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Principles and general objectives of education

Article 16 of the Constitution of 1975, revised in 2008, indicates that art and science, research and teaching are free, and their development and promotion shall be an obligation of the state. Education constitutes a basic mission for the state and shall aim at the moral, intellectual, professional and physical training of the Greeks, the development of national and religious consciousness and at their formation as free and responsible citizens. Compulsory education shall not last less than nine years and all Greeks are entitled to free education on all levels at state educational institutions.

According to the Cross-thematic Curriculum Framework for compulsory education (2003), the educational process should initiate students into the values of democracy, respect for human rights, peace and freedom. Education aims at both the well-rounded development of the students' personality and their successful integration in society through developing new values and cognitive, affective and psycho-kinetic skills and abilities. These values and skills will enable students to function as informed, responsible and active citizens in continuously changing and highly demanding social settings. This effort should focus on the following: to provide general education; to develop students' skills, abilities and interests; to provide equal learning opportunities for all students; to reinforce the students' cultural and linguistic identity within the framework of a multicultural society; to develop environmental awareness and foster relevant patterns of behavior; to prepare students to explore new information and communications technologies; to facilitate the students' physical, mental and social development; and to sensitize students to issues of human rights and world peace and preserving human dignity. (Pedagogical Institute, 2003).

In the programming period of the *National Strategic Reference Framework 2007-2013* (Ministry of Economy and Finance, January 2007), Greece aims at becoming an outward-looking country with strong international presence, with a competitive and productive economy, a country that will lay emphasis on education and the young, quality, technology, innovation and respect for the environment. The major importance of human resources is directly linked to the introduction of new forms for organizing work, where human capital is mainly assessed in terms of knowledge (production of new knowledge and dissemination of knowledge already available), skills, flexible adaptation and integration of good practices. In this context, promoting lifelong learning, improving the quality of education and training, and the adaptability of employees, employers and firms are nodal strategic choices for tackling structural problems of the labour market.

Laws and other basic regulations concerning education

The **Law No. 1566** of 30 September 1985 stipulates the aims and objectives of education and sets the basic principles of the organization and delivery of primary and secondary education. The law gives priority to the quality factor by the introduction of new curricula and improvements in teaching methods and educational resources. A



dynamic and flexible education system, decentralization and democratization of education, are the main principles laid down in the law. The basic structure and organization of non-compulsory general and technical-vocational secondary education, previously mainly regulated by Law No. 2525/1997 on the unified upper secondary school (lyceum) and other provisions and Law No. 2640/1998 containing provisions related to the technical-vocational education schools (TEEs), has been reformed in accordance with **Law No. 3475/2006** on the organization and operation of secondary level vocational education and relevant provisions. This Law established the vocational lyceum and vocational training schools which replaced the TEEs. The Law No. 2525/1997 also established all-day kindergartens and all-day primary schools.

Non-university higher education institutions, e.g. technical colleges or Technological Education Institutions (TEIs), are regulated by the provisions of **Law No. 1404** of 1983, amended by **Law No. 2916** of 2001 and supplemented by other regulations. By **Law No. 2916/2001**, TEIs were integrated into the technological non-university sector at the higher education level. The **Law No. 2009** of 1992 established the National System for Vocational Education and Training and revised postsecondary vocational training. The **Law No. 3191/2003** provides the framework for effective coordination of the systems of initial and continuing vocational training, the recording of needs of the labor market, performed by the Employment Observatory (PAEP), and the formation of vocational frameworks, which lead to the development of reliable initial and continuing training curricula. (CEDEFOP, 2009).

University education was organized according to the provisions contained in the Law No. 1268 of 1982 regarding the structure and function of universities and the Law on the Modernization of University Education No. 2083 of 1992. During the period 2005-2006 several legislative measures have been adopted in the framework of the implementation of the Bologna process. The **Law No. 3685/2008** provides the legislative framework for postgraduate studies. According to this law, under certain conditions TEIs can award postgraduate diplomas. The new **Law No. 4009/2011** on the operational structure and quality assurance of higher education institutions provides for a reform and restructuring of the whole higher education sector (universities and TEIs) including changes in the management, organization and funding of higher education institutions. This new Law stipulates the use of the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) credits for doctoral programmes.

Second chance schools are established according to **Law No. 2525** of 1997. The Hellenic Open University, an independent and self-governing university offering distance learning programmes, was established under the **Law No. 2083** of 1992 and subsequent amendments. The National Education Council, the Educational Research Centre and the Institute for Continuing Adult Education were established under **Law No. 2327/1995**.

Law No. 2817 of 2000, supplemented by **Law No. 3194** of 2003, updated and improved the institutional framework for special needs education and education for pupils with special talents. According to Law No. 2817, the Ministry of Education has to cooperate in the establishment of special vocational training centres and workshops (which are under the authority of the Ministry of Health and Social Solidarity) as long



as school age pupils with special needs attend these centres. The new **Law No. 3699/2008** on special education and education of people with disability or special educational needs regulates issues concerning the degree of learning difficulties that pupils may meet either in mainstream or special education schools.

The **Law on Lifelong Learning and other Regulations No. 3369** was passed on 25 June 2005 and entered into force on 6 July 2005. This law provides for an institutional framework to be incorporated in the governmental strategy regarding human resources development and investments in human capital, rationalizing the existing educational and training frameworks within the perspective of lifelong learning. The **Law on the Development of Lifelong Learning and other Provisions No. 3879** of September 2010 regulates matters concerning lifelong learning placing emphasis on the recognition and accreditation of all types and levels of formal, informal and non-formal learning. This law contains special measures for the creation and systematization of an integrated system of lifelong learning and the implementation of lifelong learning policies at local, regional and national level (i.e. National Lifelong Learning Network). It foresees the establishment of a cohesive national framework of assessment and certification for all modes of training and general adult training through the setting up the National Organization for the Certification of Qualifications and the establishment of an integrated national framework of the recognition of qualifications and certification of knowledge, skills and competences described in terms of learning outcomes (e.g. the National Qualifications Framework, which has been developed in accordance with the European Qualifications Framework). The Law also refers to the Zones of Educational Priority, which are expected to develop activities in order to fight against school dropout and improve learning outcomes.

Since 1976 compulsory education comprised six years of primary education for pupils aged 6-12 and three years of lower secondary education. Children enrol in primary school when they reach the age of 6 by the end of December of the year of admission. Any person who has guardianship of a child and fails to register him or her in school is subject to a penalty. According to **Law No. 3518/2006**, which regulates issues under the competence of the Ministry of Employment and Social Protection, pre-primary school attendance is compulsory for 5-year-olds with effect from 2007/08.

Administration and management of the education system

The general policy in the field of education is determined and directed by the government. The education system is under the overall authority and supervision of the **Ministry of Education, Lifelong Learning and Religious Affairs** (previously, and until October 2009, the Ministry of National Education and Religious Affairs), which is organized into sections, directorates, administrative sectors and general directorates.

Some activities are under the responsibility of agencies overseen by the Ministry, such as: the **School Buildings Organization (OSK)** which is responsible for the design, construction, and equipment of primary and secondary education premises; the **School Textbook Publishing Organization (OEDB)**, whose primary task is to publish and distribute textbooks and other educational materials; the



Organization for Vocational Education and Training (OEEK), which organizes and runs the vocational training institutes and submits proposals to the Ministry on issues related to vocational education and training; the new **National Organization for the Certification of Qualifications (EOPP)**, established in 2010 to replace the OEEK; and the **Organization for the Further Training of Teachers (OEPEK)**, established under the Law No. 2986/2002, responsible for: planning further education policies for primary and secondary school teachers; coordinating forms and types of further education and implementing further education initiatives; preparing further education programmes and assigning the educational work to competent agencies; managing resources provided for further education; and certifying forms and degrees of further education. The Ministry of Education also supervises the operation of the **National System for Linking Vocational Education and Training with Employment (ESSEEKA)**.

The **National Education Council (ESIP)** is a consultative body to the Ministry of Education. It makes recommendations to the government on educational policy and planning matters at all levels. Three individual councils operate under the ESIP: the Higher University Education Council, the Higher Technological Education Council, and the Primary and Secondary Education Council. The **National Lifelong Learning Committee** has been established under the Law No. 3369/2005 in order to deal with national policy and planning issues in this area. The **National Accreditation Centre for Lifelong Learning Structures (EKEPIS)** has been responsible for accrediting centres for continuing vocational training as well as specialized training centres for vulnerable groups of the population. Since 2010 EKEPIS is being reorganized and restructured in order to develop and implement the National Accreditation System of the structures of non-formal education, including the responsibility for their licensing.

The **Pedagogical Institute** is an advisory body to the Ministry of Education on curriculum development and supervises the preparation of textbooks. It also revises the curriculum on the basis of the school counsellors' annual reports. In particular, the Evaluation Department of the Institute, which has been established in early 1996, prepares proposals regarding the evaluation of the educational activities and pupils' assessment. The Pedagogical Institute also coordinates in-service teacher training activities. The **Institute of Educational Policy** has been established under the Law No. 3966/2011 to replace the Pedagogical Institute starting from 2012.

The **Educational Research Centre (KEE)**, operating under the supervision of the Ministry of Education, promotes research on issues related to education, such as school organization, teaching methods, continuing education and training, etc.

Universities and technological education institutes (TEI) are self-governing bodies operating under the authority and supervision of the Ministry of Education. As regards higher technological education, legislation provides for the participation of representatives of students and employees in the management of TEIs.

There are **Regional Education Directorates** and **Offices for Primary and Secondary Education** in every prefecture (in the number of 54 as of 2010). They administer and supervise the operation of educational establishments at the preschool, primary and secondary levels. Their offices are located in the capital of the prefecture.



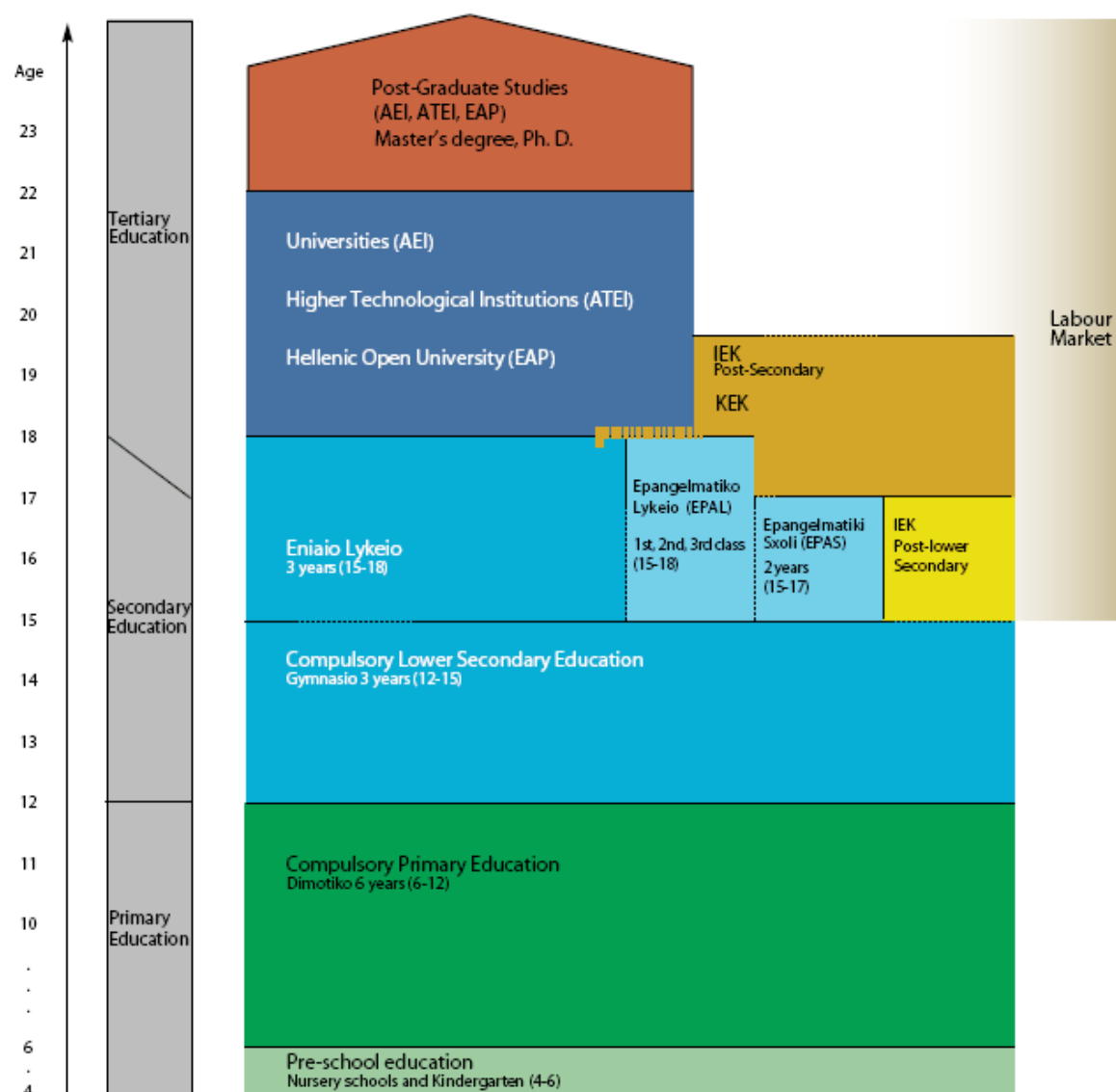
Both public and private schools in each prefecture are under the authority of the head of the Directorate of Education. There are also **Education Offices**, **Technical Vocational Education Offices** and **Physical Education Offices** in each prefecture. The prefect is in charge of the administrative units in his/her prefecture, performing the duties which have been assigned to him/her by the Minister. The heads of the Directorates and Offices monitor the operation of the schools in their region; they supervise the activities of teachers and administrative staff serving in these offices. At the prefectural level, **Regional Service Councils for Primary and Secondary Education** are established by the prefect and are responsible for matters related to the conditions of service of teachers. The **Prefectoral Education Committees** are responsible for the establishment and operation of school units at the level of the prefecture. The **Municipal/Community Education Committees** operate in every town or community and consist of representatives of the municipality or community, the parents' association, school heads, and representatives of the teachers' trade union organizations. These Committees reports to the mayor or president of the community and to the town or community council on matters related to the organization and operation of the schools within their jurisdiction and the allocation of funds.

A **school council** operates in every school and consists of the head of the school, the teachers' association, a representative from local government, a representative of parents' association and a representative of the pupils in the case of secondary schools. The task of the school council is to support the operation of the school. The **teachers' association** (chaired by the school head) constitutes the collective body for charting directions and ensuring the effective implementation of educational policies and the smooth operation of the school. **School committees** are responsible for managing the budgets which are made available for running costs.

In order to ensure participation in school life, parents must be organized into **parents' associations**. The parents' associations of schools in the same community or town or municipal district make up a union, in which each association is represented by at least one delegate representing up to forty pupils. Parents' unions in every prefecture or prefectural district join together in a federation in which each union represents up to 400 pupils. Federations of parents form a nationwide confederation in which every federation is represented by at least one delegate.

Structure and organization of the education system

Greece: structure of the education system



Source: CEDEFOP, 2009.

Pre-school education

Pre-primary education and care provided at child and infant centres (i.e. daycare centres or nurseries) in the private and public (municipalities) sectors is for children aged between 2 months (or 7 months in public nurseries) and 5 years. Daycare centres offer mainly custodial care and attendance is not compulsory. Children aged 4-5 years can attend private or public kindergartens (*nipiagogeia*), administratively considered part of primary education. Preschool education is free of charge in public kindergartens. According to Law No. 3518/2006, pre-primary school attendance is compulsory for 5-year-olds with effect from 2007/08.



Primary education

Primary education is compulsory and lasts six years (grades 1-6). Children who have reached the age of 6 by the end of December of the year of enrolment are admitted to grade 1. Upon completion of grade 6, pupils receive the primary school-leaving certificate which gives access to the lower secondary school (gymnasium). In recent years, an increasing number of all-day primary schools has been established, with an extended timetable and enriched curriculum.

Secondary education

Lower secondary education (gymnasium) lasts three years and completes the compulsory education cycle. The evening gymnasium offers pre-vocational education and is for students aged 14+. Students successfully completing the gymnasium programme receive the lower secondary school-leaving certificate. At the upper secondary level, the 1997 reform introduced the unified lyceum offering a three-year programme with three main streams (humanities, natural sciences and technology) starting from the second year. Following the adoption of Law No. 3475/2006, upper secondary education is now offered by the general education lyceum (with three main streams, i.e. humanities, natural sciences and technology, starting from the second year) and the vocational education lyceum, combining general education and technical-vocational studies. There are also other types of lyceum, e.g. ecclesiastic, experimental, minority, multicultural, music, art, special education, and lyceums with sports departments. In 2011 the Ministry of Education envisaged to introduce the technological lyceum to replace the vocational lyceum starting from 2012 (Eurydice, 2011). The evening lyceum is for students aged 15+ and offers a four-year programme. Vocational training schools (EPAS), which replaced the technical-vocational education training schools (TEEs) in 2006, offer programmes normally lasting two years (three years if on-the-job training is provided, normally in apprenticeship EPAS). Students having successfully completed the first year of the lyceum may enrol in the first year of EPAS, while EPAS graduates may enrol in the second year of the vocational lyceum. Upon successful completion of lyceum studies, students receive the upper secondary school-leaving certificate (in addition, a vocational education certificate in the case of the vocational lyceum). EPAS graduates receive the vocational education certificate, which entitles them to get a professional license and enrol in a postsecondary vocational training institute. Vocational training institutes (IEK) offer programmes at the postsecondary, non-tertiary level usually lasting two years. In the case of vocational education graduates who followed a similar course, the further training usually last two semesters. Certain IEK courses are also for gymnasium graduates.

Higher education

Higher education is offered at universities (including polytechnics and the higher school of fine arts), non-university technological education institutions (TEIs), and other non-university tertiary level institutes offering vocationally-oriented programmes lasting two or three years. Admission to higher education is through the system of national exams. At the TEIs the duration of studies leading to the award of the diploma of technical education is four years, including a semester of practical training. University studies leading to the award of a first degree normally last four



years, with the exception of faculties at polytechnics (five-year programmes in the fields of agriculture, architecture, engineering, dentistry, pharmacy and veterinary medicine) and faculties of medicine (six-year programme). Postgraduate programmes leading to the award of the diploma of graduate studies are offered at universities and their duration is normally one year (in some cases one and a half to two years). Postgraduate specialization diplomas are a requirement for registration in a doctoral programme, which normally last a minimum of three years (at least four years for those students who do not hold a master's degree or equivalent).

The school year generally consists of 175 days or 35 teaching five-day weeks. Classes are usually held from 11 September until 15 June at the primary level and until 30 June at the secondary and post-secondary level. (Eurydice, 2009/10). Primary schools usually operate between 8:00 a.m. and 14:00 p.m. (in the case of primary schools) or 16:15 p.m. (in the case of all-day primary schools, which may offer an additional optional period up to 17:00 p.m.). The starting time for classes may be modified according to local needs by a decision of the Regional Service Council. (EURYDICE, CEDEFOP & ETF, 2009/10). The academic year in higher education begins in September and ends on 31 August the following year. It is structured into two semesters and each semester shall include at least 13 weeks of classes and two weeks for examinations. The first semester begins in the second half of September and the second semester ends in the second half of June. Each semester course carries a number of credits which is normally 30 according to the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS).

The educational process

Curricula are complete guides to the teaching process and consist of a. clearly stated objectives according to each level of education for each subject, in the framework of the more general aims and specific objectives. Teaching materials should be in accordance with timetable, the assimilating abilities of the students, clearly structured in units according to topics. For each unit or topic orientations concerning the teaching methods and means are provided. Curricula are drawn up, tested, assessed and revised continuously, in order to reflect developments in the fields of knowledge, the needs of societies and developments in educational theories. Curricula of the nine-year compulsory education have cohesion and the teaching materials for learners and teachers are written according to them. The curricula in formal education are designed by research teams at the Pedagogical Institute and approved by the Ministry of Education. The teams usually consist of university teachers, counsellors and teachers of secondary education. The curricula for vocational training institutes (IEK) are designed by groups of specialist professionals in each field. Such committees are set up by the Organization for Vocational Education and Training (OEEK, replaced in 2010 by the National Organization for the Certification of Qualifications). Educators themselves are not involved in the assessment of curricula, materials or procedures, as this task is the responsibility of committees set up by OEEK. The same process applies to the design of curricula for vocational training centres, and the body responsible for their design and implementation is the National Accreditation Centre for Continuing Vocational Training (EKEPIS). Experienced teachers and trainers of each field can be members of such committees and participate in designing curricula. (CEDEFOP, 2009).



In general education, lifelong education, initial and continuing vocational education and training (IVET and CVET), new types of skills have been introduced in the curricula and new methods have been integrated into them. In formal general education, effort has been made to adopt new educational practices that promote the development of critical thinking, collaborative skill and creative activity. The Pedagogical Institute has worked since 2001 on the development of the new Cross-thematic Curriculum Framework (DEPPS) introducing a cross-thematic approach to learning. This innovative endeavour focuses on the horizontal linking of all subject contents, ensuring a multidimensional analysis of concepts. This can involve planning and designing teaching subjects which are not within the field of only one specific discipline. Examples of such subjects are: 'studies of the environment', 'social studies and citizenship education', or 'exploring the natural world'. Within this framework, the Flexible Zone programme was implemented by the Pedagogical Institute as a pilot project in compulsory education. This project aims at promoting a cross-thematic approach to learning and is supported by specially designed educational materials. In some classes therefore (grade/year 6 and grade/year 9), the cross-curricular book-portfolios are introduced which include cross-curricular activities that support and motivate pupils' creativity.

In second chance schools the educational content corresponds to current social and economic priorities and needs of the labour market. The skills and competences integrated in the programme include: basic skills (reading, writing, numeracy), social skills (group work, communication), social and cultural education and preparation for working life. The acquisition of general knowledge, the use of new technologies, foreign language learning, and vocational guidance improve the opportunities for access to the labour market. Centres for adult education, in cooperation with the local authorities, provide adult education on basic skills, new basic skills, social skills and language learning for immigrants. The learning programmes are based on studies concerning the specific needs of the local communities carried out by the local authorities and other social and professional bodies under the responsibility of the General Secretariat for Adult Education (now the General Secretariat for Lifelong Learning). In vocational education and training and lifelong education, the introduction of new methods and skills aims to broaden adults' educational and occupational options, providing opportunities for further learning and updating of knowledge and skills. (*Ibid.*).

Curricula (including lesson timetables) for primary and secondary school education are mandatory for all schools. The inter-disciplinary approach of the DEPPS, introduced in 2003, provides the structure for the content of the individual subjects based on a balanced, horizontal and vertical distribution of teaching material and promotes the inter-connection of cognitive content as well as the integrated analysis of basic concepts. This curriculum framework specifies the key content principles per subject/area, the general education goals (knowledge, skills, attitudes, values), and the indicative basic concepts of the cross-thematic approach. It also discusses the general principles for teaching methodology, assessment and teaching materials. The analytical programmes of study are divided into six levels corresponding to the six grades of primary school, or into fewer levels according to the subject. The curriculum for each subject specifies educational objectives, content, as well as indicative activities and inter-disciplinary work plans/projects. In order to encourage multilingualism, a second foreign language (either French or German) was



added to the primary school curriculum in 2006 at the grade 5 level. Another innovation is the introduction of information and communication technology (ICT) into the curriculum of all-day primary schools from grade 1. More generally, however, ICT in primary school is infused into the teaching of the individual subjects. Teachers apply this open ICT curriculum according to the educational needs of their class and the means available. (Eurydice, 2009/10).

With regard to the secondary education curricula, the Pedagogical Institute organizes competitions for the writing of school textbooks and teacher manuals based on the approved curricula. The analytical programmes are full guides to teaching and consist mainly of: clearly formulated goals for each subject within the framework of the general and specific aims of the level of education; the material to be taught structured into units; and instructions indicating the method and teaching aids for each subject. Curricula are drawn up, tested experimentally, evaluated and revised according to developments in scientific knowledge and pedagogy. The new textbooks introduced in 2006 are based on the DEPPS and the new analytical programmes and are distributed free of charge to state schools. Parallel to the national cross-thematic curriculum, innovative themes and activities have been introduced such as health education, youth entrepreneurship, environmental education, flexible zone of innovative actions, cultural programmes, and school vocational guidance. (*Ibid.*).

The Cross-thematic Curriculum Framework (DEPPS) enables pupils to acquire a unified body of knowledge and skills, following a holistic approach to knowledge. This approach will allow them to form their own personal opinions on scientific issues that are closely interrelated and are also related with issues of everyday life. In this way, pupils can form their own perception of the world, their own opinions about the world they should get to know, love and live in. The cross-thematic approach is supplemented by methods of active acquisition of knowledge, which are applied in the teaching of individual subjects, and are further explored in cross-thematic activities taking place during the teaching of each theme. Diffusing cross-thematic approach in school textbooks (wherever possible) facilitates the organization of cross-thematic activities. Fundamental concepts used across various scientific fields can facilitate the horizontal linking of school subjects. Some fundamental concepts that can be called cross-thematic are common in several subjects of the same grade, often appear in school subjects of different classes, and contribute to the promotion of attitudes and values that are directly related to the main aims of school education. At the primary level, the main aim is that the pupils acquire knowledge on the basis of fundamental concepts and principles and develop a positive attitude towards lifelong learning, cooperation and responsibility. To realize this aim the pupils' cognitive and learning abilities as well as their individual needs should be taken into consideration. At the lower secondary level, the study of independent subjects is considered essential and is facilitated by the spiral development of subject matter. Parallel to it, the horizontal interconnection of the individual subject curricula is also considered important and should be aimed for and ensured. For students with special educational needs, the planning and implementing of individualized educational programmes adapted to their individual needs and interests is required. (Pedagogical Institute, 2003).

The specification of contents at each grade level should ensure internal coherence and the gradual development of different concepts. In relation to the

development of specific skills and abilities, the teaching of different subjects should be organized in a way that ensures objectives are met. Whilst some skills appear to be relevant to a few particular subjects, others are diffused into a much wider range, and are therefore considered essential for effective learning. There are also skills that can be characterized as cross-thematic or horizontal and for this reason it is necessary to promote them through all the individual subject curricula. The most relevant skills are the following:

- communication skills (speaking, listening, reading, writing, argumentation, dialogue, etc.);
- effectively use numbers and mathematical concepts in everyday life;
- use multiple sources of information and communication tools, with the aim of finding, analyzing, assessing and communicating information;
- cooperative skills (group work);
- being able to critically process information, values and principles;
- problems solving skills acquired through the development of the necessary strategies of planning, controlling, providing feedback and remedial intervention;
- being able to make rational choices on a personal and social level;
- the ability to administer resources (natural, economical, social etc.);
- the ability to think creatively and appreciate art;
- the ability to exploit knowledge and adopt values appropriate to the formation of personal views facilitating decision-making.

The general part of the DEPPS can be considered as the basic reference framework for the design of the relevant individual school subjects. The cross-thematic approach of each school subject should be flexible enough to allow for adaptations of its content, whenever this is thought necessary. These adaptations of content should however be made according to specific criteria regarding the aims of each individual subject at each grade level. With regard to structure, each subject includes: the general teaching-learning aim of the subject; the guiding principles of the contents; the general goals, including knowledge, values, attitudes and skills promoted through the teaching of the each subject; and indicative fundamental cross-thematic concepts, diffused in the textbooks, which constitute the basis for the planning of cross-thematic activities in the corresponding individual subject curricula. (*Ibid.*).

Goals refer to knowledge, attitudes and values needed to satisfy personal needs and meet social demands, and generally express the results pursued through the educational process, at each grade level. Goals therefore are set to assist personal fulfillment through the development of a critical, analytic, synthetic and creative attitudes, which in turn will foster creative action on a personal and collective level. The goals of each subject should be in line with and bring out the general goals of the education system. Objectives constitute the guidelines for the planning and design of the content of teaching subjects and also of the processes of assessing the achievement of educational goals. Objectives should be clearly specified, thereby obviating misinterpretations. For methodological reasons these objectives, could be divided into three groups, despite difficulties in defining the scope of each group. These groups are: cognitive, affective and psycho-kinetic. The objectives are based on three guiding



principles referring to: knowledge, cognitive and practical skills as well as discipline-referenced skills that pupils must have acquired after the completion of their studies at each grade level; social skills including group participation and communication skills, presentation skills, etc.; and developing awareness and evaluating the effects of science and art applications in everyday life. The teaching content is arranged into units spread across each grade level in a spiral manner. The spiral arrangement of instructional materials is clearly described, so as to avoid overlapping and repetition from each grade level to the next. Furthermore, for the definition of the content of each teaching subject the contents of other subjects are also taken into consideration, so as to facilitate cross-thematic links. Indicative activities are classified into two categories: subject-oriented activities (activities structured around a specific subject), which promote the aims of each teaching subject through the understanding and elaboration of fundamental concepts of the corresponding discipline and through the acquisition of discipline-referenced skills; and cross-thematic activities, based on the elaboration of cross-thematic concepts, which are designed to facilitate the integration of knowledge from different school subjects with everyday life experience. Apart from helping pupils to gain the fundamental background, concepts and understanding of the various subject matter areas, emphasis should also be placed on acquiring cognitive skills to assist in the development of positive attitudes towards issues concerning the pupils themselves as well as their social environment. This can help bring order and depth of understanding to the learner, moving thus away from the fragmented learning of facts. (*Ibid.*).

The basic purpose of assessment is to provide feedback about both student progress and teacher success (or in other words, about learning and teaching processes) and also to identify strengths and weaknesses. The initial or diagnostic assessment is used primarily at the beginning of the learning process (and sometimes also during it), to identify the level of pupils' knowledge and their interests and to identify possible difficulties that they face. In addition, it helps to define the factors that contribute to pupil underachievement. This allows corrective measures to be developed. The formative assessment, applied during teaching and mainly of informative character, it is used to monitor pupil progress towards the achievement of specific educational goals. The final or summative assessment is used to summarize and offer feedback, in order to assess the level of pupil achievement compared to specified and anticipated pedagogical and educational targets. The assessment of pupils' progress is a continuous process and relies predominantly on the evaluation of their progress on the basis on specific criteria deriving from learning objectives and not from comparison with other learners. It concerns not only the acquisition of knowledge and skills, but also the development of positive attitudes, values and behaviors. Pupil assessment should be characterized by validity, reliability, transparency, and objectivity. All forms of assessment should involve some degree of self-assessment depending on age and mental maturity of pupils. Assisted by their teachers, pupils will acquire increasingly effective self-assessment skills. Assessment techniques include: written or oral exams with closed or open type questions; semi-structured dynamic dialogue among the participants in the learning process; synthetic creative-exploratory tasks (projects); systematic observation; student portfolios; self-assessment or peer assessment; and combinations of different techniques (e.g. written test and oral exam together). The assessment results (e.g. final grades or marks) should be neither an end in itself, nor a means of ranking or classifying students in any way, but rather a means of activating school authorities and teachers in order to

take suitable educational and teaching measures that would improve learning achievement. (*Ibid.*).

Pre-primary education

As mentioned, pre-primary education and care provided at child and infant centres (i.e. daycare centres or nurseries) in the private and public (municipalities) sectors is for children aged between 2 months (or 7 months in public nurseries) and 5 years. Daycare centres offer mainly custodial care and attendance is not compulsory. Children aged 4-5 years can attend private or public kindergartens (*nipiagogeia*), administratively considered part of primary education. Kindergartens can be housed independently or together with primary schools. Preschool education is free of charge in public kindergartens. Private kindergartens are licensed by the Ministry of Education and operate under its supervision. According to Law No. 3518/2006, pre-primary school attendance is compulsory for 5-year-olds with effect from 2007/08.

In the framework of primary education, all-day *nipiagogeia* providing an extended daily programme compared to that of the regular kindergarten were introduced for the first time in 1997/98. In 2008/09 the total number of all-day kindergartens was 2,898. (EURYDICE, CEDEFOP & ETF, 2009/10). The main goal is providing children with comprehensive preparation for primary school, facilitating working parents and supporting state actions to decrease educational and social disparities. A new and innovative package of educational and support material has been developed for all-day kindergartens that includes both printed and electronic material and is geared to multiple audiences (parents, pre-primary school teachers and children). (Eurydice, 2009/10).

Under the Law No. 1566 of 1985, preschool education is part of primary education and most of its functions are subject to the same regulations as primary schools. Article 3 of the Law 1566/1985 indicates that the purpose of preschool education (kindergarten) is to promote the physical, emotional, mental, and social development of children within the broader framework of the general aims of primary and secondary education. In particular, the kindergarten helps children to: cultivate their senses and organize their mental and physical actions; enrich and organize their experiences deriving from the physical and social environment and acquire the ability to discern relationships and interactions in this environment; develop the ability to understand and express themselves through symbols in general and in the domains of language, mathematics and aesthetics in particular; create interpersonal relations which will assist their gradual and harmonious integration into the life of the community; develop initiatives freely and, within the framework of the organized environment, become accustomed to relationships with other individuals and the group.

The curriculum is designed by the Pedagogical Institute and approved by the Ministry of Education. The goal of the curriculum is to support children's gradual socialization so that they develop physically, emotionally, mentally and socially. These programmes are organized around themes that attract children's interest and are pedagogically appropriate. The organization around themes as well as the work plans are basic features of the pre-primary curricula that emphasize inter-disciplinarity, a holistic approach to knowledge and the mobilization of children's interests and ideas

in the learning process. A typical kindergarten daily programme includes hours for developing interdisciplinary activities, for spontaneous activities in activity corners, for breaks and for breakfast. The day starts and ends with a discussion to plan or to evaluate the activities of the day. Similarly, the daily programme of the all-day kindergartens starts and ends with discussion time, while it includes more hours of inter-disciplinary and spontaneous activities and more breaks, meal and rest periods. Child and infant centres have a daily programme of creative activity that aims at promoting the children's socialization, supporting their developmental progress and providing an environment of freedom and security in order to ensure their harmonious psychosomatic development. The daily programme includes time for individualized growth and development programmes, for free play and creative activities supportive of the aforementioned goals, as well as meals and rest periods. (EURYDICE, CEDEFOP & ETF, 2009/10).

The Cross-thematic Curriculum Framework for kindergarten, prepared by the Pedagogical Institute in 2003, sets directions for programmes regarding planning and development of activities in the context of the following subjects: language, mathematics, studies of the environment, creativity and expression (through fine arts, drama, music, physical education) and introduction to ICT. These programmes are not conceived as independent subjects; rather, it is suggested that they should be taken into consideration during the planning and implementing of meaningful and purposeful activities to the children. Indicative fundamental cross-thematic concepts, underling curriculum's philosophy for the planning and development of activities, promote children's essential skills, attitudes and values such as: respect and tolerate the other; integrate immigrant children into the society; develop children's sense of independence and self-perception; acknowledge diversity in children's different abilities, interests and experiences; develop interaction, cooperation and communication among children; enhance children's ability to research, observe, experiment, discover, solve problems; promote children's learning through play; help children to master and make better use of several sources of information; and encourage children's ability to express themselves in many different ways. The cross-thematic approach together with the projects are both methodological approaches which are proposed to emphasize the cross-thematic perception, the holistic perception of knowledge and the development of the interests and the ideas expressed by children while learning. (Pedagogical Institute, 2003).

The guidelines defined in the kindergarten curriculum and in the Guide on Educational Planning and Creative Educational Environments (2005) provide support for the preschool teacher. The Guide provides teachers with a foundation of theoretical and methodological support, as well as suggestions and direct examples of educational activities. The Guide for All-Day *Nipiagogeio* Teachers (2008) supplements these resources by providing additional material and ideas appropriate to the extended programme of the all-day kindergarten. According to the guide for kindergarten teachers, their work should promote the development of autonomy in children so that they may learn, amongst other things, to co-exist, cooperate and use knowledge and skills from different cognitive areas. The teacher creates the proper educational conditions in an attractive, safe, friendly and stimulating environment that ensures motivation and education for all children where the teacher assists, cooperates, intermediates and facilitates the whole educational process. (Eurydice, 2009/10).



Kindergartens may have one or two teachers. One-teacher *nipiagogeia* (i.e. single classroom) are those attended by a number of children ranging between seven and 25; and two-teacher *nipiagogeia* (two classrooms) are those attended by 26 to 50 children. The number of children per pre-primary teacher should not exceed 25 children. All-day kindergartens are staffed by at least two pre-primary school teachers. Attendance at kindergarten is for two years; children who, before 31 December of the year of enrolment, are at least 4 years old are eligible to attend. As mentioned, attendance of 5-year-olds is compulsory since 2007/08. In one-position *nipiagogeia* which operate with one teacher, children of both age groups share the same classroom, but an effort should be made to differentiate activities as regards pace and level of difficulty, in order to take into account the specific needs of each age group. Infant centres are divided into classes according to the age of children as follows: from 6 months to 1.5 years and from 1.5 to 2.5 years. In child centres classes group children from 2.5 up to 3.5 years and from 3.5 to 4.5 years. Infant sections are attended by 12 infants with two teachers and one assistant. Every section of the child centre serves up to 25 children with one teacher and one assistant. Children with recognized special education needs can enroll in special education pre-primary schools with early intervention sections providing systematic support from the preschool age.

Kindergartens are normally in operation from 1 September to 21 June of the following year, with educational activities starting on 11 September and ending on 15 June of the following year. Child and infant centres operate 11 months per year as defined in the standard operation regulation. They suspend operation mainly in August, but they may choose to break for a month between June and July according to local needs. Public kindergartens operate Monday to Friday and the daily schedule is from 8:15 until 12:15. Children are expected to arrive at 8:00 and leave by 12:30. The schedule of all-day *nipiagogeia* is extended by four hours: starting at the same time as the regular kindergarten and ending by 15:45, while leaving time is at 16:00. Furthermore, there is a possibility of an elective morning attendance from 7:00 to 8:00 if at least five children participate. The daily schedule is drafted by the teaching staff in cooperation with the head of the kindergarten and may be readjusted after consultation with the pre-school advisor. Child and infant centres operate Monday to Friday and children may arrive from 6:45 until 9:00, while they may leave from 13:00 until 15:45. Organized educational activities may start at 9:30 and end at 12:00 when they break for lunch; afterwards children gradually leave or participate in play and creative activities. According to the standard operational regulation, this schedule is flexible and indicative; the basic times (times of arrival – departure – lunch, rest and breaks) are stipulated in the operational rules of each centre. (*Ibid.*).

In kindergarten, evaluation is continuous and is based on observing the everyday behaviour and activities of the children, both on an individual and on a group level. Assessment results, records, occasional notes of the teacher and the child's work file are included in the evaluation file of each child. At least once a month, or more often if there is such need, cooperation is arranged beyond the hours of teaching with the parents of the children. The evaluation file is accessible to parents. Staff at child and infant centres meet with parents once a month to inform them about the child's general on-going development. (EURYDICE, CEDEFOP & ETF, 2009/10). Alternative ways of assessment are recommended. Emphasis is put on procedures aiming at acquiring knowledge through creative work, communicative



skills and responsibility through collaborative work, research and critical thinking. Such alternative methods are focusing on: the development of projects and their final outcome; group assessment, done collectively by the children themselves; and evaluation of the children's work based on their files/portfolios. (Pedagogical Institute, 2003).

According to national data, in 2001/02 the percentage of participation in preschool education of the 5-year-olds was 81.8%. In 2004/05 there were 5,274 kindergartens with 137,059 children enrolled and 11,083 teachers in the public sector. In addition, there were 117 private preschools with 4,595 children enrolled and 259 teachers.

The Hellenic Statistical Authority reports that at the beginning of 2009/10 there were 6,103 kindergarten units (including 403 units in the private sector) with a total enrolment of 157,908 children (including 11,658 children in private kindergartens) and 13,488 teachers, of whom 669 in the private sector. At the beginning of 2009/10, girls accounted for 48.7% of the total kindergarten enrolment. In 2009/10, there were 78 kindergartens in the public sector for children with special educational needs, with a total enrolment of 397 children and 147 teachers. (HSA, 2011).

Primary education

Primary education is compulsory and lasts six years (grades 1-6). Children who have reached the age of 6 by the end of December of the year of enrolment are admitted to grade 1. Upon completion of grade 6, pupils receive the primary school-leaving certificate which gives access to the lower secondary school (gymnasium). In recent years, an increasing number of all-day primary schools has been established, with an extended timetable and enriched curriculum.

Article 1 of the Law No. 1566 of 1985 indicates that the general aim of primary and secondary education is to contribute to full harmonious and balanced development of the emotional, psychological and physical capacities of pupils, in order for them to be given the opportunity to fully shape their personalities and be creative in their life irrespective of their origin or sex. One of the specific objectives of primary and secondary education is to help pupils become free, responsible and democratic citizens, as well as citizens capable of fighting for national independence and democracy. Other specific objectives are the cultivation of creative and critical thinking and the development of a spirit of friendship and cooperation with people from all over the world.

According to the Cross-thematic Curriculum Framework for compulsory education of 2003, the main aim of general education should be ensure the balanced development of humanistic-social and scientific-technical areas of the curriculum, assisting thus the balanced physical, mental, moral, aesthetic, and emotional development of students. This aim should be achieved by emphasis on the following goals: contribute to the development of pupils' interests and skills; provide opportunities for access to and exploitation of information concerning all kinds of topics; develop the abilities of critical thinking and decision-making on the basis of personal values and needs; develop the ability to express thoughts and views, through

the development of intellectual, social and communicative skills; and develop a spirit of cooperation among pupils that will enable them to accomplish common goals and act responsibly. (Pedagogical Institute, 2003).

Article 4 of the Law No. 1566/1985 states that within the broader framework of the general aims of primary and secondary education, primary education shall help pupils to: expand and redefine the relations between their creative activity and the objects, situations and phenomena they are studying; build the mechanisms that contribute to the assimilation of knowledge, to develop physically, improve their physical and mental health and cultivate their motor skills; learn the most basic concepts and gradually acquire the ability to derive abstract thoughts from concrete data; acquire the ability to express themselves correctly, both in oral and written form; become gradually familiar with ethical, religious, national, humanistic and other values and organize them into a system; cultivate their aesthetic criteria, enable them to appreciate artistic works and express themselves through their own artistic creations.

Curricula and timetables for primary and secondary school education are prepared by the Pedagogical Institute and submitted to the Ministry of Education for approval. Curricula are defined, tested, evaluated and reviewed constantly in the light of developments in the fields of knowledge, social needs and the progress made in the teaching profession. The curricula for the nine-year compulsory education programme, in particular, have internal coherence and a uniform content development. Textbooks for pupils and teachers are based on the curriculum.

The tables below show the weekly lesson timetable for primary education in 2004/05 and 2009/10:

Greece. Primary education: weekly lesson timetable (2004/05)

Subject	Number of weekly periods in each grade					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
Religion	–	–	2	2	2	2
Modern Greek language	9	9	8	8	7	7
Mathematics	4	4	4	4	4	4
History	–	–	2	2	2	2
Environmental studies, including religion in grades 1-2	3	3	3	3	–	–
Geography	–	–	–	–	2	2
Science	–	–	–	–	3	3
Social studies and civics	–	–	–	–	1	1
Music and arts	3	3	3	3	2	2
Physical education	2	2	2	2	2	2
Foreign language (English)	–	–	3	3	3	3
Flexible (Interdisciplinary area)	4	4	3	3	2	2
Total weekly periods	25	25	30	30	30	30

Source: Greece Eurydice Unit, 2006. Each teaching period lasts 40 to 45 minutes.

Greece. Primary education: weekly lesson timetable (2009/10)

Subject	Number of weekly periods in each grade					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
Religion	–	–	2	2	2	2
Modern Greek language	9	9	8	8	7	7
Mathematics	4	4	4	4	4	4
History	–	–	2	2	2	2
Environmental studies, including religion in grades 1-2	4	4	3	3	–	–
Geography	–	–	–	–	2	2
Natural sciences	–	–	–	–	3	3
Social studies and civics	–	–	–	–	1	1
Arts education	3	3	3	3	2	2
Physical education	2	2	2	2	2	2
Foreign language (English)	–	–	3	3	3	3
Second foreign language (French or German)	–	–	–	–	2	2
Flexible (Interdisciplinary and creative activities)	3	3	3	3	2	2
Total weekly periods	25	25	30	30	32	32

Source: Eurydice, 2009/10. Each teaching period lasts 40 to 45 minutes. ICT is integrated into different subjects.

All subjects are compulsory for all pupils and considered to be of equal value. However, the method applied by teachers is a matter of personal choice and a product of their own education and training and of the pedagogical guidance offered by the school advisors. Guidelines regarding the teaching-learning process are provided in the curricula and especially in the teachers' books prepared for every subject at each grade level. In most primary schools all the subjects are still taught by the class teacher. However, the teaching of certain subjects by specialized teachers is increasingly gaining ground. Legislation stipulates that physical education, music, foreign languages and arts can be taught by subject teachers. Compulsory English language classes have been introduced from the third year of primary education since 2003/04, as well as the teaching of physical education and music by specialized teachers. In order to encourage multilingualism, a second foreign language (French or German) has been introduced from grade 5 in 2006. Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is integrated into the teaching of individual subjects. In all-day primary schools pupils may choose from the following electives: visual arts, drama, music, dance and sports (the latter only in grades 3-6). Within the context of the 'flexible zone' and elective after-school activity programmes, environmental education, health education, artistic and cultural projects are also being implemented. These activities emphasize empirical, interdisciplinary and team approaches to education so as to assist pupils to develop social and critical thinking skills while at the same promoting the opening up of schools out to the broader community. Health education advisors cooperate with the educational community in implementing the health education programme, developed by the Pedagogical Institute with the focus on interpersonal relations and mental health. The primary education curriculum includes health education issues in various subjects with the objective of promoting the ability



to use knowledge and skills for protecting health on a personal and social level. (Eurydice, 2009/10).

Schools enrolling 10 to 45 pupils (that may be single-teacher, two-teacher or three-teacher schools) have up to 15 pupils per class, while larger schools have up to 25 pupils per class. Depending on the area, one-teacher primary schools with less than 15 pupils can be merged into a central primary school. All-day primary schools offer an enriched curriculum complemented with alternative teaching approaches and content. These include empirical methods, modern subjects and skills such as ICT and additional hours for foreign language teaching. In 2008, the all-day school curriculum was implemented in 90% of primary schools. Regarding pupils with disabilities and special educational needs, the general policy is for co-education within mainstream primary school. Special measures (special educational materials, application of new technologies, etc.) aim at facilitating their integration in the mainstream class. Primary schools usually operate between 8:00 a.m. and 14:00 p.m. (in the case of primary schools) or 16:15 p.m. (in the case of all-day primary schools, which may offer an additional optional period up to 17:00 p.m.). Primary school advisors have the responsibility of scientific and pedagogical guidance and supporting teachers in their district. Youth Guidance Centres (one in each Directorate) provide support services to pupils with personal, psychological, family or social problems. (*Ibid.*).

Assessment is an integral part of the teaching-learning process. Its essential aim is the continuous improvement of the educational process and also to keep both teachers and pupils informed about their efforts in order to achieve the best possible results. Pupils are assessed by the class teacher in all subjects on the basis of: (i) the daily oral assessment and participation of the pupil in the learning process and in other school activities; (ii) performance results on the basis of assessment criteria which constitute an integral part of the school programme; (iii) the assignments to pupils either at school or at home; and (iv) a creative project in grades 5 and 6. The purpose of the projects is to develop the pupils' creative capability and critical thinking, to cultivate the spirit of questioning and research, to promote pupils' special talents and interests and accustom them to systematic and responsible work. In grades 1 and 2 there is only a descriptive assessment, with no numerical mark recorded. In grades 3 and 4, in addition to the descriptive assessment, the following marks are used: excellent (A), very good (B), good (C), and fair (D). In grades 5 and 6, the following marks are used: excellent (9-10), very good (7-8), good (5-6), and fair. For pupils who receive a mark D, as well as for the grades 1-2 pupils who are facing similar difficulties, remedial teaching programmes are implemented. Priority is given to grades 1 and 2 pupils who have not yet acquired basic skills in reading, writing and arithmetic. Remedial teaching classes may be held throughout the school year or for a limited period of time; they may cover one to two hours a day and up to six weekly hours and may be organized during or after the daily timetable. The basic core content of the remedial teaching programme per subject is defined by the Pedagogical Institute.

Pupils in grades 1 and 2 are promoted if the classroom teacher judges that they meet the assessment criteria. Otherwise, they repeat the grade. Pupils in grades 3 and 4 are promoted if the majority of their final average marks are higher than D. Pupils in grades 5 and 6 are promoted provided that their general average is at least 4.5 out of 10 or higher. In grades 1 to 5, at the end of the school year pupils receive a progress



report certificate confirming their promotion. Upon completion of grade 6, a primary school-leaving certificate is issued and sent through the educational service channels to the gymnasium where the pupil will enrol. (*Ibid.*).

Enrolment in primary education is almost universal. According to national data, in 2004/05 there were 5,609 primary schools with 603,108 pupils enrolled and 52,237 teachers in the public sector. In addition, in the private sector there were 375 schools with 47,134 pupils enrolled and 3,540 teachers.

The Hellenic Statistical Authority reports that at the beginning of 2009/10 there were 5,460 primary schools (including 362 schools in the private sector) with a total enrolment of 633,406 pupils (including 46,023 pupils in private schools) and 64,268 full-time teachers and other teaching staff (i.e. foreign language teachers, music teachers, etc.), of whom 3,992 teachers in the private sector. At the beginning of 2009/10, girls accounted for 48.6% of the total primary school enrolment. In 2009/10, there were 147 primary schools in the public sector for children with special educational needs, with a total enrolment of 2,872 pupils and 1,032 teachers. In 2007/08 a total of 14,651 pupils were attending 1,313 special education classes in mainstream primary schools. (HSA, 2011).

Secondary education

Secondary education is free of charge in state schools. As mentioned, lower secondary education (gymnasium) lasts three years (four years in the case of special education gymnasia) and completes the compulsory education cycle. The evening gymnasium offers pre-vocational education and is for students aged 14+. Students successfully completing the gymnasium programme receive the lower secondary school-leaving certificate which entitles them to enter upper secondary school without entrance exams or other restrictions.

At the upper secondary level, the 1997 reform introduced the unified lyceum offering a three-year programme with three main streams (humanities, natural sciences and technology) starting from the second year. Following the adoption of Law No. 3475/2006, upper secondary education is now offered by the general education lyceum (with three main streams, i.e. humanities, natural sciences and technology, starting from the second year) and the vocational education lyceum (EPAL), combining general education and technical-vocational studies. There are also other types of lyceum, e.g. ecclesiastic, experimental, minority, multicultural, music, art, special education, and lyceums with sports departments. In 2011 the Ministry of Education envisaged to introduce the technological lyceum to replace the vocational lyceum starting from 2012 (Eurydice, 2011). The evening lyceum is for students aged 15+ and provides a four-year programme. Vocational training schools (EPAS), which replaced the technical-vocational education training schools (TEEs) in 2006, offer programmes normally lasting two years (three years if on-the-job training is provided, normally in apprenticeship EPAS). Students having successfully completed the first year of the lyceum may enrol in the first year of EPAS, while EPAS graduates may enrol in the second year of the vocational lyceum. Upon successful completion of lyceum studies, students receive the upper secondary school-leaving certificate (in addition, a vocational education certificate in the case of the vocational lyceum).



EPAS graduates receive the vocational education certificate, which entitles them to get a professional license and enrol in a postsecondary vocational training institute.

Vocational training institutes (IEK) offer programmes at the postsecondary, non-tertiary level usually lasting two years for graduates from the general education lyceum. In the case of vocational education graduates who followed a similar course, the further training usually last two semesters. Certain IEK courses are also for gymnasium graduates. The certificate or diploma of vocational training awarded by IEK is equivalent to that of the vocational lyceum (EPAL) with professional rights enabling access to the labour market in both the public and the private sector. (Eurydice, 2009/10).

Article 5 of the Law No. 1566/1985 indicates that, within the broader framework of the general aims of primary and secondary education, the high school (i.e. the gymnasium) shall promote the all-round development of students according to their abilities and the requirements of life. In particular, the high school shall help students to: broaden their value system (moral, religious, national, humanistic) so that they can regulate their behaviour to conform to these precepts, and control and direct their emotions towards creative goals and humanitarian actions; complement and combine the acquisition of knowledge with social considerations, so that they can deal successfully with a variety of situations and seek solutions to life's problems in a responsible way, in a climate of creative dialogue and collective effort; cultivate their language skills so that they can correctly and clearly express their thoughts in both oral and written form; develop their physical abilities and cultivate their talents and motor skills; recognize the various art forms and acquire aesthetic criteria useful for their own creative expression; become aware of their own abilities, inclinations, skills and interests, acquire knowledge for the various professions, and understand the equal contribution of intellectual and manual work to social progress and development.

In the gymnasium pupils follow a common programme of studies, excepting the English language module which is taught at two different levels per grade based on the pupils' language proficiency. The curricula and timetables are prepared by the Pedagogical Institute, which also coordinates the competitive bidding for the writing of textbooks for pupils and teachers based on the approved curricula. The tables below show the weekly lesson timetable for the day-time gymnasium in 2001/02 and 2009/10:

Greece. Lower secondary education (day-time gymnasium): weekly lesson timetable (2001/02)

Subject	Number of weekly periods in each form		
	7	8	9
Religion	2	2	2
Ancient Hellenic literature	4	4	4
Modern Greek language and literature	5	4	4
History	2	2	3
Civic and social studies	–	–	2
Foreign language (English)	4	3	3
Second foreign language (French or German)	2	2	2
Mathematics	4	4	4
Physics	–	2	2
Chemistry	–	1	1
Computer science	1	1	1
Geography	2	2	–
Biology	2	–	2
Technology	1	1	–
School vocational guidance	–	–	1
Physical education	3	3	2
Music	1	1	1
Arts	1	1	1
Home economics	1	2	–
Total weekly periods	35	35	35

Source: Eurydice, 2001/02. Each teaching period lasts 45 minutes.

Greece. Lower secondary education (day-time gymnasium): weekly lesson timetable (2009/10)

Subject	Number of weekly periods in each form		
	7	8	9
Religion	2	2	2
Ancient Greek language and literature	5	5	5
Modern Greek language and literature	5	4	4
History	2	2	3
Civic and social studies	–	–	2
Foreign language (English)	3	2	2
Second foreign language	2	2	2
Mathematics	4	4	4
Physics	–	2	2
Chemistry	–	1	1
Computer science	1	1	1
Geography	2	2	–
Biology	2	–	2
Technology	1	1	–
School vocational guidance	–	–	1
Physical education	3	3	2
Music	1	1	1
Arts	1	1	1
Home economics	1	2	–
Total weekly periods	35	35	35

Source: Eurydice, 2009/10. Each teaching period lasts 45 minutes. The second foreign language may be French, German, Italian or Spanish, depending on the school.

At the beginning of the school year instructions are provided to teachers by the Pedagogical Institute about the educational objectives of the subjects they teach, together with general and particular methodological orientations. Teachers are responsible for assessing the abilities of their pupils and modifying their teaching approach accordingly. A substantial effort is also undertaken to promote workshop instruction (laboratories) for the natural sciences and enhanced teaching and implementation of new information technologies in all secondary schools.

Pupil assessment is regarded as an on-going pedagogical process. The purpose is continuous improvement in the teaching process and more generally the operation of the school, as well as to inform teachers and pupils about the results of their efforts, to achieve the optimum education results. The assessment of pupils is based on: (i) the daily oral assessment and the pupil's participation in the teaching-learning process; (ii) short written tests; (iii) hour-long compulsory written tests which are given without notice in each of the first two terms, at the discretion of the teacher and in consultation with the school head teacher; (iv) the assignments to pupils at school or at home, as part of the daily learning process; (v) the creative projects undertaken by the pupil either alone or in cooperation with their mates, on a subject of his/her choice and under the guidance of the teacher; (vi) written review examinations for all subjects excepting physical education, music, home economics, technology, and art and school vocational guidance and information technology in the first two years.



Pupils may sit for a written and/or oral supplemental examination in September in as many subjects as they have failed, when they have failed in up to four subjects. Pupils in the final year, who have not been judged worthy of promotion or of writing supplemental examinations, are permitted to repeat the examinations until they pass, without the obligation of attending the classes again. In terms of pupils' promotion and graduation subjects are distinguished into two groups (A and B). Group B includes physical education, music-art, home economics, technology and school vocational guidance. Group A includes all the other subjects. Pupils can be promoted or graduate in the following instances: (i) when they have an annual general mark of at least 10 in each subject of groups A and B; (ii) when they have a mark of less than 10 in one up to four subjects of the B group and an overall average mark in both groups of at least a full 10; (iii) when they have a mark of less than 10 in up to four subjects of the A group but have an average overall mark of at least 13 in all subjects in the A group; and (iv) when their mark is less than 10 in one up to four subjects of groups A and B and the conditions outlined above in (ii) and (iii) for the subjects in each group apply. Pupils may sit for a written and oral supplementary examination in September in as many subjects as they have failed to receive a passing mark of 10. (Eurydice, 2009/10).

The aims of the general education lyceum are to: provide a high level of general knowledge; develop the students' abilities, initiative, creativity and critical thinking; offer the students the knowledge and abilities necessary to continue their studies; cultivate students' skills which will, after specialization or training, facilitate their access to the labour market. The objectives of secondary vocational education are to: develop the pupils' abilities, initiative, creativity and critical thinking; transmit the required technical and professional knowledge and development of relevant skills; and offer students the knowledge and abilities necessary to continue their studies. (Eurydice, 2009/10; EURYDICE, CEDEFOP & ETF, 2009/10).

The first year of general education lyceum is an orientation year with common academic subjects and one elective. In the second and third years, part of the programme is devoted to academic subjects and electives, and the other part to specialization subjects according to three fields of study, e.g. humanities, natural sciences and technology (the latter includes two further specializations in the third year: technology and production, and information science and services). Enrolment in the first year of takes place without examinations and without restrictions, on the basis of the gymnasium leaving certificate. In the evening schools, the largest percentage of students is between 16 and 25 years of age.

The tables below show the weekly lesson timetable for the day-time, general education lyceum:

Greece. Upper secondary education (first two years of the day-time, general education lyceum): weekly lesson timetable

Subject	Number of weekly periods in each grade			
	10	11		
		Humanities	Sciences	Technology
<i>General education subjects:</i>				
Religion	2	2	2	2
Ancient Greek language and literature	6	2	2	2
Greek language	2	2	2	2
Modern Greek literature	2	2	2	2
History	2	2	2	2
Algebra	2	2	2	2
Geometry	3/2	2	2	2
Physics	2/3	2	2	2
Chemistry	2	2	2	2
First foreign language	3	2	2	2
Principles of economics	2	–	–	–
Technology	2	–	–	–
Physical education	2/1	2	2	2
School vocational guidance	–/1	–	–	–
Biology	–	1	1	1
Introduction to law and civil institutions	–	2	2	2
<i>Sub-total</i>	32	25	25	25
<i>Specialized subjects:</i>				
Ancient Greek texts	–	4	–	–
Latin	–	2	–	–
Principles of philosophy	–	2	–	–
Mathematics	–	–	3	3
Physics	–	–	2	2
Chemistry	–	–	2	–
Communications technology	–	–	–	2
<i>Sub-total</i>	–	8	7	7
One elective (*)	2	–	–	–
Two electives (*)	–	4	4	4
Total weekly periods	34	37	36	36

Source: Adapted from Eurydice, 2009/10. Each teaching period lasts 45 minutes.

(*) In the first year elective subjects include: second foreign language (English, French or German); European civilization and its roots; information science applications; aesthetic education (drama, music, visual arts); and psychology. In the second year, electives include: second foreign language (English, French or German); social and political organization in the ancient Greece; principles of environmental sciences; modern European literature (history and texts); astronomy and space studies; design (linear, freehand, technical); history of the social sciences; history issues; computer applications; biology; natural resources management; and chemistry.

Greece. Upper secondary education (third year of the day-time, general education lyceum): weekly lesson timetable

Subject	Number of weekly periods in each grade			
	Humanities	Sciences	Technology	
			A	B
<i>General education subjects:</i>				
Religious education	1	1	1	1
Ancient Greek language and literature	1	1	1	1
Greek language	2	2	2	2
Modern Greek literature	2	2	2	2
History	2	2	2	2
Physics	1	1	1	1
First foreign language	2	2	2	2
Physical education	1	1	1	1
Biology	1	1	1	1
Mathematics and elements of statistics	2	2	2	2
Sociology	2	2	2	2
<i>Sub-total</i>	<i>17</i>	<i>17</i>	<i>17</i>	<i>17</i>
<i>Specialized subjects:</i>				
Ancient Greek	5	–	–	–
Modern Greek literature	3/2	–	–	–
Latin	2/3	–	–	–
History	2	–	–	–
Mathematics	–	5	5	5
Physics	–	3	3	3
Chemistry	–	2	–	–
Biology	–	2	–	–
Chemistry and biochemistry	–	–	2	–
Electrical elements	–	–	2	–
Development of applications and programming	–	–	–	2
Principles of organization, business administration and services	–	–	–	2
<i>Sub-total</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>12</i>
One elective (*)	2	2	2	2
Total weekly periods	31	31	31	31

Source: Adapted from Eurydice, 2009/10. A = Technology & production course; B = Information science and services course.

(*) Electives include: second foreign language (English, French or German); principles of economic theory; statistics; logic (theory and practice); computer applications; history of the art; history of science and technology; philosophic problems; modern Greek literature; technology and development; elements of agronomy and agricultural development; industrial production and energy; principles of accounting; technical design; architectural design; computer systems technology and operating systems; multimedia and networks; and software applications.

With regard to the evening (general education) lyceum, the first and the second years are orientation classes and general knowledge subjects are taught for a total of 21 periods per week, plus one elective for two weekly periods. In the third and



fourth years there are general knowledge subjects and stream subjects. In the third year general knowledge subjects account for 18 weekly periods and in the fourth year for 12 periods. The number of teaching periods for the compulsory subjects varies between seven and eight a week in the third year, depending on the stream, and 12 periods a week in the fourth year. In the third year there are no electives. In the fourth year, students may opt to take 'principles of economic theory' for two weekly periods. The third year of the evening lyceum corresponds to the second year of the day-time lyceum. (Eurydice, 2009/10).

The assessment of students in the lyceum is considered as an integral part of the educational process. An effort is made to apply a variety of assessment methods and techniques so as to arrive at a valid, reliable, objective and accurate assessment of students' knowledge, their critical ability and skills. The ultimate purpose is to foster the students' self-knowledge, to keep students and guardians fully informed and to enable teachers to draw conclusions about the results of their efforts and provide feedback for the teaching process. Within this framework, students are evaluated on the basis of: their participation in daily classroom work and their overall activity at school; their performance on written tests during the two four-month terms of the school year; their composite creative projects; and their individual file (keeping such files is optional for the school). The following forms of assessment are applied: diagnostic evaluation; procedures for evaluating the oral mark; composite creative projects; assignments and activities that make up the students' optional performance and activity file; and written examinations for promotion or graduation. These examinations for students in the first and second years are based on questions set by the teachers at the school level. For students in the third year for certain general knowledge subjects, the examinations are based on questions set at school level by the teachers. For the rest of the general knowledge subjects and all the specialized subjects, the questions are set by an external nationwide examination committee and are graded by two markers in marking centres at the prefectural level. The marking scale for students' performance is from 0 to 20 as follows: poor (0 – 5), fair (5.1 – 9.4), average (9.5 – 13), good (13.1 – 16), very good (16.1 – 18), and excellent (18.1 – 20). For students to be promoted and receive a school-leaving certificate an 'average' general mark of 9.5 is compulsory; this is calculated on the total of the marks for all subjects requiring final written examinations (taking into consideration the oral marks) whether they are examined internally at the school level or externally at the national level in the third and final year of the lyceum. (*Ibid.*).

The curriculum at the vocational lyceum (EPAL) includes general knowledge subjects common to all students, technical-vocational subjects and workshop exercises, for a total of 35 weekly periods in each year. Thus, in all grades of the vocational upper secondary school, except for general knowledge subjects, the curriculum includes subjects in cycles (technological, services and marine) for the first year, in professional sectors for the second year and in specializations for the third year. Students must study both the common subjects corresponding to their class and the cycle subjects of the selected sector. The number of fields and specializations offered in each EPAL depends on the local socio-economic conditions and needs, the numbers and preferences of the students, and on the recommendations of municipal committees, the Pedagogical Institute, prefectural committees and the heads of secondary education offices. In the vocational training schools (EPAS) the curriculum includes theoretical and workshop modules. (*Ibid.*).



The subjects in EPAL are distinguished into general knowledge, theoretical vocational education, mixed subjects and subjects with two or more cognitive objects. The general knowledge subjects in the first year of all three cycles cover about 70% of the total programme and specialization subjects the remaining 30%. The assessment of students in EPAL is governed by the general principles and philosophy of the similar procedure applied in general upper secondary education. Furthermore, methods to assess performance of students in workshop subjects are applied. A common assessment scale is registered for every individual subject, each four-month period and in calculating of the average general mark. The mixed subjects of theoretical and workshop or design feature are examined and assessed independently for each feature. The final mark of the subject in question is based on the average of the theoretical and workshop or design parameters and ultimately a single mark is registered. Subjects with one or more cognitive objects are examined and marked for each object and the mark registered is the average of the partial cognitive objects. Curricula in EPAS include only technical-vocational subjects and workshop exercises (laboratory practice) for the specialties. The subjects in EPAS are in principle specialization subjects. Apprenticeship EPAS (normally admitting students having completed the first year of the general education or vocational lyceum) belong to upper secondary education and focus on specialties demanded by the labour market. The duration of the studies in apprenticeship EPAS is two years (four semesters). During these two years trainees receive theoretical training in class and at the same time practical training in public or private enterprises for four or five days a week. (CEDEFOP, 2009).

Postsecondary vocational education is provided by vocational training institutes (IEK). Public IEK come under the supervision of the Organization for Vocational Education and Training (OEEK; the new National Organization for the Certification of Qualifications, has been established in 2010 to replace the OEEK). There are also IEK that operate under the supervision of other ministries and bodies, such as the Manpower Employment Organization, the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Tourism. The main target group of IEK consists of adults aged 18+ who do not wish to continue their studies at the higher education level and prefer to obtain a vocational qualification. IEKs also offer further and supplementary training to EPAL and EPAS graduates in their area of specialization. They are also suitable for older people who want to upgrade their skills and adapt to the changing needs of the production process. For general education lyceum graduates the duration of training is four semesters. For EPAL and EPAS graduates attending a specialty relevant to the one they studied before, the duration of training is two semesters. Each training year comprises of two separate semesters, winter and spring. Each semester lasts for fourteen weeks of full training. Training in public IEKs is usually provided during afternoon hours. Trainees attend compulsory theoretical, laboratory and mixed lessons in the framework of the educational curricula, which cover a wide range of fields and specializations. A total of 208 specialties fall into 14 broader fields. The subjects taught place emphasis on specialization rather than broader occupational skills. IEK also offer programmes at the post-lower secondary level for adults who do not wish to continue their studies and would like to obtain some basic vocational skills. The main admission requirement is the completion of lower secondary education or a second chance school. Prior working experience in the field is also valued. The minimum admission age of trainees is 18 years, whereas there is no age limit for enrolment.



There are six broad fields, where a total of 19 specialties belonging to these are offered. The specialties are divided in fields and groups. (*Ibid.*).

Trainees who successfully complete their training at IEK are awarded a vocational training certificate, which entitles them to take part in the final accreditation examinations leading to the award of a vocational training diploma (at the postsecondary, non-tertiary level). The vocational training diploma is a prerequisite for obtaining a licence to exercise a profession in the relevant specialties. OEEK has regulated the professional rights of IEK graduates in 63 specialties in collaboration with the competent ministries and in 2009 was in the process of promoting the professional rights of 52 specialties. There is no direct access to tertiary education and graduates can enter higher education only by sitting national-level examinations. In 2007/08, 13,964 students attended apprenticeship EPAS. There were 114 public IEK operating in all prefectures of the country and mainly in the big towns and 52 private ones. In the fall semester, in both public and private IEK 37,280 trainees attended, while in the spring semester the respective number was 37,106. (*Ibid.*).

According to national data, in 2004/05 there were 1,867 gymnasias with 316,862 pupils enrolled and 39,238 teachers in the public sector. In addition, there were 117 private schools with 17,857 pupils enrolled and 2,291 teachers. In the same year, there were 1,265 lyceums with 226,056 students enrolled and 23,403 teachers in the public sector; there were also 110 private upper secondary schools with 17,428 students enrolled and 2,076 teachers. In 2004/05 there were 473 TEEs with 109,428 students enrolled and 16,423 teachers in the public sector, as well as 67 TEEs with 4,287 students enrolled and 1,073 teachers in the private sector.

The Hellenic Statistical Authority reports that at the beginning of 2009/10 there were 1,980 gymnasias (including 107 gymnasias in the private sector as well as 87 evening gymnasias, of which two were in the private sector) with a total enrolment of 335,602 pupils (including 18,147 pupils in private schools) and 41,865 teachers, of whom 2,336 teachers in the private sector. The total number of general education lyceums was 1,368 (including 103 lyceums in the private sector as well as 75 evening lyceums, of which three were in the private sector), the total enrolment was 248,927 students (including 16,884 students in private lyceums), and the number of teachers was 27,548, including 1,932 teachers in the private sector. With regard to secondary vocational education (including ecclesiastic education), in 2009/10 in the public sector there were 627 schools (including 385 vocational lyceums and 104 vocational training schools under the responsibility of the Ministry of Education) with a total of 109,928 students enrolled and 18,897 teachers; there were also 14 schools in the private sector (e.g. four vocational lyceums and 10 vocational training schools) with a total enrolment of 639 students and 145 teachers. At the beginning of 2009/10, girls accounted for 47.8% of the total enrolment in gymnasias, 53.3% in general education lyceums, 32.3% in vocational lyceums and 45.8% in vocational training schools run by the Ministry of Education, and 81.9% in vocational training schools run by the Ministry of Health. In 2009/10, in the public sector there were eight special education gymnasias with 295 pupils enrolled and 147 teachers, five special education lyceums with 140 students enrolled and 105 teachers, and 16 vocational training schools with 690 students enrolled and 304 teachers. An additional 729 students were enrolled in



other units of special programmes and 2,392 students were enrolled in workshops of special vocational education and training. (HSA, 2011).

Assessing learning achievement nationwide

Debates on the evaluation of the education system focus on the establishment of a quality assurance framework for all the educational levels and training services. The government is committed to improve efficiency, accountability and transparency within the higher education system, mainly through the Quality Assurance and Accreditation Agency established in 2006. The same applies to primary and secondary education, in particular in conjunction with the implementation of provisions contained in Law No. 2986/2002 concerning the assessment and further training of teachers. At the same time, more attention is devoted to the possibility of self-evaluation of educational institutions which was introduced under Law No. 2525/1997 and the specific regulations of Law No. 2986. This was based on the positive outcomes of the piloting of schools' self-evaluation conducted between 1997 and 1999. The Educational Research Centre coordinates the participation of Greece in the OECD Program for International Student Assessment (PISA).

“In the PISA 2009 assessment of 15-year-olds, Greece showed below-average performance in reading (rank 25), mathematics (rank 30) and science (rank 30). The results remain below the average even after accounting for spending per student and the socio-economic context of students. While the PISA results show that Greece has maintained its performance in reading since 2000 and in science since 2006 when PISA began to measure these trends, student performance in mathematics has improved by 21 score points since 2003. Girls outperform boys in reading by an average of 47 points, an advantage that is greater than on average across OECD countries. In Greece, girls also outperform boys in science by an average of 10 points, while there is no gender difference on average across OECD countries. However, in Greece, boys outperform girls by 14 points in mathematics, which is comparable to the OECD average advantage of 12 points. In Greece, 21% of 15-year-olds do not reach the PISA baseline Level 2 of reading proficiency, less than the OECD average of 19%. This proportion, which has remained unchanged since 2000, is larger than in most OECD countries. In mathematics, 30% of students perform below Level 2 on the PISA mathematics, which represents a decrease by 9 percentage points since 2003. In science, 25% of students perform below Level 2 on the PISA science scale and this proportion has remained unchanged since 2006. At the other end of the performance scale, the share of students in Greece at the very highest levels of reading proficiency (Levels 5 and 6) is below the OECD average. Some 6% are top performers in reading (OECD average is 8%), 6% are top performers in mathematics (OECD average is 13%) and 3% are top performers in science (OECD average is 9%). The proportion of top performers in reading has remained unchanged since 2000, while the proportion of top performers in mathematics has increased by two percentage points since 2003 and the proportion of top performers has remained unchanged in science since 2006.” (OECD, 2011).

“The difference between high and low performers in reading (i.e. variation in students' performance in reading) is slightly greater in Greece than the OECD average, and 46% of this performance variation is attributable to the performance difference between schools. In Greece, this difference is greater than the OECD

average of 39%. The difference between high and low performers in reading has remained the same since 2000 between schools, but has increased within schools. Socio-economic disadvantage does not have a particularly strong impact on student performance in Greece: some 13% of the variation in student performance in Greece is explained by students' socio-economic background while the OECD average is 14%. In Greece, the level of school responsibility reported by principals in developing curricula and assessments is the lowest among the OECD countries. In Greece, 20% of students are in schools whose principals reported that only principals and/or teachers have considerable responsibility in establishing student assessment policies (the OECD average is 66%), 6% reported that only principals and/or teachers have considerable responsibility in deciding which courses are offered (the OECD average is 50%), 1% reported that only principals and/or teachers have considerable responsibility in determining course content (the OECD average is 45%), and 7% reported that only principals and/or teachers have a considerable responsibility in choosing which textbooks are used (the OECD average is 78%). Greece also shows below-average school autonomy in resource allocation." (*Ibid.*)

Teaching staff

Teachers are trained at the higher education level. The duration of pre-service teacher training programmes at universities is four years, while programmes in professional fields (i.e. polytechnic schools) last four to five years. Technical and vocational secondary education teachers normally are graduates from a four-year programme in technological fields with an additional one-year certificate of pedagogical training from the School of Pedagogical and Technological Education (ASPATE), which replaced the Technical and Vocational Teacher Training Institute in 2002. For music teachers with university degrees in music studies the duration of training is five years.

The initial training of kindergarten and primary school teachers is offered at pedagogical departments which have been established at various universities. For secondary education teachers, pre-service training is mainly offered by universities, Technological Education Institutes (TEIs), and the ASPATE.

The 1982 reform of universities established two categories of teaching faculty. The first category is that of the auxiliary faculty, which comprises the assistants, academic assistants, and postgraduate scholars, who are not doctoral degree holders. The second category is the tenured teaching and research faculty, and is divided into four levels: lecturers, who have a doctorate and at least three publications; assistant professors; associate professors; and full professors. The qualifications of the three classes of professors are graded by additional qualifications (papers, publications, etc.).

In the case of kindergarten and primary school teacher training programmes, students are evaluated in each course by the professor, whose evaluation must be based on the written or oral examinations they have set or on students' written assignments or on laboratory exercises. Students complete their studies and are awarded a degree when they have passed the required courses and obtained the required number of credits. The pedagogical departments for preschool and primary school teachers grant degrees which allow their holders to participate in examinations held by the Supreme Employee Selection Board (ASEP) and to be included in a list of



provisional substitute teachers in order to be appointed as kindergarten or primary school teaching staff. The same applies to secondary school teachers. (Eurydice, 2009/10).

Until 1997, preschool, primary and secondary education teachers were appointed in vacant organic positions of the respective schools by a decision of the Ministry of Education on the basis of a 'precedence list' where prospective teachers were registered. Since 1997, a different system has been implemented for primary and secondary education teachers. The 'precedence list' has been abolished and candidates have to sit competitive examinations administered by the ASEP. The system has been further amended by additional provisions and, starting from 2005 the appointment of primary and secondary school teachers in the vacant positions takes place by 60% from the examinations administered by the ASEP and by 40% from the list of supplementary teachers (having served on the basis of a contract of limited duration). Teachers are appointed to permanent positions by a decision of the head of the Directorate, upon a proposal by the relevant Regional Education Service Council. Preschool teachers are appointed with the initial grade "C" and a pay scale of 18 (the highest level is 1, and the required time for advancement is two years for each level). After a two-year probationary period they receive a permanent appointment. For promotion from grade "C" to grade "B", two years are required, and from grade "B" to grade "A", six years are required. Additional allowances and incentives are also granted. Primary education teachers are appointed under the same procedure as kindergarten teachers.

With regards to teachers' workload at the different educational levels, preschool teachers arrive at the kindergarten at 8:30 a.m., i.e. half an hour before the children, and leave at 12:45 p.m., i.e. fifteen minutes after the end of the activities. Primary school teachers usually work 25 hours per week in schools with one to three teaching positions. Teachers who serve in primary schools with at least four teaching positions teach for at least 24 hours a week if they have up to 10 years of service, 23 hours if they have between 10-15 years of service, 22 hours if they have between 15-20 years of service, and 21 hours a week if they have more than 20 years of service. Principals of primary schools have the following teaching hours: 20 hours at schools with four and five teaching positions; 12 hours at schools with six to eight teaching positions; 10 hours at schools with 9 to 10 teaching positions; and 8 hours at schools with 11 and 12 positions. All primary school teachers must stay at school on working days over and above their teaching hours in order to provide other services related to education as a whole and to perform specific tasks assigned by the school's administrative bodies. However, working hours cannot exceed six hours a day or 30 hours a week. At the general secondary education level, teachers with six years of service work 21 hours, 19 hours with 6-12 years of service, 18 hours with 12-20 years of service, and 16 hours with more than 20 years of service. At the technical-vocational secondary education level, teachers with seven years of service work 22 hours, 19 hours with 7-13 years of service, and 18 hours with over 13 years of service. (*Ibid.*).

Teachers' further education is divided into induction for newly appointed teachers and periodic for those already working and takes place at the Regional Further Education Centres. The Law No. 2986/2002 established the Organization for the Further Education of Teachers (OEPEK) under the supervision of the Ministry of



Education. OEPEK is responsible for: planning further education policies for primary and secondary school teachers; coordinating forms and types of further education and implementing further education actions; preparing further education programmes and assigning the educational work to competent agencies; allocating and managing resources provided for further education; and certifying forms and degrees of further education. OEPEK is not in charge of preparing the introductory further education programme. Continuous training takes the form of further education programmes, which, upon their approval by the Minister of Education, are implemented by further education bodies. In order to accomplish its purpose, the OEPEK can cooperate with the Pedagogical Institute, the Educational Research Centre, public services and organizations, Greek and foreign universities, TEIs and research centres. (*Ibid.*).

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*For more detailed and updated information consult EURYDICE, the information
network on national education systems and policies in Europe:*

http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/education/eurydice/index_en.php

*For updated links, consult the Web page of the International Bureau of Education of
UNESCO: <http://www.ibe.unesco.org/links.htm>*