

Papers on

➤ **New trends in professional formation and updating in occupations associated with adult learning**



A GRUNDTVIG PROJECT

**"NEW LEARNING PATHWAYS FOR
ADULTS"**

**«New trends in professional formation and
updating in occupations associated with
adult learning»**

Adult Education in Greece is undergoing a lot of changes. The national strategy for adult education (attached) is being transformed due to LLL dimension.

Although the policies, strategies and actions have been described and released since April 2001 by the **General Secretariat for Adult Education (GSAE)**, state agency, under the supervision of the Ministry of Education, and the main provider of adult education, the implementation process is very slow.

So far has been announced an expansion of the Second Chance Schools, 10 more totally financed by our national budget, to operate from September 2003.

Within the strategy “Learning Cities”, two nets, each comprising 4 municipalities, have been established in Attiki (area around Athens). Indeed, only the decision has been made.

Some vocational training courses and Greek language courses for Immigrants, Refugees and Repatriated Greeks operated in its Center for Vocational Training. (ESF 75%, Greek national budget 25%)

Some pilot programmes in “Parents’ Counseling” were implemented, in cooperation with municipalities.

Next month (May 2003), within the framework of the Greek presidency, the GSAE organizes a Conference on Adult Education for active citizenship in the Learning Society.

In relation to the **professional formation in occupations associated with Adult Learning** nothing has been done so far, although there is provision for the establishment of a **National Center for Professional Training**, teaching methods and materials, and development of an evaluation system for training the trainers and other employees working in the Adult Education Sector.

On the other hand, there is an expansion of Continuing Vocational Training (golden age for the providers, namely the Centers for Vocational Training-KEK). The high unemployment rates (still 11%), the promotion of employability, and the money from the ESF (75%)- added to that 25% from our national budget, explains this expansion. In relation to the **professional formation of trainers in Vocational Training there are some developments.** (*see below*)

- ***Who are the professionals***

In Greece, “professionalisation” of the adult education staff is needed. Occupations associated with adult learning are: teachers/ trainers/ “adult educators” (term not established), project evaluators, management staff, administrative staff, counseling staff.

Their profiles differ but their roles are not always distinct.

Quite often teachers/ trainers are involved in curriculum development, teaching materials development or counseling.

New occupations associated with adult learning: authors of teaching materials (either face to face or distance teaching/learning).

Statistical evidence of the number of professionals involved in adult education, unfortunately, does not exist, neither in the public nor in the private sector. It has to be mentioned that most of them are not exclusively occupied in adult education e.g. most of the teachers/ trainers teach in Schools full time and part time are teaching adults.

The ways individuals may enter an occupation associated with adult learning vary. Sometimes posts are been advertised, candidates submit applications and are selected either by giving an interview or sitting a written exam.

Quite often the criteria applied / employed are not meritocratic, qualitative. Acquaintances, belonging in a particular party etc. play an important role, as there are not many people having special training in occupations associated with adult learning and the criteria are very vague, not specific. There is not any job description so far.

In Vocational Training Centers (KEK), for the first time this year (2003) trainers are selected from the Register kept by **E.KE.PIS- National Center for Certification**, an Institution under the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs.

Candidates submit an application together with copies of their degrees and certificates and also with documents about their teaching/ training experience (special consideration is taken of the experience in teaching adults, in teaching immigrants/ refugees; knowledge of foreign languages and ICT skills are also considered). Qualifications are evaluated and, when approved, candidates are certified and registered.

It has to be mentioned that most of the certified teachers/ trainers, are teachers in public or private Schools. The majority of them not having extra training regarding adult teaching. But most of them having experience in teaching adults.

- ***Roles and occupational profiles***

As it was mentioned before, there are not established generally accepted occupational profiles for those involved in adult education.

E.KE.PIS –The National Center for Certification has informed us that has charged the **HOU – Hellenic Open University** Professor Demetrios Vergides to study and define the profile of the adult trainer/ educator, as well as the profile of the trainer of trainers (But what about the profiles of those occupying other posts such managers, administrators, counselors, etc.?)

Please note. This positive development started from the Vocational Training Sector. Vocational Training is ... trendy. More money is assigned to (see above)

- ***Policy measures***

The **GSAE-General Secretariat for Adult Education** is responsible for policies regarding occupations associated with adult learning.

Policy measures are described in the framework for Adult Education, released by the GSAE in 2001. More specific:

-Curriculum development for training the educators/ trainers

-Long distance Learning Center for adult trainers

-Certification of adult educators/ trainers

-Evaluation system for curriculum and trainers

-Training of executives

But until today (April 2003) nothing has been implemented, although it was anticipated “to have certified an adequate number of adult trainers by the end of 2002”.

Also **E.KE.PIS – the National Center for Certification** is responsible for policies with regard to professionals in Vocational Training.

As it was mentioned earlier, E.KE.PIS is taking concrete measures to increase the professionalism of teachers and trainers: Identifying the profile of adult educators/trainers and, according to the recommendations of Professor Vergides’ study, a training curriculum for trainers, teaching materials, and an evaluation system will be developed and implemented.

This task will be undertaken by a Developmental Partnership comprising the following:

- Hellenic Open University (H.O.U.)
- “Mentor kek”- Center for Vocational Training
- “INE-GESEE kek”- Institute of Labor – General Confederation of the Greek Workers, Center for Vocational Training
- Association of Greek banks

E.KE.PIS also is intending to train the evaluators of VET curricula / courses and of the trainers.

- ***Initial training***

In none of the Greek Universities exists Adult Education Department. Only the Open University is offering a post graduate course in adult education.

People responsible for adult learning are mainly University graduates: The majority has a degree in humanities or social sciences (language teachers, psychologists, sociologists, social workers, etc). Most of them are working in the formal education system, without having any additional training in adult teaching. They have acquired, with the years, experience in teaching and supporting adults.

Their initial training took place in state Universities or Technological Educational Institutes-TEI (recently TEI became equivalent to Universities) and lasted 4 or 3 years. It was free of charge (in Greece there are not recognized private Universities- this is against our constitution)

Only a small number of teachers/ trainers who may have studied abroad have done initial training in adult education.

A small number of adult teachers have done post graduate studies in adult education, either abroad or in Greece, offered by the Open University -distance learning; students pay fees.

The GSAE’s- National Center for Professional Training is NOT in operation yet.

There are short programmes/ seminars to train trainers, before entering adult education, organized by the adult education providers, either state, private or NGOs.

- ***Continuing professional development***

The GSAE has not realized its relevant policies yet (as it has already been mentioned)

The National Center for Certification-E.KE.PIS is organizing now the above mentioned training of trainers. More specifically: At this stage 270 certified trainers have been selected to undertake a course of 300 hours duration (75 hours face to face learning and 225 hours long distance learning). These 270 trained trainers will undertake the training of the certified trainers in the future. All expenses are covered by E.KE.PIS (Ministry of Labor).

The trainers of trainers must have the qualifications of trainers mentioned above (see *who are the professionals*) and in addition postgraduate degree in Education or/ and training the trainers seminar in new pedagogies over 100 hours duration or/ and professional experience over 3 years with socially excluded groups. Also the candidate's professional experience in the field of long distance training or/ and in the field of adult education is been taken under consideration.

The Open University offers a course/ thematic Unit on adult education, leading to post graduate Diploma/ Certificate of postgraduate further Education

Aim of the course: The acquisition of knowledge and the development of skills, so that the certificate holders become able to design, organize, manage and evaluate long-life learning programmes, as well as to teach subjects of their specialty, using modern pedagogies and methods.

Conditions for entering the course. Accepted are holders of University or Technological Educational Institute degree; the knowledge of a foreign language is necessary. English language, proved by appropriate documents, is more preferable. It will help substantially the attendance of the course.

Basic objectives. The student to:

Know the theoretical framework of adult education and the peculiarities in different scientific fields.

Understand its social and economic function

Know globally the methodology of programmes' implementation (either nation wide programmes or programmes addressed to certain groups)

Be able to design and organize these programmes

Be able to train adults

Be able to study/ examine matters related to adult education and to evaluate adult education programmes.

Course Structure

1. Principles of adult learning and factors of adult education
2. Social and economic function of adult education
3. Design, organization and evaluation of courses/ programmes
4. Teaching methodologies and techniques appropriate for adult learners
5. Aspects of the existing situation of adult education in Greece

Note : One needs 12 hours of study per week for this Thematic Unit

Other adult education providers organize seminars on specific topics for their trainers (sensitization on the needs of special social groups, on methodologies suitable to adult learners etc)

The government is investing in human resources e.g annual programmes of further education for school teachers, launched at various Universities

- ***Information and communication technologies***

With the introduction of ICTs as a medium for learning, existing teachers and trainers have to learn both, how to use new technologies themselves and how to apply new pedagogies for the use of this medium

Most of adult trainers, especially the younger ones, have ICT skills. New technologies are used in teaching.

The **GSAE** is designing a **Long Distance Learning Center** for adult trainers; another important action to be taken is the training of executives in networking skills, so that all partners involved in adult education procedures can support the actions at local level

E.KE.PIS has certified trainers with ICT skills and others who have not these skills developed. These are going to be trained/ or to be asked to acquire them (at their own expenses) and produce relevant evidence in order to be reaccredited

Various providers (e.g KEK) organize courses for their staff (administrators, managers, trainers, counselors) leading to **ECDL -European Computer Driving License**

As it was mentioned earlier, a considerable number of adult teachers come from the pool of School teachers. Digital illiteracy was addressed by the **Ministry of Education** which organized and realized an in- service training programme in ICT skills for all teachers (60.000), primary and secondary (money from the Community Support Framework). The duration was 48 hours, leading to a certification examination. It was offered free of charge; more over each participant received 300 euro for buying a computer. Participants who passed the exam and got the certificate got another 300 euro.

We do not know how many teachers attended and finally how many got the certificate.

- ***Qualifications, status and recognition***

“Professions” (?) associated with adult learning are open to people with diverse backgrounds:

Until now, formal qualifications do not differ/ are the same, held by teachers in the formal education system, with very few exceptions, teachers who have done a course in adult education at the Hellenic Open University or abroad.

As for their status, with few exceptions, is rather the same; they enjoy the same status as School teachers. We speak more or less about the same persons. In the Vocational Training Sector there are some trainers coming from other sectors outside education (e.g. industry).

Their pay is almost the same with other teachers and trainers, depending on their qualifications. There are some differences depending on the provider. In Vocational Training Centers, the pay used to be higher, but this year KEKs agreed to reduce the pay. They “cornered the market”

Even though underpaid, they decide to work (how well?). This is not their only occupation. Their work in adult education and training sector is complementary. Most of them do not work exclusively as adult educators.

To be mentioned that some adult educators (University Professors, experts in certain fields-e.g doctors) **offer their work voluntarily**. Usually when the provider is an Association or Local Authority

- ***Research***

Research is lacking. There is not much research carried out in the field of Adult Education and in particular into the professional development of occupations associated with adult learning.

The Open University considers scientific research among its very first and main objectives. In the field of Adult Education it is expected to have research data soon, as the University started offering post graduate courses leading to degrees (Master, Ph.D)

The **GSAE** is now establishing/ developing a **Resources and Documentation Center**, which will be connected with all Local Multi Centers for Adult Education, all over Greece. The Local Centers (established but not operating yet) will collect and elaborate quantitative and qualitative data.

Under the GSAE exists and operates already the **I.D.EK.E- Institute for Continuing Adult Education** (legal entity of the private law). One of I.D.EK.E’s main objectives is research, but so far no research concerning professional development has taken place.

Athens, 12 April 2003
Panayota Ghika

Framework for Adult Education in Greece

Policies and Initiatives

(as released by the General Secretariat for Adult Education)

Principles

The National strategy for adult education in Greece is being transformed due to LLL dimension which penetrates and redesigns the aims of formal non formal and informal education.

The lifelong learning, as it is interpreted in Greece, aims to empower all citizens in social participation and enhance their social mobility. The promotion of employability is being interconnected with active citizenship and thus forms the basis for all aspects of adult education such as certification, access, evaluation, teaching methodologies and educational programmes. Within this framework adult education aims to support citizens in accessing, selecting- evaluating, and creating new information.

Strategies

For the time period 2002-2006 national strategy involves the development of a comprehensive system for Adult Education which will combine the different aspects of education already existing in this domain or will be created in the future. The main aims of the system are:

- ⇒ Offering multiple possibilities for learning by creating the adequate learning environments
- ⇒ Creating of alternative educational pathways for the reintroduction of adults in educational system
- ⇒ Reinforcing the employability of adult population and particular target groups
- ⇒ Combating social exclusion and discrimination
- ⇒ Contributing to a social, cultural, economic and sustainable development

The action plan involves areas of action concerning:

- ✓ National Adult Education Curricula and production of educational materials
- ✓ Training and certification of adult trainers
- ✓ Creation of infrastructure and networks
- ✓ Evaluation system
- ✓ Certification system

Educational Programmes initiatives:

- **Second Chance schools programme (see case study)**
- **Programmes of multiple learning opportunities for adults:**
 - ✓ Basic skills in communication (language and calculating skills)
 - ✓ New basic skills (communication in social and labor environment)
 - ✓ New technologies applications
 - ✓ Entrepreneurship
 - ✓ Partnership
 - ✓ Empowerment of particular target groups (rom, prisoners)
 - ✓ Expansion of cultural activities
 - ✓ Support of the third age
 - ✓ Training of volunteers for encountering emergency situations
 - ✓ Basic skills for immigrants

These programmes are addressed to:

- ✓ General adult population
- ✓ Early school leavers
- ✓ Specific target groups

These programmes are provided in modular form and correspond to three levels (0, 1st, 2nd) of communication skills.

Local Multi-Centers for Adult Education

These centers are established recently and perform several coordinating operations such as:

- ✓ Designing educational activities
- ✓ Promoting the access to lifelong learning programmes
- ✓ Providing guidance and counseling to adults
- ✓ Creating partnerships with local authorities, enterprises, labor unions, universities
- ✓ Implementing and monitoring internal evaluation procedures in cooperation with trainees and trainers
- ✓ Collecting and elaborating quantitative and qualitative data

All centers are connected to the documentation center and the General Secretariat for Adult Education. They are members of local networks between municipal authorities, labor unions and enterprises. These networks are activated towards goals such as:

- Ascertainment of learning needs

- Counseling and support through portfolios
- Cooperation for educational programmes tailored to adults needs
- Diagnostic evaluation of skills and competencies

(**Note:** Multi-Centers do not operate yet: it is anticipated that ten (10) centers will start functioning at the beginning of 2003)

Curricula, training of trainers

A national curriculum framework for basic skills has been elaborated in collaboration to Universities and Pedagogical Institute. This framework offers the opportunity for validation and certification of skills as it is built in levels corresponding to the national framework for school education.

By the end of 2002 an adequate number of certified adult trainers will be available in regions where the Multi-Centers operate. The trainers are mainly university graduates (language- maths teachers, psychologists, sociologists) who have received a long period of training for teaching and supporting adults.

A long distance learning center for adult trainers is designed and it will start operating by the end of the year.

Another important action is the training of executives in networking skills so that all partners involved in adult education procedures can support the actions at local level.

(**Note:** only the National Curriculum Framework has been developed so far)

Evaluation system

A framework for the external evaluation of adult education has been structured according to indicators for each area of concern (administration, teaching methodologies, learning achievements, accountability, dissemination procedures). All procedures are supported by quantitative data analysis methods.

By the end of 2002 a parallel framework of internal- self evaluation is to be applied in all Multi-Centers so that all partners (centers' employees, trainers, facilitators) involved are able to improve and promote the quality of services in their domain.(Multi-Centers' operation, see above)

Dissemination, delivery

A large scale action – local and central- concerning seminars and events aiming at raising awareness of general population, educators, local authorities and social partners had been launched since the beginning of 2000. The seminars are publicized in cooperation with local mass media (press, tv and radio).



“ERGON K.E.K”
Center for Vocational Training

A web site for lifelong learning has been operating where all events, initiatives and programmes implemented are presented. The site also serves as a forum for the submission of opinions and proposals related to various areas of lifelong learning.(under construction).