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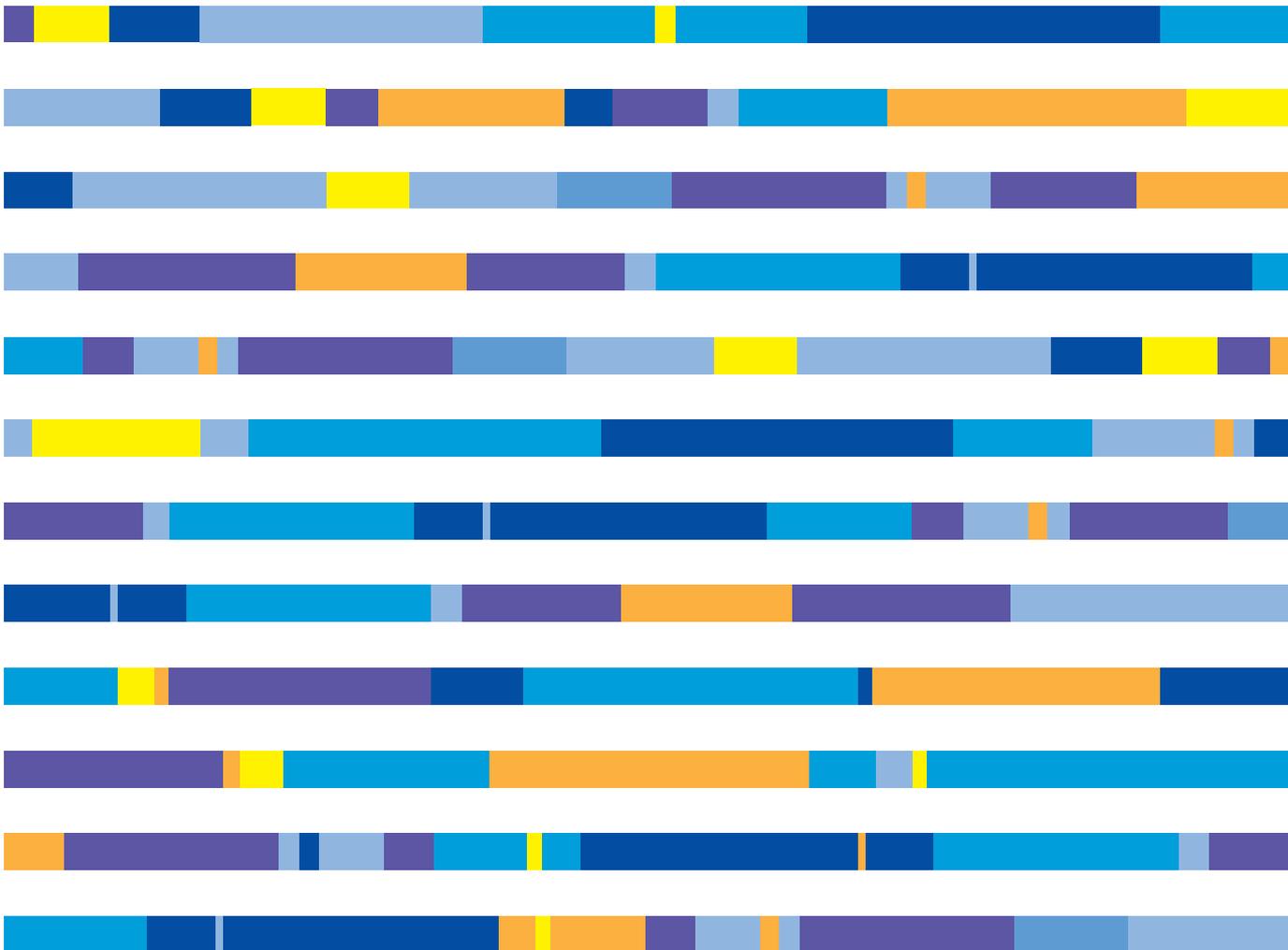
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European inventory on validation of non-formal and informal learning 2018 update

COUNTRY REPORT: **GREECE**

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1 Introduction

Progress in Greece, in terms of implementing the 2012 Council Recommendation on the validation of non-formal and informal learning has been somewhat slow, in the sense that a framework for validation that can encompass informal learning gained through work experience is not part of immediate plans. Validation of informal learning in particular, is not seen as a societal need or a political priority.

During the past two years, continuing vocational education and training (CVET) has been the policy priority and this is where most progress has been made. Initial vocational education and training (IVET) has also been prioritised as there is a large volume of IVET graduates whose status needed to be addressed. Hence, the accreditation of Institutes of Vocational Training (IEK) graduates has been regularised over the past two years (IEKs are defined as non-formal education in Greece).

In summary, progress made between 2016 and 2018, includes:

- Accreditation of CVET training programmes has been a priority. Training programmes are not yet accredited. However, the legislative provisions for the accreditation of training programmes was being prepared by the Ministry of Education during the time of writing this report and their adoption is imminent.
- Another significant development since 2016 is the legislative provision for the development of two-year post-secondary vocational training programmes organized by Universities. This is foreseen by Article 8 of Law 4521/2018, according to which, Higher Education Institutes may establish two-year vocational training programmes for Vocational Lyceum graduates (EPAL). These programmes provide diplomas at Level 5 of the Hellenic Qualifications Framework (HQF) and European (EQF) Qualifications Frameworks. Accreditation will be carried out by the Universities, without the involvement of the validation authority (EOPPEP). Significant questions such as whether these cycles will be part of formal education, need to be clarified.
- Progress is being made in terms of basic skills for adults, in the context of the Upskilling Pathways recommendation. This progress has taken the form of two pilot projects within the calls for the European Agenda and EaSi progress, with less clear progress in terms of policy or provision at national level.
- In post-secondary VET, the certification of those who will graduate from the fourth year of Vocational Upper Secondary School (the 'Apprenticeship Class' – *taksi mathiteias*) has been developed.

The development of a system for the certification of outputs was imminent during the 2016 Inventory update. Since then, progress has been slow in terms of the development of a National System for the Certification of Outputs. In 2018, this system remains one of the strategic objectives of the National Organisation for the Certification of Qualifications and Vocational Guidance (EOPPEP). If implemented, the certification will follow criteria and processes that will ensure that the certified qualifications correspond to the requirements of the relevant certified occupational profiles (*Epaggelmatiko Perigramma*).

Validation of non-formal and informal learning is thus not yet fully developed in Greece, due to lack of legislation in this field possibly stemming from cultural factors. Even though informal and non-formal learning represent the majority of learning pathways in Greece, such learning is not adequately valued and recognised in society. In relation to validation of informal learning, a cultural shift would also be required in favour of learning outcomes, to support steps towards recognition and validation.

2 National perspective

2.1 Overarching approach to validation

In order to better understand the developments and state of play in the validation of non-formal and informal learning in Greece, it is important to highlight the definitions used in the country, regarding initial vocational education and training (IVET), vocational education and training (CVET), non-formal learning and validation.

Box 1: Definitions of key terms in the Greek context

Initial Vocational Education and Training (IVET): Under the law on Restructuring of Secondary Education (Law 4186/2013 of September 2013), IVET in Greece includes Vocational Training Schools (SEKs) (ISCED 3) and Institutes of Vocational Training (IEKs) (ISCED 4). IEKs were recognised as non-formal learning institutions by the 2010 Lifelong Learning law. SEKs were introduced by the 2013 law and were also recognised as non-formal learning institutions to provide initial vocational training to graduates of formal compulsory education. However, only 4 of the foreseen 95 SEKs were established and according to law 4386/2016, the SEKs will be abolished on 31 August 2019.

Non-formal learning:

Compared to the definition provided by the 2012 Council Recommendation for the validation of non-formal and informal learning, it is underlined that non-formal learning does not have the same definition in Greece. The 2013 Referencing Report of Greece also highlights this difference¹.

Non-formal education in accordance with Greek legislation (Law 3879/2010, art. 2, paragraph 4 and Law 4386/2016, art. 66, paragraph 2) includes:

1. IVET
2. CVET
3. General Adult Education
4. In post-secondary VET, the fourth year after graduating from the Vocational Upper Secondary School (EPAL), named 'Apprenticeship Class' is also defined in the area of non-formal education.

Validation:

The word 'certification' (*pistopoihsh*) is mainly used across processes and national policy documents; it may regard documentation that attests that learning took place; but may also imply 'assessment' and 'validation'. However, it is also interesting to note that the word 'certification' (*pistopoihsh*) is sometimes used when no actual assessment takes place. Experts suggest that for 'validation' another term should be used in Greek (*Epikirosi* or *Egyropoisi tis mathisis*), to imply assessment and equivalence in learning outcomes.²

These definitions shape the way non-formal learning and its validation is handled in the country. The above definitions are also used in this report, when discussing national policy documents and processes.

A national system for non-formal and informal learning per se does not exist in Greece. EOPPEP is the centralised authority for such validation, but only takes into

¹ "The term 'non-formal education' is a direct translation from the terminology in Greek legislation, and does not have the same meaning as the term 'non-formal learning' as defined in the 2012 Recommendation on the Validation on Non-formal and Informal Learning", and as updated in 2015. In Greece, non-formal education refers to the educational activities outside the formal educational system

² <https://e-stadiodromia.eoppep.gr/index.php/education-and-adult-training/>

account learning coming from specific IVET and CVET providers. Hence, EOPPEP validates some learning in IVET and CVET based on legislated criteria for infrastructure, trainers & curricula, as well as enacted specifications for the organisation and operation of the provider, employed staff and provided services.

EOPPEP is also working on the development of occupational profiles with the active contribution of the social partners, with increasing emphasis on learning outcomes regardless of the learning path.

Progress in implementing the Council Recommendation on the validation of non-formal and informal learning has been somewhat slow, in the sense that a framework for validation that can encompass informal learning gained through work experience is not part of immediate plans. Policy priorities have instead focused on the validation of non-formal learning given that IVET and CVET are defined as non-formal education in Greece. Continuing VET has been the top policy priority and this is where most progress has been made over the past two years. CVET centres are entering a process of voluntary accreditation of their programmes and the priority for the remainder of 2018 will be how to certify the outputs of CVET centres, which is to be developed in consultation with the social partners through a working group set up for this purpose.

Also, priority has been placed on the accreditation of graduates of Vocational Training Institutes (IEKs) which provide IVET. This is because there is a large volume of graduates whose status needs to be addressed/normalised. IEKs are defined as non-formal education in Greece, in this sense falling within the remit of non-formal and informal learning.

More specifically, in terms of non-formal learning (which in Greece generally has characteristics of 'formal' learning), there are streams of actions that have been taken in a validation perspective, as follows, in relation to CVET:

1. Curricula are now certified based on learning outcomes. The Ministry of Education together with teams of drafters developed these and they were certified by EOPPEP.
2. Significant progress has been achieved in terms of CVET through the establishment of the accredited study programmes. The accreditation of the study programmes has been linked to the accreditation of the training structures. Ministerial Decisions are awaiting for these to be implemented.
3. Again in terms of CVET, a framework has been developed for the Lifelong Learning Centres as a regulation has been created for their operation and inspection and penalties have been foreseen. A recent law (Article 89 of Law 4547 of 2018) makes provisions for certification of outputs of CVET centres (in particular of Lifelong Learning Centres) and for the inspection of CVET centres and for imposing fines on those who do not comply. The law prompts for the Ministerial Decisions necessary, which are currently pending.

And in relation to IVET:

1. IVET examinations have been regularised as these exams were only taking place once a year. They take place twice a year now, from September 2018. These exams offer the possibility to certify the outputs of IVET learning. The post-secondary VET 'apprenticeship year' (*Mathiteia IEK*) has been initiated and a Quality framework has been developed for it. The first phase of the certification process for the Vocational Education and Training (VET) Apprenticeship Scheme took place in July 2018: 340 apprenticeship graduates successfully completed the exams that were organised by EOPPEP. EPAL graduates (graduates from Vocational Upper-Secondary Schools) of seven

different specialties were examined in the first phase. Graduates of the same seven - plus another nine specialties (16 specialties in total) - will be examined in the second phase of the certification process which will take place in early 2019³. Two-year IVET programmes were initiated by Universities as of September 2018, in 10 specialisations. These will be differentiated from the IVET offered by IEKs as quality will be assured by the University offering the programmes and participants will not sit IEK examinations. The specialisations themselves must be consistent with the curriculum studies of the University Department offering them, and this is expected to give new impetus for the IVET offer in new specialisations.

2.2 Validation in education and training

As described in the 2016 Inventory report, EOPPEP is the certification authority, that is, the authority responsible for the quality assurance of the certification of qualifications in Greece. It was created in November 2011, merging three pre-existing organisations in a single organisation dealing with both inputs (infrastructures, trainers etc.), guidance, and outputs/certification⁴.

In 2010, the Lifelong Learning law (Law 3879/2010) recognised non-formal and informal learning as part of lifelong learning and the providers of such learning as parts of the National Framework for Lifelong Learning. The law also introduced new organisations and empowered decentralised authorities. However, the new organisational structure that the 2010 law provided has since changed given the restructuring of organisations and authorities under the overall reforms in the public sector.

The law on Restructuring of Secondary Education (Law 4186/2013) identifies entities/institutions offering non-formal learning that can lead to recognised certifications on a national level. According to the law, non-formal learning institutions (public or private) include:

- **Vocational Training Schools** (*Sxoli Epaggelmatikhs Katartishs - SEK*) that offer initial vocational training to graduates of compulsory education (gymnasium), including an apprenticeship year – these institutions will however be abolished on 31 August 2019;
- **Vocational Training Institutes** (*Institouto Epaggelmatikhs Katartishs- IEK*), offering initial vocational training to graduates of formal, non-compulsory secondary education (general or professional lyceums);
- **Lifelong Learning Centres** (*Kentra Dia biou Mathisis – KDBM*), offering continuous vocational training, general adult education, vocational guidance and lifelong counselling; and
- **Colleges** (*Kollegia*), which offer non-formal learning to graduates of non-compulsory secondary education (general or professional lyceums).

³ Refernet Newsletter Greece, October 2018

⁴ The term 'inputs' refers to the study programme, teaching methods, teachers/trainers qualifications and course duration. The term 'outputs' refers to the outcome of the above processes, which is the certification of qualifications and which is not to be confused with learning outcomes.

Vocational Training Schools, Vocational Training Institutes and Lifelong Learning Centres can be public or private, while Colleges are private Institutions. Private providers must meet specific criteria to receive licencing.

The Ministry of Education and EOPPEP are responsible for inputs in non-formal learning, whereas EOPPEP is the responsible organisation for the outputs. Additionally, graduates from the above mentioned non-formal learning institutions, except from Colleges (*Kollegia*) and *Lifelong Learning Centres*, receive a certification of vocational training and can participate in examinations held by EOPPEP. Success in these examinations leads to: a) a 'Vocational Specialisation Diploma' (*Ptychio Epaggelmatikis Eidikohtas*) (ISCED level 3) for graduates of Vocational Training Schools (SEK) and b) Vocational Specialisation Diploma' (Diploma Epaggelmatikis Eidikotitas, Ekpaidefsis kai Katartisis) (ISCED level 4), awarded to graduates of Institutes of Vocational Training (IEK) that is linked to professional rights and licence to practice. The specialisation diploma is also linked to the HQF.

Validation in non-formal learning (IVET)

Regarding IEKs, the validation process, rules and regulations regarding the examinations and studies follow the IEK Regulation (Decision 5954/2.07.2014). For each IEK specialisation, EOPPEP has developed Certification Regulation Guides, where individuals can find information on the type of examinations and the relevant process, a description of the job profile, the task analysis that describes the knowledge-skills and competences that the individual should demonstrate under job relevant thematic areas, and duration of the process etc. The guides also include a number of questions (approximately 300) relevant to the content of examinations. Examinations include both a theoretical and a practical part. The theoretical part involves written examinations. The examinations are held all over the country in specific Examination Centres, but are assessed centrally by EOPPEP⁵. The written essays, included in the theoretical part of the exam, are assessed by two examiners. The practical part aims at assessing the individual's professional skills and competences as described in the pre-agreed job profiles. This part of the examination takes place in the IEK laboratories or in laboratories or work places where the applicants conducted their practical training/work placement during their studies. The examiners are present during the practical exam and evaluate in situ the individual's performance. An oral examination with three examiners follows to allow individuals to explain their work. The examiners represent EOPPEP and regional social partners. In order to be successful, the individual must be positively assessed by at least two of the three examiners. The practical examinations may take place in more than one examination centre, depending on the specialisation.

Validation in non-formal learning (CVET)

The same process is followed by graduates of the Lifelong Learning Schools operated by and within higher education institutions and vocational training offered by the Lifelong learning centres belonging to the social partners. The Lifelong learning law allowed those institutions to run Lifelong Learning Schools that are recognised to offer non-formal learning. After the completion of each training programme, participants receive a certificate of participation and a training certificate. Research shows that participants are assessed either through weekly tests or only through final examinations. Each Lifelong Learning School determines the way participants are assessed. Training programmes are very often taught exclusively through e-learning,

⁵ Announcements on examination guides and results for each specialisation can be found at <https://www.eoppep.gr/index.php/el/certification-exams/anakoinwseisiek/> (in EL)

such as examples of courses provided by the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki and the University of Pireaus.

The 3879/2010 Act also identified institutes/research bodies of the most significant social partners⁶ as institutes providing lifelong learning services, thus including them in the National Lifelong Learning System. These stakeholders provide CVET opportunities to their members and/or employees of their members. The relevant training programmes are relative to professions and sectors. After the completion of the programme, participants are provided with a certificate of attendance (KEK GSEVEE a). The successful completion of some of these training programmes is linked to the advancement of professional rights (for example, Energy Inspector is eligible to be included in the relevant national registry) (KEK GSEVEE b). As these institutes are recognised to offer non-formal learning, their graduates can opt to sit the examinations held by EOPPEP for their specialisation.

It should also be noted that the 2013 law recognises distance learning as equal to traditional learning, as any private or public institution that offers non-formal learning can choose this type of learning. If a distance learning training programme relates to an entire specialisation, then the graduates receive a Certification of Vocational Training and can sit in the EOPPEP Certification examinations.

Online Greek Qualifications Register

EOPPEP has established the Greek Qualifications Register online: <http://proson.eoppep.gr> and <http://proson.eoppep.gr/en> upon its responsibility for the creation and development of the HQF and its referencing to the EQF and under the supervision and coordination of the Ministry of Education, Research and Religious Affairs. It comprises the qualifications classified in the HQF and referenced to the EQF, together with information based on a unified description standard suggested by the European Commission, to allow for uniformity in the structure of information concerning qualifications among European countries. The Qualifications Register is linked to the European Portal 'Learning Opportunities and Qualifications in Europe' (<http://ec.europa.eu/ploteus>).

To date, 674 qualifications have been sent by the respective educational institutions. EOPPEP has already processed 500 of them to be **included in the Register. The majority of qualifications are Level 5 (188 qualifications), followed by Level 6 degrees (130 qualifications) and Level 4 (55 qualifications) (source: EOPPEP j)**. During 2017, the National Qualifications Register was highlighted as good practice at the EU level and in April 2018, there was an exchange with Latvia on the registers of the two countries. In the future, it is planned for the awarding bodies to gain access to the Qualifications Register upon EOPPEP's authorization, with a view to directly updating the qualifications they award and adding new qualifications.

The National System for Certification of Outputs

The development of a National System for Certification of Outputs is one of the strategic objectives of EOPPEP (EOPPEP, b). This is a very important step, considering the focus of the national education system on inputs.

The National System aims at certifying qualifications that the Greek state is interested in and that are expected to boost employment. The certification would be implemented according to criteria and processes that will ensure that the certified qualifications correspond to the requirements of the relevant certified occupational profile

⁶ The Institute of Labour (I.N.E.); The Centre for Education Policy Development (K.A.N.E.P.) at the Confederation of Greek Workers in Greece (G.S.E.E.); The Small Business Institute (I.M.E.) at the General Confederation of Professional Craftsmen and Tradesmen in Greece (G.S.E.V.E.E.); The Social Multi-Centre and Trans-Balkan Institute for Public Administration Senior Management Associations of Civil Servants (A.D.E.D.Y.).

(*Epaggelmatiko Perigramma*). Under this framework, professionals that do not hold a formally recognised qualification/title, regardless of the way they have developed their professional knowledge-skills-competences, *will be able* apply to EOPPEP for certification. For the above framework to be implemented, the Greek legislative framework requires that a Presidential Decree (PD) be issued outlining the conditions for the certification of outputs, however progress has been stagnant in this respect since 2016 so this framework has not yet been implemented.

VET provided by Higher Education Institutes

A very recent development related to non-formal learning is the establishment of two-year post-secondary vocational training programmes organized by the Universities, included in Article 8 of Law 4521/2018. Accordingly, Higher Education Institutes may establish two-year vocational training programmes for Vocational Lyceum graduates (EPAL). These programmes provide diplomas at Level 5 of the HQF and European Qualifications Framework (EQF). The curriculum, based on what is available in other countries will provide specialized knowledge and skills for highly qualified technicians. These programmes are similar to two-year Vocational Diploma Programmes offered by UK Universities.

Even though two-year post-secondary VET is a well-established institution in the European Union, in Greece this is introduced for the first time. Two-year post-secondary vocational training programmes organized by the Universities are a promising new institution because they will be integrated into the Universities; graduates will be offered a level 5 qualification without having to go through the EOPPEP examinations. It is hoped that this new institution will make vocational training more attractive and will in some way help to connect higher education institutes with the labour market.

In order to consolidate this new institution, a concrete implementation plan will be necessary to determine the vital space of the new institution, while resolving key questions such as whether these 2-year cycles will belong to the formal education system and not to post-secondary IVET (which, as mentioned earlier, is not part of formal education in Greece).

A point made by critics (Adrianoupolitits, 2017) is that pathways for secondary VET school graduates into Higher Education will need to be clarified, so that the implementation of the two-year cycles of vocational programmes in higher education institutes are not jeopardised. Also, the Post-Secondary Apprenticeship year of the vocational secondary school (EPAL) also leads to level 5 qualification. The issue of how EPAL graduates can enter these two-year programmes is also of prime importance for improving both the quantity and quality of students in VET and more generally for upgrading the quality of Greek VET, which is a current government priority.

Certification of the teaching competence of Adult Trainers in non-formal learning

As described in detail in the 2016 Inventory Update, since 2014, adult trainers in non-formal learning (as this is defined in Greece) need to have certified educational competence/proficiency to participate in non-formal learning programmes funded by public resources (Law 4115/2013). This includes the IEKs (ISCED 4). The certification process is accessible by all individuals who meet specific criteria: in order to enrol in the certification examinations, one has to meet certain criteria regarding educational attainment or proven professional experience. More specifically, the individual must initially submit an electronic application. According to his/her educational and/or professional status, the system categorises the candidate in one of the following three certification paths: a) Actual Certification, in case the candidate meets certain criteria

(e.g. tertiary education professors in the field of lifelong learning or adult education or continuing education and training); b) Eligible to participate in certification exams: most participants fall under this category, as the criteria are very broad, varying from specific educational titles to a minimum 150 hours relevant teaching experience of adults⁷; c) Eligible to participate in certification exams, only after successful completion of train the trainer programme. The last category regards applicants with no relevant professional/teaching experience and who hold no applicable educational title in the field of adult learning.

Certification examinations include both a theoretical and practical part and are aimed at ensuring the candidate meets the relevant knowledge, skills and competences, described in the respective certified Occupational Profile. All details of this assessment stage are explicitly described and analysed on EOPPEP's website (EOPPEP, c). Additionally, a relevant ministerial decision defines the requirements for training programmes for train the trainers.

There are over 11 500 certified Trainers for Adults by EOPPEP enrolled in EOPPEP's Register for Certified Adult Trainers and eligible to teach in non-formal learning programmes.

Focus on specific sectors

Currently, sectoral focus is operationally implemented for:

- Certification of private security personnel
- and for the licensing of specific technical occupations (plumbers, technical works machinery operators, liquid and gas fuel installation and welding, certification of technicians who work with fluoride greenhouse gases, and the register of recognised examiners of train drivers).

Training Certification System for employees in the wider public sector

Another attempt at certifying learning outcomes from non-formal learning relate to the development of a Training Certification System for employees in the wider public sector. The relevant law (Government Gazette no. 1592/30-9-2010) introduces the System and aims at certifying the knowledge acquired by public servants through seminars/trainings delivered by the National Centre of Public Administration, other public sector schools, public universities, technological institutes (TEI) that belong to tertiary education, the European Institute of Public Administration, the Social Polycentre and the Inter-Balkan Institute of Public Administration. All training and training structures should be certified by a Central Certification Committee (KEP). Regarding the certification of participants' knowledge and competences, the law defines that it is based on the learning objectives included in the plan of training. The assessment-certification is managed by the training institutions mentioned earlier. It could include multiple-question tests or open questions, case studies, or assignments that participants have to complete. If successful, participants receive a Certificate of Accreditation which is linked to training points. It should be noted that promotions in the public sector take into consideration these points. Unsuccessful participants receive a certification of participation.

Validation of Greek language competence

Non-formal learning in Greek (for foreigners) and other languages can also be validated through examinations offered by the Greek Language Centre of the Ministry of Education. The General Secretariat for Lifelong Learning plans and implements programmes for the teaching of Greek as a second language to foreigners. The Secretariat also runs procedures for certifying the knowledge of the Greek language

⁷ According to EOPPEP

and elements of Greek history which are a prerequisite for assigning migrants the status of 'long-term residents'. A special Unit has been created for this certification procedure through the Presidential Decree P.D. 18/23 February 2018.

The Ministry of Education, through the Greek Language Centre (Greek Language Centre, a) also offers the National Language Certificate that any individual can take through examinations, regardless of how the language skills have been obtained (Law 4018/2011, Article 16). This certificate is not linked to formal education and there are no restrictions regarding participation in examinations, so self-learning, informal learning or any type of learning is acceptable.

The Greek Language Competence Certificate has six levels, following the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages of the Council of Europe. This Certificate is recognised in the public and the private sector and is also mandatory for people applying for public sector positions. There is thus an increased interest from applicants to receive the A2 grade certification which is increasingly being demanded as a pre-requisite for public sector jobs such as municipal cleaners, taxi drivers and nurses, professions which are in demand from foreigners.

As far as trainers for the Greek language are concerned, even though it is felt that it is important for trainers to have formal qualifications, there is the possibility for trainers with at least one year of relevant experience to participate in the "train the trainer" programmes offered for those interested in supporting applicants through the process leading to the recognition of Greek language competence.

Informal learning

The validation of informal learning is not yet well developed in Greece, as there is no evidence of an official framework, neither in the public nor in the private sector. However, some steps have been taken in this direction. In the vocational training schools, created by the 2013 law, students that complete the third year of studies and can prove a minimum number of wages/employment hours are not obliged to attend the fourth study year, the apprenticeship year. These individuals can directly take the certification exams of EOPPEP. In that way, the professional experience of a student is recognised as equivalent to part of the curriculum.

The same holds for students in IEKs (IVET): if minimum wage/hours thresholds are met, students can opt to skip the semester of traineeship. This cannot be regarded as a validation process, but underlines the recognition of informal learning in official education processes.

2.3 Validation and the labour market

The Manpower Employment Organisation (OAED) is the Greek public employment service (PES) providing services to unemployed individuals regarding their entry to the labour market. In this context, unemployed individuals can visit OAED to develop their individual action plan, assisted by employment counsellors. The latter record the individual's profile (studies, previous work experience etc.) and taking into consideration the individual's career aspirations, design the individual action plan (IAP) towards employment. Steps in the plan may include further training, and existing job positions are suggested. Next steps are jointly agreed, but it is the individual's responsibility to carry them out, while the IAP does not certify or validate the unemployed individual's knowledge, skills, and competences or link them to a qualification level.

A recent development from 2017 has been a pilot project run by OAED in its Kalithea branch which is planned to be mainstreamed as a nationwide policy during 2018. The PES Profiling Pilot programme in the Employment Promotion Centre KPA of Kalithea

entailed the profiling of 200 long term unemployed, low skilled people. After this profiling, OAED offered them a tailored training programme through the Greek training voucher scheme. This initiative covers steps 1 and 2 of upskilling pathways but step 3 on validation remains an open question. The pilot action profiled 200 people, 50 of which were lacking Greek language skills, 35 of which had no qualification, 60 of which had a qualification but no work experience and the remaining 60 were closer to the labour market. OAED intends to mainstream the profiling tool to all KPA throughout Greece during 2018 and to profile all registered unemployed people throughout Greece. OAED is currently recruiting 310 job counsellors in order to achieve this.

In relation to Upskilling Pathways, the case in Greece (as in other EU Member States) is that work on the EQF and on the Upskilling Pathways initiative takes place in different organisational settings, with the Ministry of Education and EOPPEP being responsible for validation and the Ministry of Employment and Greek PES piloting Upskilling Pathways initiatives. However, possible synergies between validation and Upskilling pathways have been explored during the groundwork that has been taking place in Greece to respond to the Council Recommendation on Upskilling Pathways. A Memorandum of cooperation is planned to be signed between EOPPEP (the validation authority) and the Greek PES. In addition, all relevant stakeholders have come together on several occasions during the first half of 2018 to develop their dialogue on upskilling pathways and validation and this dialogue is set to continue during 2018.

Smaller scale EU funded projects with a validation element are also supported in some sectors. For example, EOPPEP participates in 'Lifeskills', an Erasmus+ project around art management and live performance. The objective of the project is to support workers, in a sector where their jobs are in danger of being lost, to develop entrepreneurship skills. The project includes a skills gaps analysis, training courses based on learning outcomes, and creating the infrastructure to validate the learning of participants in the project. The project will not validate learning per se, but is creating a basis for the development of validation later (which cannot be completed during the lifetime of the project due to short timeframes, but can be completed at a later stage).

Another Erasmus+ project that EOPPEP is participating in, is the ASAP project in the publishing sector, as the sector moves from paper to e-publishing. Skills gaps analysis, developing training programmes following the ECVET principles, and developing the infrastructure to eventually validate the learning are among the interventions of the project.

All Erasmus+ projects foresee provisions for the dissemination and sustainability and exploitation of results. For EOPPEP, this dissemination of results takes place within the organisation and can be used to feed into a framework for validation at a later stage.

Pilot projects with a validation element are also supported by private sector actors. For example, the MENDI pilot programme is a three-year vocational training programme carried out in partnership between OAED, the Greek PES, the German-Hellenic Chamber of Commerce and the Stuttgart-based DEKRA Akademie GmbH. The project aims to link apprenticeship with Continuing Vocational Training and it focuses on the well-known dual system that has been established for centuries in the German-speaking countries of Central Europe. Graduates of the OAED apprenticeship school in Tourism, can participate in an additional year of supplementary vocational training and practical training by working as apprentices. After completing the programme and passing examinations, the Greek Manpower Employment Organization (OAED) will issue

a Vocational School Apprenticeship Diploma, and the Hellenic-German Chamber will issue a qualification under the German law. The qualification will correspond to Level 4 of the European Qualifications Framework. The Greek qualification in question will be drawn up on the basis of the Greek educational law, and will therefore be fully recognized. (Source: <https://www.dekra-akademie.gr/dual-education-tourism/?lang=en>).

2.3.1 Skills audits

There are no relevant skills audits to report.

2.4 Validation and the third sector

In the third sector, there is no specific framework for validation. However, it appears that organisations develop their own validation systems: for example, the Greek Red Cross offers Train the Trainers opportunities for all specialisations of interest (such as lifeguards). The offered training and its certification are linked to specific international criteria. The diploma earned at the end has a validity of five years and examinations are required for its renewal.

3 Links to national qualification systems

Qualifications and qualifications frameworks⁸

The HQF was adopted in December 2015 and the referencing to the EQF was adopted in November 2016. The HQF comprises eight levels, as in the EQF, defined in learning outcomes for knowledge, skills, and competences. Key definitions in Greek have been developed to facilitate the adoption of the Framework, and a broad range of qualification types have been identified and integrated within the Framework. The Framework has been designed to incorporate all formal qualifications.

Credit systems

The European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) is used in higher education. The law on higher education (Law 4009/2011) introduced changes whereby curricula are to be defined in learning outcomes in accordance with the EQF, and the use of ECTS is introduced for doctoral programmes. However, validation of non-formal and informal learning is not yet established in higher education.

The 3879/2010 law foresaw implementation of the European Credit System in Vocational Education and Training (ECVET), but the system has not been implemented. EOPPEP was identified as the National Contact Point. Nonetheless, the latest law on the reform of technical and vocational education explicitly recognises that vocational education curricula will be shaped according to ECVET credits and where available, to the occupational profiles developed by EOPPEP. The latest legislative developments have triggered awareness raising events on ECVET.

4 Standards

As was the case in 2016, there are still two occupations where certification is possible (security personnel and trainers of trainers) where the standards used are the occupational profiles (*Epaggelmatika perigrammata* in Greek). The certification for hairdressers and cargo loaders has not yet advanced as planned during the past two

⁸ Information provided by EOPPEP

years. Also, there are currently 202 certified occupational profiles in place covering a wide spectrum of occupations. It should be underlined that the social partners have been highly involved in the development and certification of all such profiles. This, in effect, validates the certification process that EOPPEP operates. More specifically, according to the institutional framework for the certification of Occupational Profiles, representatives from the competent authorities and from organisations of social partners participate in the opinion-issuing Committees.

Occupational profiles include descriptions of the tasks, job functions, necessary knowledge, skills, and competence for each occupation or specialty and indicative ways to assess them. Possible pathways towards the attainment of the profiles are also included.

These occupational profiles are certified by EOPPEP. According to the organisation, these profiles (EOPPEP d):

- Are for occupations with a high demand in the labour market;
- Are included in the national database of accredited professional profiles;
- Lead to the development of vocational education and training programmes that respond to labour market needs;
- Promote upgrade of knowledge, skills and competence;
- Contribute to the recognition of vocational skills in the labour market;
- Contribute to the promotion of lifelong learning;
- Support the credibility of vocational education and training.

The shift towards modularised curricula in IEKs, including attribution of credits, is going to be based on these certified occupational profiles. According to authorities, this will facilitate the certification of a larger number of professionals and learners.

Aside from the EOPPEP plans to introduce standards, the ISO 17024 standards on 'Personnel certification' have been increasingly used in the labour market over the past couple of years to verify the competences gained through training programmes promoted by the Greek Public Employment Services (OAED). This **certification of persons**, takes place in a range of programmes that exist for financial planners, public accountants, safety professionals, non-destructive testing experts, supply and purchasing management professionals, the construction industry, health care professionals etc. (<https://www.iso.org/news/2012/07/Ref1625.html>).

5 Organisations and institutions involved in validation arrangements and its coordination

Institutional Framework

In Greece, there is currently no comprehensive national framework on the validation of non-formal and informal learning. However, EOPPEP is the competent institution for the validation of non-formal and informal learning and has been building parts of the framework over the past few years, starting from the validation of IVET and CVET.

The Ministry of Education is the overall competent authority in education in Greece, especially with respect to formal education. The 2010 Lifelong Learning law introduced more participatory decision-making bodies and procedures, introducing the Lifelong Learning Committee. This committee, responsible for IVET and CVET (and therefore, non-formal learning), involves representatives of ministries, authorities

relevant to qualifications, occupational profiles and guidance⁹, prefectures and local authorities, as well as representatives of the main social partners.

Regarding Initial Vocational Training, EOPPEP is responsible for the certification exam of students having completed training at Initial Vocational Training Institutions (SEK-Level 3 and IEK-Level 5). Regarding Continuing Vocational Training, EOPPEP is planning to act as the responsible authority for the certification exam of students having completed training at Lifelong Learning Centres (KDBM). Regarding the fourth year (referred to as Apprenticeship Class) after graduating from the three-year vocational education at the Vocational Upper Secondary School (EPAL) EOPPEP is responsible for the certification exam of students who have successfully completed the fourth year named Apprenticeship Class.

The supervision of the providers of 'non-formal education', both public and private, as well as the authority to define their educational framework falls under the responsibility of the General Secretariat for Lifelong Learning and Youth of the Ministry of Education, Research and Religious Affairs. In this respect, Accreditation of 'Input' (providers of Initial and Continuing Vocational Training, Occupational profiles, learning programmes for Initial and Continuing Vocational Training) falls under the responsibility of EOPPEP and of the Ministry of Education, Research and Religious Affairs, while Certification of 'Output' (certification of graduates of the Initial Vocational Training and Continuing Vocational Training, certification of qualifications) falls under the responsibility of EOPPEP (Law 4186/2013, art. 17, paragraph 2).

Allocation of responsibilities (at national, regional, local, social partner, provider level) according to the different aspects of validation

EOPPEP is the responsible authority for the validation of non-formal and informal learning. Stakeholders are highly involved, although indirectly, in the validation processes in place (called certification - *pistopoihsh*).

The Lifelong Learning law introduced decentralised Lifelong Learning Committees on a regional (prefectures) level. The law empowered prefectures to develop their specific lifelong learning programme, distilling the national one. The Prefectural Committees for Vocational Training were also launched in order to link the local labour market with the supply of education and training. Although these decentralised approaches could promote the validation of non-formal and informal learning, since November 2013 these are not in place due to shortages of human and financial resources.

According to the 2013 law reforming secondary education, public and private providers of non-formal learning can be established across the country, and as representative authorities of the General Secretariat of Lifelong learning, at prefectural level. Official bodies of technical professions will be able to run certification procedures, as EOPPEP does, after receiving an appropriate licence from the above authorities. As the implementation of the new law matures, more information and insights will be available to allow for the evaluation of the process.

It should also be considered that there are in place new institutional frameworks, regarding certification of qualifications for certain occupations, namely: a) Recognition of examiners of Engine drivers and candidate engine drivers (Common Ministerial Decision 49045/5005)¹⁰; and b) Licensing examinations regulations for technicians of liquid and gas fuel, plumbers, technicians of engineering installations, and welders (Common Ministerial Decision 411/14). The certification regards examination in

⁹ These authorities have been merged into EOPPEP in 2011.

¹⁰ By 2016, there were 29 Recognised Assessors of Train Drivers'.

theory and practice, that are organised and quality assured by EOPPEP, as in the case of trainers of adult learners.

There is no evidence that validation of non-formal and informal learning takes place in formal education. Higher education institutions are autonomous and can create a Lifelong Learning Centre, so these Centres can be found across higher education institutions in Greece. As an example the Centre for Continuous Education and Training of the University of Athens offers numerous opportunities for e-learning programmes, which however are not certified. This highlights that the importance of validation of non-formal learning is gaining momentum in higher education, even by small steps.

Education and training providers

Training providers do not take part in the validation process. Since the only official certification process is the one run by EOPPEP, training providers in IVET or CVET only provide certifications of vocational training to their participants. In order to obtain and sustain their operational licence, private providers are obliged to conform to specific regulations regarding their infrastructure and trainers.

Private sector actors (including social partners)

Social partners collaborate with EOPPEP in the development and certification of occupational standards. Moreover, they participate in all competent examination committees that provide certification of qualifications (e.g. for the licensing process of technicians, which is carried out by the Prefectures, a representative of the respective federation participates in the examinations committee and can be supported by a representative of the Technical Chamber). Equally, in the case of IVET (IEKs) graduates certification, representatives of Chambers, professional bodies, social partners and scientific organisations participate in the Central Examinations Committee (KEEPEK).

Additionally, representatives of social partners participate in the Board of EOPPEP: a) one representative of the General Confederation of Workers of Greece (GSEE) b) one representative of the employers' organisations (EOPPEP, f) and c) one representative of the General Confederation of Professional Craftsmen and Merchants (GSEVEE).

One of the aims of EOPPEP for the coming years is to increase the dialogue and the actual involvement of the social partners in the wider sense (i.e. to include more stakeholders such as representatives of young people) in the design and implementation of a framework for validation.

Coordination between stakeholders

Social partners are involved in the development and certification of occupational profiles that are linked to the validation of non-formal learning through the EOPPEP examinations. These examinations are designed by EOPPEP but other relevant bodies can be included, such as the Centre for Security Studies (KEMEA) of the Ministry of Civil Protection and Public Security.

Stakeholders also participate in the Prefectural Committees of Vocational Education and Training (foreseen by article 7 of Law 3879/2010 and Article 8 of N.4186/2013), where these are active.

Next steps on validation seem to rely heavily on EU funds, as underlined by relevant projects and initiatives in place.

6 Information, advice and guidance

6.1 Awareness-raising

Individuals can be informed on the process of certification through the website of EOPPEP. However, no specific awareness-raising practices or initiatives have been found, specifically targeting the validation of non-formal and informal learning.

6.2 Information, advice and guidance

EOPPEP offers IAG services to young people and adults alike, free of charge. During the programming period 2014-2020, EOPPEP will promote the link between certification and lifelong learning guidance. The focus of this initiative will be unemployed individuals to facilitate their re-entry to the labour market.

EOPPEP, through its Directorate for Vocational Guidance and Counselling is committed to promoting relative information to professionals and practitioners, thus promoting participation in various European and National Networks. In parallel, several e-tools that facilitate the overall awareness-raising and knowledge exchange of practitioners and beneficiaries have been developed and launched, while providing vocational guidance e- services. These include the following.

- **A National Database of Learning Opportunities, 'PLOIGOS'** (<http://ploigos.eoppep.gr>), developed in 2009 by the Euroguidance Centre of Greece, provides information to Greek and European citizens (students, job seekers, parents, guidance counsellors, teachers etc.) about learning opportunities of all types (General Education, Vocational Education and Training, Special Education etc.). PLOIGOS is connected to the European Portal for Learning Opportunities and Qualifications in Europe (<http://ec.europa.eu/ploteus/en>) promoting educational mobility throughout the European space and was being further developed within the 2014 - 2016 Euroguidance activities of EOPPEP (project 'Euroguidance National Databases for learning opportunities').
- **The Interactive Guidance Portal for young people** was developed by EOPPEP at the end of 2012 and is widely used by students, young people and guidance practitioners. Tools available include values and decision making tests, e-portfolio development, 'Ask the counsellor' service etc.
- **The Lifelong Career Development Portal** (<http://e-stadiodromia.eoppep.gr/>) is a recently developed Lifelong Career Development Portal, providing career development services and mobility information targeted towards adults and includes digitised career tests, E-Counselling Services, E-Lifelong Career Portfolio Development Tool, Career & Mobility information Resources, and a Career Management Skills Section).
- **The IRIS Lifelong Career Guidance e-forum** (<http://guidanceforum.eoppep.gr>), organised and maintained by EOPPEP.

7 Validation practitioners

7.1 Profile of validation practitioners

Certification examinations for adult trainers for non-formal learning (practical part) are undertaken by two Assessors who can be employees of EOPPEP or other authorized persons, that are competent for the implementation, coordination, and assessment of lifelong learning activities, adult education and training and employment promotion. Experts in lifelong learning, labour market and/or vocational education and training come from the Registry of Assessors of EOPPEP. There is also a Supervisor, appointed by EOPPEP as well.

7.2 Qualification requirements

Applications for the certification examinations of adult trainers in non-formal learning are initially screened by Assessors. As stated earlier, according to the relevant legislation, these Assessors can be employees of EOPPEP or other public authorities that are competent for the implementation, coordination, and assessment of lifelong learning activities, adult education and training and employment promotion; experts in lifelong learning, labour market and/or vocational education and training come from the Registry of Assessors of EOPPEP. All assessors should have tertiary education qualifications (Government Gazette no. 2844/23.10.2012).

The Assessors of the written tests in the theoretical part and of the practical part (teaching simulation) and interviewers who are already included in the Assessors Registry need to have a Master's degree or PhD in one of the following fields: Pedagogy; Adult Training; Lifelong learning; Continuous Education; Continuous VET; Continuing Education; Education Policy; Human Resources Management or Training. Additionally, they need to have five years of professional experience and/or significant teaching experience in relevant fields and attend relevant training run by EOPPEP (EOPPEP h).

Assessors, however, are not allowed to evaluate candidates that they have trained in their role of training adult trainers.

The Centre for Security Studies (KEMEA) sets requirements for Assessors and Supervisors for the examinations of professionals of private security without prior formal qualification. KEMEA runs a Registry of Supervisors and Examiners.

Overall, the minimum requirement to be included in the KEMEA Registry is to have a tertiary level qualification in a field relevant to the topics under examination. At least five years' professional experience is also mandatory (KEMEA, b). In a call for Supervisors and Examiners, KEMEA asked for active or retired members of the Security Forces and Armed Forces or trainers in those Forces who are graduates of tertiary education and have at least five years of professional experience, and strong ICT skills. The candidates should have studied law, sociology, criminology, psychology, medicine, nursing, or other relevant specialisms.

It should be noted that regarding the examination for Certification of private security personnel, organized by EOPPEP in cooperation with KEMEA, the written tests are corrected and graded by KEMEA Assessors under the supervision of EOPPEP.

7.3 Provision of training and support to validation practitioners

Before their involvement in the assessment/examination stage of the certification process of EOPPEP, Assessors and Supervisors attend a short, focused training course run by EOPPEP.

KEMEA also trains Supervisors and Examiners so they can participate in the certification process of professionals in security services without a recognised vocational qualification.

8 Quality assurance

Since November 2013, EOPPEP is one of the first public entities in Greece that is certified in Level 1 of the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) (EOPPEP e). This means that the organisation and its activities are quality assured.

Quality assurance systems / procedures in IVET

The certification examinations that EOPPEP runs, both for IVET graduates (non-formal learning) and for professionals without formal qualifications, are developed based on already certified vocational/occupational profiles. As described above, these profiles are used as qualification standards. As they have been developed through consultation and collaboration with all major social partners, research centres/think tanks and the competent national authorities (since 2011 EOPPEP, previously EKEPIS) the process and mainly the outcomes (certification) can be considered as approved by stakeholders. Also, representatives from stakeholders are involved in the examination committees for the certification of IVET graduates, the certification of adult trainers of non-formal learning, professionals of private security services and technicians in specific technical occupations. Although EOPPEP leads all these examinations and its employees are involved also as supervisors, the process is designed to ensure that all relevant stakeholders have a voice, even indirectly. This is why these certifications have high acceptance in the private sector as well.

As far as the examination stage of the process is concerned, Supervisors are accountable for ensuring that the pre-set process takes place as foreseen. For this reason, they observe and report back to EOPPEP all the stages of an individual's examination. EOPPEP determines the steps the Supervisor should take if there are issues and problems during the process.

National Quality Assurance Framework for Lifelong Learning, 'π3'

A key development in recent years has been the procedure of updating and legally establishing a National Quality Assurance Framework for Lifelong Learning, 'π3', denoting "quality, always and everywhere". This is an integrated model for excellence in VET and concerns VET providers including self-assessment. The model is based on and follows the guidelines of the European Quality Assurance Reference Framework, as a new methodological tool, intending to support VET providers in further improving their educational services. In essence, the National Framework for Quality Assurance in LLL, 'π3', is the main means by which the Ministry of Education will coordinate the role of all VET organisations towards the improvement of quality and the alignment with the national policy as well as the European strategy "Europe 2020". Between 2016 and 2018, the model has not been fully implemented for all VET providers. A Quality Assurance (QA) process has been developed over the past two years, but is not based on 'π3'. EOPPEP has done the ground work and is ready to implement the 'π3' model as soon as the green light is given for it, as a political priority.

Evaluation framework

The certification system currently in place by EOPPEP is evaluated through the EFQM framework. Under the EFQM, the organisation is obliged to run annual satisfaction surveys to all users of its services, including individuals that participated in the certification.

9 Inputs, outputs and outcomes

9.1 Funding

Validation is not recognised as a national framework for specific funding. EOPPEP, as the leading institution in validation is a legal entity of private law and is self-funded, so does not burden the state budget. EOPPEP is co-funded by the Operational Programme 'Development of Human Resources', in the case of certification of teaching competence of Adult Trainers for non-formal education. The development of a coherent System for the Certification of Outputs and the development/amendment of other national Certification Systems are also co-funded by the European Social Fund (ESF).

9.2 Distribution of costs

A strategic objective of EOPPEP is to minimise the costs of the certification processes it oversees, both for the organisation itself and for the individuals participating. This is done by getting rid of paper processes, having as many of the elements of the process as possible taking place online and by keeping the individual's participation costs to a minimum.

To participate in the certification examinations organised by EOPPEP, an IVET graduate has to pay a participation fee of EUR 50, for the theoretical part of the exam and EUR 50 for the practical part. Respectively, for the certification examinations for professionals in private security services, the cost rises to EUR 150, of which EUR 100 goes to EOPPEP and EUR 50 to the Centre for Security Studies (KEMEA), an entity of private law on security studies of the Ministry of Public Order and Civil Protection. Individuals that fail in previous certification examinations and re-sit the examinations must pay EUR 100 (EOPPEP, i).

For a non-native speaker to take part in the examinations towards the various levels of the Greek Language Competence Certificate, they need to pay EUR 65 (Greek Language Centre, a)

9.3 Evidence of benefits to individuals

According to national experts, individuals who have been certified by EOPPEP as professionals in private security services have easily found employment, some of them even abroad.

Overall, formal certifications from public bodies are highly valued in the Greek labour market and society. Therefore, it can be expected that individuals who successfully sit the EOPPEP certification process benefit significantly.

Regarding the validation of foreigners in Greek language, their benefit is explicitly recognised in the related legislation: the Greek Language Competence certification is a prerequisite to obtain a 'long-stay' permit in Greece and it must be submitted along with the relevant application to the Ministry of Interior. Also, the Greek Language

Competence is a requirement to practise several professions in Greece - anyone who wishes to obtain a professional/vocational licence must demonstrate sufficient knowledge of the Greek language. The level of competence in Greek is determined by competent authorities for each licence and is adjusted to the demands of the profession, (According to Presidential Decree 38/2010 that transposes the EU Directive 2005/36/EK).

9.4 Beneficiaries and users of validation processes

9.4.1 Validation trends

In terms of trends in the number of validation beneficiaries, the body of people with IEK certification has been steadily increasing since 2012 when the exams were introduced:

- **Initial Vocational Training - Certification of Vocational Training Institutes (IEK) graduates:** During the years 2012-2017, EOPPEP, has conducted national level certification examinations for initial VET graduates in a wide range of over 200 VET specialisms. The number of participants to the exams peaked in 2014 and in 2017, with 14 490 and 10 235 applicants respectively. Over the five-year period 2012-2017 (no exams held in 2013), the total number of applicants for the theoretical part of the examinations was 41 889, of whom 22 482 successfully passed the exam. For the practical part of the examination, there were 35 909 applicants, out of whom 26 371 successfully passed the exam for the practical part of the examination. Hence the body of people with IEK certification has been steadily increasing. The success rate in the practical part of the examination has however been variable, ranging from a low of 44% in 2016, through 51% in 2012, to a high of 68% in 2017 (proportion of successful candidates compared to the number of those who sat the theoretical examination). Those examined had a higher success rate on the practical aspect of the examination, the success rate in the practical part is consistently in the range of 82% to 87% of those sitting the exam.
- **Certification of teaching competence of Trainers for Adults of non-formal education:** there are over 15 000 Certified Trainers of Adults, enrolled in EOPPEP's Register for Certified Adult Trainers and eligible to teach in non-formal learning programmes. During the latest exams that took place in May 2018 in 21 Examination Centres across Greece, a total of 3 582 candidates participated. Of these, 3 152 (success rate 87.99%) succeeded in the exam and were included in the Register of Adult Educators. The success rate in the Theoretical part is 89.97% and the Practical part is 80.84%.
Certification of private security personnel: EOPPEP in cooperation with KEMEA, over the period 2012-2018, has conducted national level certification examinations for Private Security Professionals twice a year. In numbers, applicants for the theoretical and practical part of the examination were 36 041, of whom 31 831 successfully passed the exam. During the past seven years (2012 up to and including early 2018), 37 589 Private Security Professionals, not in possession of any recognised occupational title, have been certified by EOPPEP.
- **Certification of technicians, who work with fluorides greenhouse gases (in cooling, air conditioning, fire-fighting, etc.):** To date, this certification has been awarded to 270 certified technicians.
- **Register of recognised Examiners of train drivers:** EOPPEP maintain the register of recognised Examiners of train drivers. The register currently includes

29 recognised Examiners of train drivers. Recognised Examiners of train drivers can work in all Member States of the European Union.

- **Greek language certification:** The overall number of persons interested in obtaining the certificate has been increasing over the past three years. The table below shows the number of persons taking the exam every year, as well as the success rate. The table shows that success rates have climbed above 80% in recent years.

Year	Number of candidates	Success Rate
2013	3 802	71.12%
2014	3 935	79.42%
2015	3 810	81.15%
2016	4 102	83.49%
2017	4 667	82.25%
2018	5 163	82.64%

9.4.2 Validation users

EOPPEP maintains analytical records and electronic data of the number of applications and examination participants for every specialism, under each examination period and per prefecture. The organisation also keeps records of the members of the examination committees, various demographic and other specific data, as well as an integrated Register of Examiners and Assessors. This data is however, not published.

9.4.3 Validation and disadvantaged groups

No specific examples of initiatives involving migrants/ refugees have been identified, aside from the well-established process for the certification of Greek language competence, which has been widely used by migrants in Greece since 2006, and which facilitates access of migrants to - generally low-skilled - jobs in the public sector.

The Greek PES (OAED) profiling initiative which will be mainstreamed during 2018-2019, will also benefit migrants in cases where migrants register as unemployed at PES offices, and where they pass through the profiling tool. This profiling tool primarily targets low-skilled unemployed people, in the context of upskilling pathways, with the aim of offering opportunities for basic skills training to the low skilled. Language training is offered to migrants who do not speak Greek.

There are also EU funded projects with a validation element, which Greece participates in but these can operate in isolation as they are not necessarily seen as test beds for possible future mainstreaming. For example, EOPPEP is participating in the 'Just like home' Erasmus project for the recognition/validation of skills of refugees and migrants. Several EU Member States participate in the project (Belgium, Spain, Austria and Sweden, together with Greece) which develops tools based on experience from Canada, Denmark, and Australia.

10 Validation methods

Based on the description above, three of the four stages of validation take place: documentation, assessment, certification. Identification is the exception. Overall, the focus lies in assessment methods. Regarding the certification of adult trainers of non-formal learning by EOPPEP, e-portfolios are developed and used as a documentation

method. E-portfolios may include teaching programme planning, development of teaching material, video-taped teaching of the applicant and electronic files from e-learning teaching experience. When applying for the certification process for adult trainers, individuals need to provide documentation that proves, among others, their minimum teaching experience.

Assessment in Greece traditionally involves written tests. This seems to be the main methodology in most relevant (although not comprehensive) processes of validation that one can currently find in the country. Nevertheless, for IVET graduates, professionals of private security without formal qualifications and adult trainers of non-formal learning, assessment also entails a practical part, which involves oral tests, case studies' analysis, demonstration of skills and competences and also teaching simulation.

In the assessment stage for adult trainers, the practical part also involves a presentation of a teaching plan (simulation of teaching, through a 20-minute implementation of a teaching plan by the examinee in a group of nine co-candidates, who undertake the role of 'trainees'). The presentation is assessed in situ by two competent assessors. A video is recorded in case the candidate should be reassessed. After the presentation, the examinee is interviewed by two Assessors and the Supervisor.

Examinations for other forms of non-formal learning, include the theoretical and practical examinations for IEK graduates. For CVET programmes examinations take place exclusively through written tests, while Language Certificates are awarded through both oral and written tests.

The following table presents the main methods used, under each validation stage that leads up to certification:

	Identification	Documentation	Assessment
Debate			
Declarative methods			
Interview			X
Observation			X
Portfolio method		X	
Presentation			X
Simulation and evidence extracted from work			X
Tests and examinations			X
Other (e.g. e-learning methods) – please specify			

11 The position of validation in society: visibility and trust

Developments since 2010 underline that there is a clear focus towards complying with EU frameworks and Directives, while upgrading the existing systems. However, there appears to be a societal and labour market preference for formal qualifications and traditional assessment methods, such as written tests. The lack of validation practices in formal education also underlines this. The authorities emphasise that, given the financial constraints faced during a prolonged economic crisis, developments towards VNFIL have had to be prioritised across multiple sources of learning and have had to focus on validating forms of IVET and CVET, which in any event are defined as non-formal learning in Greece.

As already mentioned above, even though informal and non-formal learning represent a number of learning pathways in Greece, such learning is not adequately valued and recognised in society. In relation to validation of informal learning in particular, a cultural shift would also be required in favour of learning outcomes, to support steps towards recognition and validation.

In terms of specific initiatives:

- EOPPEP is of the view that since the IEK (IVET) examinations have been developed in cooperation with the social partners, this is a reason why the certifications have high acceptance in the private sector.
- The Greek language competence certificate is also recognised in relation to positions in both the public and private sectors.

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