for young people around Europe. The National Institute for Youth also provides educational programmes for extra-curricular activities for young people.

Among the adult population the General Secretariat for Adult Education (GSAE) helps adults to develop competencies which are necessary for them to meet the increasing demands in socio-economic activity domains. Since 2001 the GSAE is supervising the Institute for Continuing Adult Education (IDEKE), which provides technological and scientific support to the programmes of the G.S.A.E. and is involved in actions promoting lifelong learning which are addressed to specific groups.

The GSAE domains of action include:

- Literacies and completion of basic education
- Development of basic skills and new basic skills
- Updating of skills
- Vocational training
- Training of teachers and trainers
- Counseling support to special groups (unemployed, immigrants, ROMA, prisoners and ex-offenders, ex-addicts, young people threatened by social exclusion and leaders of one-parent families).
- Education and training in social and cultural domains.
- Production of educational and audiovisual material.
- Organization of conferences, seminars, one-day sessions and various events.
- Educational voluntary programme for the encounter of emergency situations.

Furthermore, for the promotion of positive perceptions of learning at regional level, the GSAE and IDEKE participates in the European cooperation and networking projects such as the following:

A) The “Regions for Lifelong learning” (R3L-Promotor) project which mobilises regional/local actors, authorities, organisations and associations to a committed and effective involvement, utilisation and support for lifelong learning and learning region promotion. R3L functions as an essential local and regional key driver for revitalisation and development of individuals and communities to enable them to move into a future learning society and to make the European area of lifelong learning a reality. This project promotes and ensures the presence of eight learning regions in seven EU-member countries (BE, DE, ES, FI, GR, SE, UK), as well as five additional learning regions in accession countries (CZ, HU, LI, PO, RU).

B) The GSAE/ IDEKE are also participating in the R3L Initiative ReLL (Regional Network to Develop Lifelong Learning Strategies) for the region of South –East Attica. The intervention model of this project consists of a diagnostic phase based on mapping at regional level, professional competences, intercompany training, improvement action with enterprises as well as intercompany benchmarking of the results.

C) “Towards European Learning Society” (NewTELS) a project that runs national seminars in 16 countries, establishes three broad expertise groups on at least nine matters of key importance in Lifelong Learning and Adult Education, creates a unique Audit Tool to provide input for Adult Education leaders and survey the extent to which Lifelong Learning is incorporated into Adult Education by European municipalities.

D) The GSAE is the coordinator for the Council of Europe initiative “Education for Democratic Citizenship” (EDC) which encompasses various means of learning democratic citizenship, ranging from civic instruction to all the other ways in which participation in society can be learned, practised and encouraged. It is part of out-of-school, formal and informal education. It is a central concern of schools but also of NGOs, communities and neighbourhoods, local authorities and the media. While giving priority to children and young people, education for democratic citizenship contributes to education in general and consequently involves all age groups throughout their lives

At higher education level, a new establishment of Institutes for Lifelong learning (IDE) in Universities is underway in collaboration with Universities for specialized training and continuous education in the form of interdisciplinary modules and courses at graduate level.

21. How do the formal systems of education and training take account of the life-wide perspective and, in particular, how are entry, progression and recognition requirements in the formal sector (e.g. mechanisms for accreditation of prior learning, methodologies and systems for assessment and validation of competence) being adapted accordingly?

Adaptation of prior learning is envisaged by specific committees which examine accreditation and validation of competencies by a collaboration between the Ministries of National Education and Religious Affairs, the Organization for Vocational Education and Training (OEEK), the Labour Ministry and the National Centre for Accreditation and Professional Certification (EKEPIS).

Furthermore, the Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs created the Section of Recognition of Professional Qualifications for the EU directive 89/48. The Organization for Vocational education and training (OEEK) has also established the Directorate of professional rights and degree equivalence according to the EU Directive 95/51.

VI. STRIVING FOR EXCELLENCE

22. Describe the general framework for improving quality of lifelong learning provision and, in particular, for evaluating lifelong learning strategies, programs and projects in your country?

According to article 4 of the law on the “Organization of regional services of primary and secondary education, evaluation of school work and teachers, teachers’ training and other decisions” issued in 2002, evaluation of the school work is under the supervision of the Centre for Education Research (KEE) and the Pedagogic Institute (PI).

For evaluating lifelong learning strategies, programmes and projects for lifelong learning provision the Ministry of National Education and the Ministries of Interior and Economy have established a specialized Service of ESF Programmes at the Ministry of National Education which is structured in 5 units as following:

- Unit A1: Implementation and Evaluation of ESF programmes.
- Unit A2: Implementation and Evaluation of ETPA programmes.
- Unit B: Support of PEP Actions by the Ministry of National Education.
- Unit Γ: Organization and Support.
- Unit Δ: Special Account.

23. Is there a mechanism to regularly review these strategies and to assess their relevance, effectiveness and synergy with other Government policies and initiatives (lifelong learning and employment, innovation, research and development, etc.)?

At the Ministry of National Education the Special Service for the Implementation of ESF Programmes under the supervision of the Unified Administrative Section of the European Support Framework. This Service evaluates the relevant actions and reports to the responsible authorities according to Law 2860/2000.

The "Information Society Programme" in Greece has a section on the quality of life with a working programme for the improvement of the human research potential and the socio-economic knowledge base. This programme supports training and mobility of researches and enhances access to research infrastructures for the promotion of scientific and technological excellence. In addition, this horizontal programme has an important coordination role within the Fifth Framework Programme, related to socio-economic research and research infrastructures.

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The General Secretariat for Adult Education: <http://www.gsae.edu.gr>

The General Secretariat for Youth: <http://www.neagenia.gr>

The Hellenic Organization of Small and Medium Sized Enterprises and Handicraft S.A. (EOMMEX S.A.) <http://www.eommex.gr>

The National Action Plan for Employment: http://www.ypergka.gr/index_gr.html

The Operational Programme for Employment and Vocational Training
http://www.ypergka.gr/index_gr.html

The Operational Programme for Education and Initial Vocational Training:
<http://www.epeaek.gr>

The Operational Programme "Competitiveness": <http://www.antonistotita.gr>

The Operational Programme "Information Society": <http://www.infosociety.gr>

The Ministry of National Education and Religious Affairs: <http://www.ypepth.gr>
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