



**European Approaches
to Inter-Generational
Lifelong Learning**

**Country Report
GREECE
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EAGLE COUNTRY REPORT

GREECE

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1 THE NATIONAL CONTEXT

In southern Europe, the Greek peninsula projects into the Mediterranean Sea from south of the Balkans. The mountainous, mostly no arable land of the Greek peninsula is deeply indented by long sea inlets and surrounded by over 2,000 islands, of which only 169 are inhabited; these include Crete , Myconos, Lesbos, Chios, Samos, Kerkira (Corfu), Rhodes etc. Greece's neighbours in south-eastern Europe are Albania, FYROM, and Bulgaria on the north borders and Turkey on the east. Greece has an area of 131,940 square kilometres.

According to the 2001 Census (May 2001), Greece has a population of 10.939 million with 5.055 million males and 5.204 million females. The birth rate in 2003 stood 9.5/1,000 inhabitants (14.5/1,000 in 1981). At the same time the mortality rate increased slightly from 8.9/1,000 inhabitants in 1981 to 9.6/1,000 inhabitants in 2003.

Age	1971	2001
Below 15 years	25.36%	15.18%
15-64 years	63.72%	68.12
Over 65 years	10.91%	16.71%
TOTAL POPULATION	100.00%	100.00%

Table 1: Population Distribution in Greece 1971 & 2001 (in %)

Almost 2/3 of Greeks live in urban areas. Greece's largest cities in 2005 were: Athens (3,190,336), Thessaloniki (980,419), Patra (216,592), Iraklion (188,650) and Volos (151,591). Most of the Greeks are Greek Orthodox in religion (98%), Moslems 1%, other 1%.

The massive immigration flow into the country took place in the late 1980's with the entrance of refugees of Greek origins (Pontioi) as well as of foreign refugees and immigrants who came mainly from ex- Communist Eastern European countries and especially after the fall of the Albanian regime in the early 1990's as well as from Asia and Africa. Most of the immigrants came illegally into the country and in 1997 the legalization process started. 371.641 migrants have asked for their legalization, 62% are Albanians and the rest comes mainly from Eastern European countries. However, a large number of illegal migrants estimated up to 650,000 remain in the country.

Traditionally an agriculture-based economy, Greece has had limited success in diversifying its economic base. However, industry has replaced agriculture as the leading source of income; agriculture accounts for slightly over 15% of the gross national product, while manufacturing accounts for some 20%. The principal manufactures are processed food and tobacco, textiles, chemicals, metal products, construction materials, and refined petroleum. The country's main industrial centres are Athens, Thessaloniki, Piraeus, Patra, and Iraklion. Tourism, a part of the growing service sector, provides a vital source of revenue. Additionally, Greece has a large merchant fleet, and its chief ports are Piraeus and Thessaloniki. There is a significant fishing industry in coastal areas.

Around half of the older workers work in agriculture, either as self employed or as unpaid family workers. Of the remaining older people still in employment, a sizeable part works in

traditional and declining sectors (e.g., traditional manufacturing), as a manual workers and technicians in physically demanding jobs.

The country has few large units of production (in terms of the number of employees). 64, 6% of the employed in Greece work in establishments employing less than 10 people, while in the Community only 36.1% of the employed work in such small firms. 7.5% of employees in Greece work in firms employing over 250 employees compared to the Community average of 16.5%. A major difference with other EU countries is the very high level of self-employment where it constitutes an especially large share of employment (43.8%) for older workers, compared to the Community average (16.6%). The international debate on new forms of work organisation has developed within the context primarily of larger firms (having more differentiated and institutionalised structures of firm governance and human resource management) and the data on the small size of Greek businesses may indicate one of the reasons why the development of new forms of work organisation has been little debated.

2 EFFECTS OF AGEING

There are a number of factors affecting the ageing of the population in Greece. The continuous decrease in birth rates and the preservation of the fertility rate below the population replacement rate as well as the increase of life expectancy, are speeding up the increase in the numbers of older people (above 65) for the total population. Greece did not experience a 'baby boom' phenomenon in contrast to other countries. This was mainly due to the large outward migration from Greece in the 1950's – 1970's, which has contributed to the acceleration of the ageing population. Also the return of a number of these immigrants since the 1980s back to Greece compounded the phenomenon of ageing population.

According to the ageing indicator, Greece occupies one of the highest ratios between aged and young people, with 114 older people corresponding to 100 young people 0-14 years old. The EU average was 80-100 older people corresponding for 100 young people. Demographic ageing appears to affect Greece to a larger extent than most other EU states. Taking 2000 as a base year, the old age dependency ratio (i.e., population aged 65 and over as a percentage of the working-age population, 15-64) it is estimated at 25.6 and is projected to climb to 29.2 by 2010. In comparison, the equivalent estimates for EU-15 are 24 and 27 respectively.

As it is seen in the table below, the working age population is set to decrease to 56.41% by 2050. The situation is particularly alarming since the rise of individuals' aged 65 and over not only does it put a strain on the pension system but also on the health system. According to many studies, it is mostly elderly individuals who widely use the latter, putting, thus, more pressure on its economic sustainability.

Age	2005	2010	2020	2030	2040	2050
Below 15 years	14.41%	14.05%	13.48%	12.18%	11.92%	12.13%
15-64 years	67.53%	67.42%	66.17%	64.47%	60.25%	56.41%
Over 65 years	18.06%	18.52%	20.35%	23.34%	27.83%	31.46%
TOTAL POPULATION	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

Table 2: Population Distribution in Greece 2005 – 2050 (in %)

Source: National Statistics Service projections, 2005, Intermediate version

The issue of 'ageing' has entered in the Greek political and academic debate primarily as a 'threat' to the viability of the pension system, to be remedied either by raising the employment levels of women and the young people, or legalising illegal immigrants or raising the statutory retirement age limits (restricting the amount of pensions is not considered as a viable option, as pensions are rather low in Greece).

On the other hand, relevant studies that have been carried out have shown ageing people in the Greek labour market to be at a distinct disadvantage. Fewer employment opportunities for ageing people and the difficulties involved in reintegrating them into the labour market are the main problems of the employment situation of the older people in Greece. Two main reasons are considered as the most important for the low employment rate of older workers in the country and their early exit from the labour market: the general attitudes favouring

early retirement and ageism - the negative attitude towards ageing people which creates a serious problem in the society. Moreover, the low educational level and the weakening working capacity of ageing workers are mentioned as other factors. Further, the combination of low incomes has a negative impact on their physical and mental health, thus accelerating their biological decline. In addition, older people have more trouble understanding changes in the production process. As a result, they experience difficulties involving the need to adapt to different working models, which cast doubt on or overturn old equilibrium in the labour market.

3 ADULT LEARNING POSSIBILITIES

According to the National strategy report on social protection and social inclusion (2006-2008), the Ministry of Employment and Social Protection and the Ministry of National Education and Religious Affairs created an institutional framework for *Life Long Learning* (Law 3369/2005) whose enforcement is being advanced. This legal provision aims at systematizing the existing education and training frameworks in order to provide knowledge for life. Important efforts are made to fight against adults' illiteracy, to cover shortages or new needs in basic skills for people who dropped out of school early. This is achieved mainly through *Second Chance Schools* and *Adults' Training Centres* expanding throughout the country (Adults' training General Secretariat). The latter expand by being adapted to the needs of individuals with cultural or linguistic particularities yielding encouraging results.

Such groups' participation (e.g. gypsies, repatriated, Muslims, immigrants etc) increased by over 150% in the period 2004-05 compared to the period 2003-04).

For the upcoming period the objective is to gradually raise participation levels from current low levels to reach Community average, in order for individuals to be equipped with skills and knowledge required to deal with labour market uncertainties.

Priority shall be given on:

- Promoting Lifelong Learning methods in the enterprises,
- Drawing up programs, appropriately adapted to self-employed people needs and elaborating flexible programs adapted to vulnerable social groups' capabilities and needs. The relevant regulation makes provision for a Second Chance Schools and one Adults' Training Centres to operate in each county already within 2006.
- On developing life long learning through the Hellenic Open University, cross department programs of supplementary education, through Life Long Learning and Distance Learning Institutes (with the use of new technologies). Emphasis will be attached on expanding higher education to cover specific sectors having the highest demand in the labour market

General Secretariat for Adult Education

The *General Secretariat for Adult Education* (www.gsae.edu.gr) within then Ministry of National Education and Religious Affairs is the executive, public body responsible for adult education and training. Its mission is to design, coordinate and support measures which relate to supplementation of basic education and life-long learning and training both for the adult workforce of Greece and for persons threatened with social exclusion. Its main fields of action relate to basic education supplementation programmes and illiteracy programmes, continuing training courses, measures to combat exclusion from the labour market and Community Initiatives financed by the European Union (European Social Fund), social - cultural education courses, continuing training and repeat education measures for the adult workforce.

The General Secretariat for Adult Education has developed a website (www.lifelonglearning.gr) about Lifelong Learning prospects in Greece. Interested parties can participate in on-line debate using the site. Moreover, the General Secretariat for Adult Education is the information centre for the *ELECTRA* portal for adult education and life-long

learning in Europe. Information provided by the centre relates to six European countries - France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Scotland/Great Britain and Sweden- while its range is expected to be extended soon to cover other E.U. countries

The Institute of Continuing Education (IDEKE) also within the Ministry of Education is concerned with lifelong learning for adults, open and distance learning and training for adults to enter the labour market, though no priority or focus is given to the education of older people.

The *Ministry of Education* through the *Central Further Education Committee (KELE)* also known as *Laiki Epimorfosi* funds the *Prefectural Adult Education Committees (NELE)* throughout the country and these run courses which older people can attend. However since they are voluntary and not discrete e.g. gymnastics classes, art classes, there is no data on the numbers attending, their age profile etc. The popularity of courses depends on the effort given by each NELE to publicising and reaching out to local citizens in each area. No data is available on trends, however the increasing numbers of people aged 50+ with higher levels of education suggests that there is an overall trend for greater participation in educational courses of all kinds. Data on the funding of the NELEs is not available.

All of the above forms of learning are offered in a formal setting.

Second Chance Schools

The institution of *Second Chance Schools* has been developed as an effort to combat the social exclusion of adults who have not finished basic education and do not have the necessary qualifications and skills to adapt to modern vocational requirements. Young people aged between 18 and 30 who have dropped out of school are now able to complete their compulsory 9-year education.

Special, intensive primary and lower secondary school courses are run at Second Chance Schools and graduates are issued with a leaving certificate equivalent to that of the Primary and Lower Secondary School leaving certificate. This entitles them to register with the Unified Lyceum, Technical Vocational Educational Institutes and post-gymnasium IEK and to attend certain vocational training courses.

Today there are 5 Second Chance Schools in operation, in Athens (Peristeri, Menidi), Patra, Thessaloniki and Heraklion-Crete, and in the future there are plans to establish other similar schools. Second Chance Schools are established following a recommendation from the Institute of Continuing Adult Education (IDEKE) in collaboration with the competent local government authorities in order to ensure the proper conditions for running such schools.

Initial Vocational Training (ISCED Level 4)

Initial training is supervised by the Ministry of National Education and Religious Affairs. Initial training is provided chiefly by the *Vocational Training Institutes (IEKs)*. The public and private IEKs operate in the framework of the National System of Vocational Education and Training (ESEEK) which was established in 1992 under the aegis of the Organisation for Vocational Education and Training (OEEK). There are also some IEKs under the supervision of other ministries and agencies, such as the Greek Manpower Employment Organisation (OAED). The objective of the IEKs is to provide all types of vocational training, both initial and advanced, and to ensure that the students obtain the necessary qualifications by imparting scientific, technical, vocational and practical knowledge and by cultivating skills with a

view to facilitating their occupational integration and their adaptation to the changing needs of the production process.

Students at public IEKs must pay fees for each semester. Scholarships are available in certain circumstances. Besides, students have the opportunity to participate in subsidised practical exercises. The fees charged by the private IEKs vary and are adjusted each year in accordance with the regulations in force.

Before taking the qualifying examinations for the vocational training certificate, graduates of public and private IEKs may attend an optional six-month practical training course which is considered as a recognised period of service for obtaining a licence to exercise an occupation. This training is provided by the public sector or by private firms and is supervised by a coordinator. The Vocational Training Diploma is recognised both in Greece and in the other E.U. countries and is a prerequisite for obtaining a licence to exercise a profession in the relevant specialisations.

Continuing Vocational Training

Continuing vocational training includes all vocational training and further training activities organised outside the formal initial vocational training and education system. The purpose of continuing vocational training is to maintain, refresh, upgrade and modernise the job skills of persons seeking employment and to help workers interested in career development. Continuing vocational training in Greece is provided by a plethora of bodies which focus on specific population groups and are supervised by various Ministries. The existing institutional framework focuses on four categories:

- Training of the unemployed
- Training of private-sector workers
- Training of wider public sector workers
- Training of socially disadvantaged groups

In Greece, the public and private sector agencies which organise continuing vocational training programmes are the *Vocational Training Centres (KEKs)*. The vocational training programmes are short-term and the number of hours of tuition depends on the subject, the content of the curriculum and the group to whom the programme is addressed. The KEKs provide continuing vocational training services and are accredited by the National Centre for the Accreditation of Vocational Training Structures and Accompanying Support Services (EKEPIS). The KEKs organise informal continuing training programmes with a view to combining training and employment; programmes to combat social exclusion for the unemployed, the self-employed and special groups; and in-house training programmes.

Private Colleges

Colleges are private training institutions for Lyceum leavers; courses last from one to four years, depending on the level of training they provide. These colleges are not subject to educational or other supervision by the Ministry of National Education and Religious Affairs. Some of these colleges collaborate with foreign Universities with a view to conferring university-level degrees. However, these degrees are not recognised by the Inter-University Centre for the Recognition of Foreign Qualifications (DIKATSA) as equivalent to those conferred by the Greek public universities and Technical Educational Institutes, because under the Greek

Constitution it is not permitted to establish or operate private Universities or private Technological Educational Institutes.

Distance Learning (Teleducation)

The *Hellenic Open University (H.O.U.)* is established in Patras and has been in operation since 1998. It is a legal entity of public law, an independent and self-governed institute among the 20 higher, state owned universities in Greece. The H.O.U. offers undergraduate and postgraduate courses, vocational training or post-training on the basis of distance learning. Certification takes place at five (5) different levels ranging from post-secondary education to doctoral degrees. In particular, the following academic titles are offered: Bachelors, Masters, PhDs, in addition to certificates of education, post-graduate training and attendance to modules. Thematic units (modules) are an innovation and a basic functional unit at H.O.U. A thematic unit covers a specific undergraduate or postgraduate level of education with subjects corresponding to three semesters of Higher Education Institutes (A.E.I.). H.O.U. students are handed over the materials per each thematic unit (in printed, audio-visual and/or electronic form) for home study. During the academic year students communicate with the teaching staff and occasionally meet in person for Group Consultation Meetings with the instructors. Priority is given to individuals over 23 years of age. In addition, people with special needs pursuing undergraduate studies and T.E.I. teaching staff pursuing postgraduate studies are allocated 3% and 10% of vacancies available, respectively. H.O.U. students are subject to fees and the costs of the teaching materials (study-guides).

Adult education modules based on the Distance Learning model are available at the *National & Kapodistrian University of Athens*. These modules were designed in response to increased education requirements in various job environments. They spin around 5 thematic units in the field of finance and last from 5 to 9 months. Upon successful completion of the academic requirements, adult students receive a Certificate of Studies. In particular, the University awards Certificates of Training and Certificates of Specialisation, each reflecting specific programme choices by the students. Eligible candidates to the University's adult education programme are University and T.E.I. graduates and secondary education graduates with previous experience. Candidates are selected on the following criteria: Grade Point Average of Degree or Graduation Diploma (i.e. Apolyterio) and priority with respect to application filed. Candidates are required to have access to a personal computer and the Internet. Fees vary with respect to the thematic unit selected.

4 POLICY ENVIRONMENT

National Action Plan against Poverty & Social Exclusion 2007

Four policy priorities are being proposed for National Action Plan for Social Inclusion (ESDEN) 2006-2008. To select these priorities the following were taken into account:

- Social situation assessment on a national level;
- The priorities fixed in the National Action Plan for Social Inclusion 2005-2006, so as to preserve policy continuity;
- Progress evaluation by the European Commission on the challenges Greece is facing (d) policy priorities of the National Reforms Program 2005-2008 and of the National Strategic Reference Framework (NSRF) 2007-2013;
- Consultations conclusions in the process of drawing up the report.

The four priorities are the following:

Priority 1: Boosting of employment, particularly for women, young people, long term unemployed and vulnerable population groups

Boosting decent employment for all citizens constitutes the solid foundation for social inclusion and social protection. In this context, total employment increase combined with a constant dwindling of unemployment remains the basic employment policy priorities in our country. Activities have been planned to achieve this purpose (see National Reforms Program 2005-08). According to indicators, results are generally encouraging with employment rate being steadily on the rise at 60,1% in 2005 against 59,4% in 2004, and unemployment rate dropping to 9,8% in 2005, against 10,5% in 2004. However, as it is mentioned in the National Reforms Program 2006, intensification and policies' fast implementation is called for so as to fulfil the main objective of 64,1% employment rate by 2010.

Household Characteristics	%
Households without dependent children and no working members	29.2
Households without dependent children and with at least one working member	13.6
Households with dependent children and no working members	51.9
Households with dependent children and with all of its members working	10.6

Table 3: Labour Intensive Relative Risk of Economic Precariousness (%)

Source: EU-SILC 2004

Nevertheless, despite an improvement in the relative indicators, the main brunt of unemployment it is still being borne by the most traditional 'vulnerable' groups in the Greek labour market, namely young people, women, long term unemployed, individuals with disabilities and other vulnerable population groups. For these individuals discrimination risk and marginalization from the labour market is still visible with severe repercussions. Therefore, a basic priority is to reinforce employment for the above groups securing at the same time their social protection for the time period they have difficulty in finding a job.

Priority 2: Dealing with individuals' and groups' disadvantaged position in education and training

Education, vocational education, training and life long learning constitute the building block for equal opportunities and a substantive instrument for social cohesion. Education and training systems qualitative upgrading and improvement, access for all citizens to these systems and increase of investments in education and training are important preconditions to achieve the objectives of sustainable development, employment and social cohesion. The productive process undergoes technological and organizational changes in an accelerated pace, constantly raising the need for more knowledge acquisition and manpower skills' development on a life long basis.

Regarding disadvantaged groups in particular, it is of vital importance to assume relative actions in education- especially in the first degrees-because in this way (a) deeply rooted stereotypes are brought down and the intergenerational vicious circle of weakness to accept diversity and co-exist in a multicultural environment collapses, while (b) children, being of the most vulnerable population groups, can easily be adapted, integrated and kept in the education system, which plays a fundamental role to ease participation in society and unobstructed inclusion in the labour market.

Investments in life long learning must be drastically increased, since our country, as it is shown in data, is lagging far behind the European average. Life long learning is a weapon to upgrade vulnerable population's skills, particularly among the older individuals who have lower performance vis-à-vis their educational level. Manpower productivity increase and its adaptability enhancement figure are the objectives endorsed by the National Reforms Program priorities.

Priority 3: Support to families and the elderly

Family in Greece plays an exceptionally significant role given that historically it has worked as an informal safety net. Supporting the family is associated with mitigating the demographic problem, lessening child poverty and supporting women's employment. Nowadays, family and personal relationships go through great changes, hence the need to embark on political and social interventions in order to adapt to the new situation without afflicting solidarity, which has always been a main feature of family relations. Family, as a social security network internalizes and deals with social problems such as unemployment, disability and elderly care; this tendency, nevertheless, tends to be restricted, hence the urgent need to support family by means of integrated policies in order to preserve social cohesion.

Poverty of the elderly and ageing has been repeatedly mentioned in pertinent researches as a poverty risk factor. Equal opportunities and equal treatment in all stages of a career and a decent living standard for individuals aged 65 and over through a satisfactory minimum pension, supplemented with other goods and services like health, transport and housing etc is a social investment, making individuals autonomous, strengthening their self-respect and promoting economic growth. In addition, policies on active ageing through incentives to prolong working life to reach the retirement threshold and investment in life long learning constitute the actions' framework addressing the elderly.

Priority 4: Social inclusion of disabled individuals, immigrants and individuals/groups with cultural/religious particularities

The equal access of all citizens to the opportunities offered by society and the elimination of discrimination form an essential element of a democratic society. As a result, reinforcing social inclusion, combating discrimination and providing support to anyone in need is decisive in order for individuals/groups with particularities to enjoy goods and services to the same extent like the rest of the population. Individuals with disabilities are a population group facing big problems in accessing employment as well as infrastructures, goods and services. According to researches on a European level, people with disabilities usually fill in job vacancies of low skills and earnings, whereas households' average income with member with disabilities stands very much below the average. Preconceived notions and stereotypes make people with disabilities victims of discrimination and social exclusion. According to available data, 10% of Greece's population are immigrants. Consequently, integrating an important population share is particularly challenging. Individuals' and groups' particular features (e.g. cultural particularities) often make access to goods, services and employment hard. Experience acquired so far from implementing social inclusion policies for these individuals/groups and an overview of contemporary challenges and data lead to the conclusion that targeted actions should be improved and extended. This shall be inscribed in a framework of cohesive interventions based on networking and cooperation between stakeholders adopting the horizontal operation concept. The aim is to improve synergy and cohesion of all policies. For the latter to be effective, groups' special characteristics should be recorded and investigated; actions are needed to lift prejudices and stigmatisation with a parallel change in the mindset. Their social inclusion passes through actions for access to employment, equal access to goods and services.

To monitor and evaluate policies three indicators are mainly needed to define quantitative objectives. The first indicator regards poverty risk and it is the poverty gap referring to the income of individuals below the poverty line and it is calculated as the abstraction ratio rate between the poverty line and the median equivalent available income of the poor divided by poverty line. In 2005 poverty gap stood at 23,9%, namely that over 50% of destitute individuals have income greater than 76,1% of poverty line, i.e. over 4.350 €, yearly, (poverty line 5716, 80), per person. The respective rate in 2003 was 30, 5%. The objective is to reach 20% by 2010.

The second indicator refers to employment increase, which significantly affects social protection. So the objective for the employment rate is to reach 64,1% by 2010. The third indicator refers to school drop out, an indicator reflecting the importance of education for combating social exclusion. So from 13, 3% school drop out rate in 2005 the objective is to bring it down below 10% by 2010.

Intergenerational Policies & Programmes

The reinforcement of active employment and training policies, legislative interventions in the labour sector, social protection structures extension, statutory changes implementation in social security and the health care system rationalisation have been the Government's policy spearhead in the social field.

As it is stated in the National Reforms Program, elderly individuals' active participation is promoted. The Government is promoting active ageing policies (up until retirement age), as well as re-training and life long learning in order to upgrade elderly individuals' skills. The

Ministry of Employment and Social Protection, through OAED (Greek Manpower Employment Organisation), is implementing special employment programs for advanced age individuals in order for them to accumulate the working hours required to qualify for a pension. Programs were effective and will continue in the next period. The programs in question are part of the targeted interventions geared towards groups and regions afflicted by acute unemployment problems (group firing). In the new Programming Period 2007 – 2013 emphasis shall be given on training the unemployed and older age working people to upgrade their skills and vocational qualifications.

The overall employment has risen in the last two years. Nevertheless, there still is a significant gap in employment rates between the two sexes. The total employment rate rose from 59, 4% in 2004 to 60, 1% in 2005 still below the EU average (63, 8% in 2005). Regarding unemployment, the average rate dropped from 10, 5% in 2004 to 9, 8% in 2005. According to the National Statistics Service, in the first quarter of 2006, unemployment rate declined even further and dropped to 9, 7% against 10, 4% compared with the same quarter of 2005. Long-term unemployment, though reduced to 5,1% in 2005 from 5,6% in 2004, is still an important problem (55,8% of the unemployed have remained jobless for more than a year). In addition, unemployment evolution was not uniform in the various age groups and youth unemployment below the age of 25 stood at 26% in 2005. Women's unemployment is at high levels, though declining (15,3% in 2005).

The relative weakness of the overall employment rate was mainly due to the extremely weak employment rate of women, which, with 43.8%, was 11.3 percentage points lower than the average for the EU and their earlier retirement from the labour force under Greek law. Although the total male and female employment rates for the 15-64 year olds have been improving significantly over time, the employment rate for those between 55-64 years of age dropped between 2003 and 2004 from 41.3% to 39.4%. The most noticeable characteristic of the indicators for this age group (55-64) is the significant difference between men and women, where the corresponding percentage of men in employment is more than double of that of women.

The Greek national action plan (NAP) puts an emphasis on full employment. To reach this ambitious objective, a number of important labour reforms have been introduced, including the transformation of unemployment benefits into employment subsidies, in particular for groups facing social exclusion and the promotion of part-time work in the public sector. Yet there have no substantial policy measures going in the right direction been taken in terms of working arrangements and incentives to encourage older workers to remain longer in employment and support for skills development.

In general, there is currently a lack of awareness into the wider implications of ageing among the public. This is not very surprising because Greek social policy has historically focused more on pension issues, rather than on other re-distributive tools of the welfare state towards the working or non-working population, e.g. family benefits. As a policy, early retirement was popular in the 80's and 90's, when it was viewed as a means of paving the way for the younger generations. This situation resulted in great numbers of healthy prematurely retired workers, many of whom continued working in the informal sector of the economy. In theory, the law does not prohibit employment of retired workers in the formal sector of the economy. In practice however, the various insurance funds impose restrictions, thus severely limiting incentives.

The fears and concerns on the demographic situation are commonly acknowledged and frequently mentioned in both academic and political discussions in Greece. Yet at the moment,

there appears to be no consensus among the dominant socio-political actors on appropriate political initiatives and, as a result no concrete measures aimed at addressing the issue have been taken so far. Although older people are seen to be at a disadvantage in the Greek labour market, neither the government nor the social partners have paid much attention to the question of their continuous employment. The restructuring of the labour market and, specifically, the decline in agricultural employment has particularly affected older workers. In addition, Lifelong Learning activities are not very well developed in Greece. Further, life long learning exclusively involves young people (25-34) and well-educated workers, a finding which is partially explained by the low educational level characterized by older workers.

Age Group	EU	Greece
25-34	22,0	23,1
35-44	27,5	32,3
45-54	33,4	46,6
55-64	44,2	66,8

Table 4: Individuals in Greece with low Attainment per Age (in % of the corresponding Age Group)

These rates corroborate the importance of life long learning and actions shall be intensified to this field in the following period. Participation rates in life long learning is below the European average (11, 0% in 2005). In 2004 the rate was 2% (EU-25 10, 3%), whereas in 2005 it was limited to 1, 8 % (EU-25 11, 0%). As far as education expenditure is concerned -as GDP rate, the available data by Eurostat show that in 2003 it stood at 3, 94%, i.e. 1, 27 units below the EU-25 average.

A good example of the benefits of intergenerational learning are evident in the second round of EQUAL in Greece which gave to development partnerships a chance to explore the issue of age management. The main focus of the development partnerships from the first round of EQUAL operated under the adaptability theme was put around two issues: the first one included producing skill profiles and job standards, which aim at the certification and accreditation of technical skills based on tacit knowledge. The second one tackled upgrading of ageing personnel's skills and promoting their adaptability in IT by taking part in training packages. DP NEORION can demonstrate that intergenerational learning in shipbuilding industry is possible. This project tested various tools that facilitate intergenerational learning. The objectives of the NEORION II DP focus on solving the adaptation problem of the Greek shipbuilding industry and concern the efforts of the shipbuilding sector to improve its competitiveness. Utilizing modern technological tools, inducting flexible labour-time arrangements, developing the sector's manpower and improving communication and cooperation between the two participating shipyards and their external environment, are the particular means for achieving the objectives. The project's innovative concept is that organizational change is used as a means for the upgrading of human resources, not just on the scale of one single industrial unit, but on the scale of an entire industry sector (cross-cut approach). More specifically, under this concept, actions such as the inventory and the assessment of production potential to achieve a rational allocation of human resources, the introduction of a system of production standards to rationalize skill specifications, the induction of a standardized system for human resources upgrading and evaluation, and skill enrichment and updating, are considered to be highly innovative, as they approach human resources issues as parts of an integrated question to meet the needs of an entire market. As an overall, the project offers the

possibility to both the employees and the businesses of getting familiar with new technologies and modern organizational and production models. In relation to the DP structure and the range and profile of its partners, the involvement of the major representative organizations of the sector (i.e., business, employers, employees, and social partners), in such a way that their active participation in all project stages is pursued and achieved, results in an integrated, multi-angled approach.

Sources of Investment & Funding

Funding of intergenerational learning activities in most of the cases is provided by the European Social Fund and in the private sector companies fund the projects from their own resources (own contribution). In few cases Local Authorities provide funding for such projects and if they do so they to cover the percentage of the national contribution.

The negative aspect in the European funding is the lack of long term funding to secure the sustainability of projects and most often projects end up when the funding stops.

5 INTERGENERATIONAL LEARNING ACTIVITIES

Examples of Projects

Education of Adults in the Acquisition of Basic Skills in New Technologies (IRAS)

The training program IRAS - 'Education of adults in the acquisition of basic skills in New Technologies' is carried out in the frame of Lifelong Learning. It has been designed and monitored by the General Secretariat for Adult Education [Ministry of National Education and Religious affairs] and is materialised by the Institute of Continuing Education of Adults (IDEKE) which belongs to the General Secretariat for Adult Education.

This project constitutes the first effort of education, in wide scale, citizens in the acquisition of basic skills in the New Technologies. The educational program has duration of 50 hours. Learning will take place in the laboratories of information technology of school units in secondary and first-degree education.

The target groups of IRAS are 110.000 citizens, socially vulnerable and/or excluded social groups but also groups from the general population (farmers, professionals, businessmen, housewives etc.) employed and unemployed interested in acquiring knowledge of New Technologies.

The program IRAS has budget 13.500.000, 00 €, and is part of the E.P.E.A.E.K program, Measure 2.5. 'Lifelong Learning', action 2.5.1: 'Alternative forms of Lifelong Learning in Higher Education' and at 75% is financed by the European Social Fund and 25% from national resources.

Education of Farmers to acquire Skills that will permit them to seek employment in the Secondary & Tertiary Sector of Economy (ISIODOS)

The Greek farmers in order to function in the new environment should acquire the modern techniques and knowledge to face with success the new competitive reality. For this reason a good level of knowledge and skills not only in the production level but also in the standardisation, the transformation and the marketing of products is necessary. Those employed in the primary sector in order to contribute in the development of their region and to insure diachronically a good income, which will allow them to remain in their region, they are called to undertake action and in the other sectors of economy. Consequently the continuous improvement of their skills and knowledge is unavoidable.

The program aims in the improvement of knowledge and skills of farmers and the encouragement of attendance of farmers in enterprising activities in order to achieve a passage from primary in the secondary and tertiary sector of economy. The program leads to a 'Certificate in Lifelong Learning'.

The target group are farmers of all ages, of every national origin, age and education.

The cost of this particular program amounts in the 4.000.000 € and is part-financed at 75% from European Social Fund (ESF) and 25% from national resources.

Citizens in Action

Citizens in Action is a non-profit, non-governmental, youth organisation based in Athens. The aims of C.i.A are:

- To support and promote the idea of active citizenship to the young people, through new forms of social commitment and participation, for a democratic and open society.
- To encourage the circulation of people and ideas through international exchanges, with the aim of the enhancement of knowledge, mutual understanding and peace.
- To contribute to community and local development through the participation of local and foreign volunteers in projects of benefit to all, with an emphasis on rural areas.
- To promote people's participation to defend and define their quality of life, aiming at the protection of the human dignity and the environment.

To achieve its aims, C.i.A invites its members to practical action, with emphasis on youth voluntary work, youth mobility and communication, international exchanges and non-formal education. Since summer 2002 C.i.A has organised 12 international work camps in Corfu. These work camps fulfilled successfully their aim: support the local community to preserve the natural & cultural heritage and bring local youth in contact with the international voluntary movement. Local young people reacted very positively to the presence of the international volunteers and they were organising many free time activities, involving the volunteers too.

Santouri

Santouri is a musical instrument introduced in Greece by the refugees from the Asia Minor who entered the country in the 1920's. It is used mainly in the islands and it was mostly played by older men. Aristides Moschos was the well known expert of this musical instrument in Greece who often appeared on television. In 1985 he started in Athens the 'Popular School of Traditional Music' a non-for-profit company aiming to teach the almost disappearing traditional musical instruments that were not very popular among young people. He was the first person to start a school for traditional music in Greece. In 1995 a very talented six year old girl, Areti Katime, started learning santouri in the school of Aristides Moschos. In the age of 9, she became a well known person for her talent in this strange and not very popular musical instrument and young people began to become interested. From that time on, she has taken part in a lot of festivals and in 2003 she produced a CD with her music

citibank

Citibank, a USA owned subsidiary operating in Greece since 1964, is involved in banking and insurance related services. With a network of 57 bank branches all over Greece, it employs 1,400 people. HR policy is focused on stability of employment and the development and training of all staff, with the involvement of older workers as mentors. A specific and positive aspect of the company's non-discrimination policy is that older workers act as trainers and mentors to the younger staff. The recognition of the role of older employees as trainers and mentors represents the company's acknowledgement of their experience and value while on the other hand, younger employees feel that in their initial career start, they have the support of the 'veterans', as they try to learn the work. The company estimates the effect of this measure to be positive for the company since older workers are able to pass their knowledge on to the new generation and thus, corporate continuity is not lost as it has created a 'cogni-

tive culture' by strengthening the situation of the bearers of practical knowledge and historical experience. For more information see:

<http://www.citibank.com/greece/consumer/en/profile.htm>

Titan Cement

Titan Cement S.A. consists of 11 cement production facilities in 6 countries; it employs 6000 people internationally and 1800 in Greece. In the previous decade the company had to consider the restructuring of the cement industry when new technologies and automation were introduced. An example was the loading of cement requiring 80 people, but after automation only 8. To meet this change one of the strategies enforced was the retraining of the staff. Technical education was provided within the company for middle and lower level personnel. Mainly older workers, who wanted to use their experience, were chosen as trainers after first having followed a 6 week seminar course. Subsequently with the help of experts, they began their work as trainers and wherever it was considered necessary, their trainers, who followed the training process, intervened and corrected them. After 2-3 months the expert advisor left and the older staff continued and became permanent trainers. Titan Cement financed all training measures. For more information see: <http://www.titan.gr/en/group/job.htm>.

Sexual & Reproductive Health

One of the most common inter-generational types of learning is the case of sexual and reproductive knowledge passed on from parents to their children. Young girls have reported in a qualitative study based on the Biographical – interpretative method that the most significant turning point in women's lives, related to their sexual and reproductive health, proved to be their 'entrance' into adulthood. Most specifically, the time women have their menstrual period for the first time appears to be the moment they recognise as the starting point of adolescence. This critical period in a woman's life was presented in the narrations as a difficult time, full of negative emotions and experiences. The reproductive health of women is an issue that shouldn't be discussed with males and should be treated with secrecy and embarrassment by the female members of the family. Instead of sharing information concerning sexual issues, silence prevails especially with the female members within the Greek family outside the big urban areas.

The Transmission of Knowledge in Curing the 'Evil Eye'

The belief that a glance can damage life and property, commonly known as evil eye, has been widespread in both westernized and non-westernized societies. According to Ch.Veikou, social anthropologist, this belief started in pre-urban areas of Greece and it is considered as 'code of communication', a strategy to structure social relations and personal identity, obeying or ignoring the principals of collective life: socialization and autonomy, collaboration and competition, compliance and demonstration. In every day life people must behave according to the societal values and principals of their community and when consciously or not they violate them by being superior to others in any way (appearance, goods, property etc) the punishment comes through a 'visual attack' which has effects on the body or the social position of the violator.

The evil eye is attributed to supernatural powers and the healer is someone who performs a ritual in a certain manner with the aim to relieve the affected person from the consequences of the evil eye. According to Lykiardopoulos, anthropologist, there is a pattern for the transmission of the knowledge of this magical healing. In Greece, it seems to be almost always

women who practice cures for the evil eye and the ritual for the treatment is passed from one generation to the next in the following way: one woman (xematiastra) is not permitted to tell another woman directly, but if she desires to give her knowledge to another woman she must first tell a man, who in turn, will tell the woman. And the person, man or woman, to whom she wishes to transfer this power must usually be the first born in the family.

Teaching Greek Languages as Second Language to Migrant Workers

This training program aims at training adult migrant workers in the Greek language and integrating them in the Greek Culture by familiarising them with the Modern Greek reality. The program is structured in four levels of learning. Levels A', B' and C' last 100 hours each one while the [D]' level has duration 125 hours. The 25 additional hours concern courses of Greek history and elements of Greek culture. In the end of each linguistic level, a Certificate of life long learning is granted. The program uses the structures of Centres for Continuing Education of Adults.

The objective of the training programme is to develop the skills required for the communication in situations of daily life and to familiarize migrants with the social habits, the daily life, and living conditions including the social life, the history and the culture of the country. Moreover, to develop the language skills of migrants to the degree that those who wish could continue and get the certificate of Greek language knowledge (ellinomatheias) which will permit them to enrol to the formal education (Schools of Second Chance).

The program 'Teaching the Greek language as a second language to migrant workers' is addressed to migrant workers of all nationalities, Greek housewives, as well as citizens of third countries that wish to acquire the requirements for a permanent residence in Greece, among which is the certificate of sufficient knowledge of Greek language and basic knowledge of Greek history and culture.

The training program is part of the EPEAEK, Ministry of National Education and Religious affairs (Metre 1.1., Energy 1.1.2. G) and is partly -financed by the European Social Fund at 75% and 25% national funding.

Education & Counselling Support for the Families of Gypsies, Muslims, Repatriating Greeks & Migrants

The smooth integration in the Greek educational system of persons with linguistic, cultural or religious diversities and the prevention of school failure and drop out rates require a completed intervention in the families of particular social groups as the school failure and drop out rates are found in direct interrelation with the socio-economic situation, the lack of basic skills of parents, and psychosocial support of their children in the educational process. Still, the lack of basic knowledge of language, apart from the catalytic negative effect in children's development, is considered as one of the main reasons, that lead to the marginalisation and the social exclusion of the individual and the entire family, as it suspends the individual growth and development, but also the equivalent attendance in the employment and in the socio-cultural environment of the country.

The objective is the creation of a supporting familial environment, which will be reinforcing for the student, limiting the school failure and drop out rates, it will help in limiting the risk of social marginalisation and exclusion of the students and their families. More concretely, the objectives of the program, are: to develop the parents basic knowledge of language, so that they are in a position to support and help their children in their educational obligations,

to develop the parents basic skills of language in such a degree, in order those who wish, would be in a position to acquire new basic skills that will contribute to their personal and professional growth. To familiarize the students and the parents with the Greek culture, to sensitise parents to realise the necessity of completion the obligatory, at least, education of their children. To encourage the parents, to collaborate with the teachers, to attend school activities, to follow-up the record of their children, to contribute in the improvement of the parents' self-image and to strengthen the parental role.

The program is mainly addressed to the parents of socially vulnerable groups of Gipsies, Muslim, repatriated Greeks and migrants. More concretely, it is addressed to parents, with children in preschool or school age.

The program is included in the E.P.E.A.E.K Ministry of National Education and Religious affairs, and is partly -financed by the European Social Fund at 75% and by National Resources at 25%. The total cost of the program amounts in 1.700.000€.

Health Promotion and Educational Support for the Rehabilitation of Offenders (HERO)

The HERO project aims to contribute to the rehabilitation of offenders within the European Criminal Justice system. The main objective of the project is to develop two sets of support services: a health promotion and health monitoring module, and a learning and skills support module, for two groups of end users: young and 'first' offenders (typically 'on remand'), and prisoners preparing for re-entry into society (typically on parole).

By the end of the verification stage of the project, the health promotion and educational support services will have been tested in four pilot correctional institutions, involving 20 prisoners in each site. By the end of the project, at least four additional pilot sites will be using the services.

Taking into account the different approaches to rehabilitation in different EU Member State penal systems, the project aims to make a contribution to addressing a number of problems facing European prisons today. Penal problems considered will include:

- The incidence of mental health disorders;
- The level of drugs misuse;
- HIV/STD transmission risks;
- Employment and skills training needs;
- Rehabilitation strategies and services.

6 CONCLUSIONS

In Greece all five fields of learning defined in the framework of EAGLE have been identified. However, intergenerational learning in informal settings is more common than well established institutionally based settings of learning. There are various reasons for that. Greece embarked on the process of industrialization considerably later than the rest of Europe, and under rather violent and short-lived stimuli. This rapid development has produced an imbalance between its economic and socio-cultural level. This lack of correspondence is a common aspect of societies that are in a stage of development that is neither well articulated nor well defined and of societies where coexisting economic, social and cultural structures correspond to different modes of production. Thus it can be said that Greek economy is characterized by heterogeneity due to the coexistence of 'traditional' and 'modern' components of techno-economic activity. This is also evident in the social sphere where the social structure of institutions, groups, and relations is still in a state of inertia imposed by the past. Social groups and/or classes cannot easily and creatively articulate their role in the context of prevailing conditions and available opportunities.

In the research conducted in the framework of Eagle it became apparent that intergenerational and lifelong learning are concepts that Greek society has not familiarised with. This is in accordance with data for the EU (European Commission 2003) which show the lowest levels of participation in lifelong learning in Greece, with 0% aged 55-64 participating in the 4 weeks prior to the surveys of 2001 and substantiated in the low levels of public expenditure as a percentage of GDP (3.7%). In CEDEFOP's study of Life Long Learning in Greece (2003) in comparison with other Member States there were more Greeks who thought lifelong learning unimportant (21%), even they were more likely to see lifelong learning as a compensatory measure for those not having done well at school (61%). Fewer Greek respondents reported learning in the past year, but were no different to other Europeans in saying they learn best in informal settings. One in five Greek citizens did not want to take up education and training in the future, with family commitments being the main obstacle, for 29%, the highest percentage of all countries surveyed.

At the informal level there is a lot of intergenerational exchange because of the traditional familial relationships that are still prevalent in Greece where grandparents play a significant role in the care of smaller grandchildren, a role that has probably been increasing as more women enter the labour market in the past 20 years. In small communities (in semi-urban and rural settings) traditional Greek handicrafts e.g. embroidery, sweet making, as well as traditional dancing and musical instruments are being passed on as skills to the young generation though we don't have a clear picture of the extent of this practice. From time to time, through the media there are cases presented from older people, active in keeping traditions alive that start in a more formal way to pass their knowledge to younger generations in order to be used as the basis for new cultural work. At the same time, beliefs and practices passed on from one generation to the next in informal settings are good examples of a society still struggling between the traditional, the modern and post-modern way of life.

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