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Lifelong Learning

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Georgios D. Raftoulis

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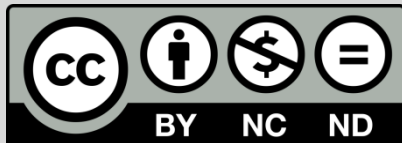
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“Γηράσκω δ’ αἰεὶ πολλά διδασκόμενος”

Σόλωνας

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1. Introduction

In this book, it is made an effort to be defined the term of Lifelong Learning (LLL), VET, adult education as this can help to understand the theoretical, and literature framework. Furthermore, it is quoted the necessity and purpose of LLL as well as of vocational training that includes the institutes of vocational training. In addition, it is made an effort to clarify the terms of adult education, lifelong learning, and vocational training. Finally, it is presented the LLL programs in Greece as well as the legislative frame about schools of second change and institutes of vocational training.

Especially, in the following Table 1 it is made an effort to clarify briefly the differences among the concepts of “adult education- lifelong learning- vocational training”.

Table 1 *Clarification of concepts*

Adult education	It consists formal, non-formal, and informal education. It is provided to every adult after the initial education aiming to professional and/or personal purposes.
Lifelong learning	It consists a wide variety of learning formats and is usually seen as education throughout the lifetime. It happens to all member of a society at all stages of their life span.
Vocational training	Is the key element of lifelong learning, which equips people with the knowledge, skills, and competences necessary for the labour market.

1.1. Concept and evolution

1.1.1. Adult Education

The meaning of “Adult Education” includes the process of lifelong learning that adults take part, either through a formal or informal method. This learning will help them to acquire, recognize, exchange and adapt to new conditions in life, in society and in organizations. Taking into consideration that youth and adulthood are different in each culture, it is a fact that as adult is considered not only those who are at a proper age but everyone who gets involved in the LLL (Hanemann, 2015).

According to CEDEPOF (2008), adult education gives the learner personal and professional perspective to develop. In general, it can: Provide general knowledge in specific topics, offer literacy and basic skills that were not taught initially, give them flexible learning opportunities (Rothwell, 2020; Walters & Watters, 2017), provide access to a whole training system, to develop and gain further knowledge, improve the technical abilities of adults in their professional life; it is a process like “a second change in education” UNESCO UIS (2015, p. 4).

According to Kokkos, “the term adult education signifies the organized part of adult lifelong learning and at the same time indicates the humanitarian direction of educational programs carried out in this context” (Kokkos, 2005, p. 37). Kokkos also argues that adult education activities are the result of needs arising at the economic technological, socio-cultural level (Vergidis & Karalis, 2004).

LLL creates a new learning society and community with the core component of learning throughout life.

The types of adult learning and education activities vary widely. Adult learning and education includes many learning opportunities for equipping adults with literacy and basic skills; for continuing training and professional development, and for active citizenship, through what is variously known as community, popular or liberal education. Adult learning and education provides a variety of learning pathways and flexible learning opportunities, including second chance programmes to make up for lack of initial schooling, including for people who have never been to school, early school leavers, and dropouts (Rothwell, 2020).

Also, literacy is very important in adult education, as it gives them the opportunity to integrate better in life, to understand, interpret and communicate in an always changing financial, vocational and cultural environment, using printed and written materials (Smythe, 2018).

The UNESCO Recommendation concerning Technical and Vocational Education and Training (2015) contains relevant provisions in this area (Smythe, 2018).

Finally, adult education, through individualised programs, activates people to learn more and be more sensitive in fields like justice, environmental protection, equity, racism, health (Fejes et al., 2018), poverty and other social problems (Fejes et al., 2018).

In our digitalized world, adults attitude towards ICT are positive as they consider that they have more possibilities of access. ICT helps adult to have access to LLL, providing individualized possibilities of learning. They can be educated whenever and where ever as well as to search information's from different sources (UNESCO, 2015).

Other objectives of adult learning and education are: To develop the capacity of individuals to think autonomously, to make them responsible, to inform them of the economy situation, to give them the opportunity to take part in a peaceful society, to respect human rights, to comfort the relationship between adult and younger generation, to make them more interested in environmental issues.

The need for adult education emerged at the beginning of the twentieth century in an economic and social-oriented field of action. Since then, the following efforts are being made both with the initiatives of the state and with the initiatives of various structures of the state, aiming always to specialize, upgrade the human resources and improve the quality of human life (Karalis, 2005, pp.35-36). Especially, they aim to:

- The completion of compulsory education by both adults and children who have not completed their basic education in order to fight the illiteracy.
- The on-going training and the training of specific groups that have the risk of social exclusion.

- The learning of the Greek language as a second, as well as the education in new technologies.
- The education -training on issues related to Greek Culture, health, the environment and generally on cultural, social, and European issues.
- The Open and distance education and training as well as the collaboration of universities with the new modern e-learning systems.

Adult education contains a number of specialist fields, including human resource development in the public and private sectors, vocational education, community adult education, health education (Thompson, 2018).

The latest action in adult education removes the limitations of the traditional education system and emphasizes to the personal interests and abilities of learners who are trained through new methods of education.

In order to have better results in adult education the Member States should create good conditions in cooperation between government bodies, organizations, agencies, institutions and the media. In general, there should be cooperation within the countries creating an international climate of suitable conditions that promotes LLL. This education should promote structures, methods and special technics (UNESCO, 2015).

1.1.2. Lifelong learning

The gradual evolution of society in a knowledge economy, dominated by rapidly changing scientific knowledge, was accompanied by the emphasis placed on learning throughout working life. Learning throughout working life has become known as lifelong learning. Lifelong learning is a concept that is important to all educators as it includes the importance of learning at every stage of people's development and it integrates a wide variety of learning formats and is usually seen as education throughout the lifetime. It happens to all member of a society at all stages of their life span. It represents a new concept of education and training which from one hand is the correlation between work, school and education and from the other hand recognizes the necessity for governments to give incentives to industry and their employees in order to invest in lifelong learning. In addition, it is also a concept of a learning society in which every citizen has a legal right for a quality learning (Aspin et al., 2012).

UNESCO first referred to lifelong learning in 1965 using the term “lifelong education” (Duke, 1976). It summarized lifelong learning concept as “spreading the education services beyond the boundaries of school age, seeing education as a tool to improve the quality of life, improving education related to the needs of everyday life, individuals’ participation in decisions on education, being open – minded in planning, management and target setting” (Tight, 2002).

It has been created a framework of some important points in the European Union (2010), as concerns lifelong learning. First, to communicate both in the mother tongue and in foreign languages. To have mathematical, science, technology digital, social and civic competence. Also, to create cultural and expression awareness. This should be either at home, at the work place, at school or in society.

Lifelong learning activities must be done in a formal context (organised by an educational institution), it can happen outside an educational institution (non-formal), or it can also happen accidentally and not planned (informal).

The European Union also plays a role in the lifelong learning method. The EU has adopted the OECD paradigm of lifelong learning. Especially they refer to new basic skills for everybody, investment in human resources, to value learning process, to have innovation in education, to take feedback from counselling and to bring education closer to the learner (Akçay & Yıldırım 2014).

Because of the changing conditions in the world people should be equipped with special skills in technology and acquire knowledge, in order to manage them.

LLL promotes all strategies and programs taking place during individual’s life, to make opportunities to learn that is in youth, vocational environment and research (Laal et al., 2013).

The education must exist throughout the life and not only during school years (Laal, 2012). It is a continuous supportive process and learners should have discipline and values to support it. LLL includes formal, informal and non-formal learning Tissot (2004) which takes place in an organized and structured context (Laal, 2012). Moreover, it leads to formal recognition (diploma, certificate). The hierarchically

structured, time-honoured educational system, from primary education to university, which includes, in addition to general academic studies, a variety of specialized programs and organizations for technical and vocational education. In the non-formal learning method there are planned activities with important learning elements such as job skills. In the informal learning the activities begin in families and further at work or personal life.

Nordstrom and Nordstrom (2006) mention ten benefits of lifelong learning: LLL leads to an enriching life of self-fulfilment. It helps people have good relationships, keeps them socially active, gives them motive to live and adapt to technological changes, to make them respect the world, to increase wisdom, to have perspective in life, to become open minded and develop natural abilities.

Since the early 1990s, in many European countries, the reasons for expanding lifelong learning were both the economic and cultural globalization. These two dimensions of globalization have led individuals to seek more opportunities to upgrade their qualifications while at the same time governments have been pushing for an increase in the average level of education for the workforce (Prokou, 2004). Since the early 1990s, in many European countries, the reasons for expanding lifelong learning were both the economic and cultural globalization (Jarvis, 2000).

According to the European Commission's White Paper on Teaching and Learning, published in 1995 the world was changed by three motivational shocks: globalization, the information society, and scientific technological culture. So, there is a vital necessity to adapt to the new century's changes.

In the years that followed, there was much debate and controversy. The perception that adult education and more generally lifelong learning are a catalyst for the development of not only the economy and employment, but also social cohesion and active citizen participation in society is prevailing. These multifaceted dimensions of the issue were identified at the Lisbon European Council in March 2000. It was intended to make the European Union "the strongest knowledge society" in the next decade. For the achieving of this goal has been identified the development of lifelong learning networks. The European Council of Nikaia in

December 2000, endorsing the Lisbon decisions, voted the 'European Social Agenda', an essential part of which is to extend lifelong learning and improve its quality.

In order to define the concept of “lifelong learning” it is necessary to interpret the term. According to the definition of the General Secretariat for Lifelong Learning of the Ministry of Education, Research and Religions of Greece (2013), lifelong learning is defined as: "all forms of learning activities during the life of a person aimed at acquiring or developing knowledge, skills and competences that contribute to the development of an integrated personality, to the integration and development of the individual, to social cohesion, to the development of the ability to participate actively in social, economic and life cultural development". The definition includes both general Adult Education, which responds to structured and organized learning environments, as well as the knowledge a person gains from their daily lives, work, experiences and experiences .

According to Bergidis (2005), UNESCO dictated the concept of “lifelong learning.” The term “lifelong learning” is broader than “education” and refers to endless knowledge, which encompasses all forms of learning throughout one's life. She/he is given the opportunity to participate in activities designed by competent authorities, which are aimed exclusively at adults, and each participates in the pursuit of a specific goal. Adult education, however, is a separate scientific and institutional area of learning and education, compared to the typical education of children, serves different purposes and develops a specific methodology (Kokkos, 2005a). "Lifelong learning" brings new experiences, which are linked to one's existing knowledge, from which conclusions are drawn, which help it to undertake new actions. But most of all, a "lifelong learning" program is a reflection of a reality that learners understand and aim to deal with and harmonize with it. Lifelong learning includes formal education, non-formal education and non-formal learning (Kokkos, 2005a).

1.1.3. Vocational Training

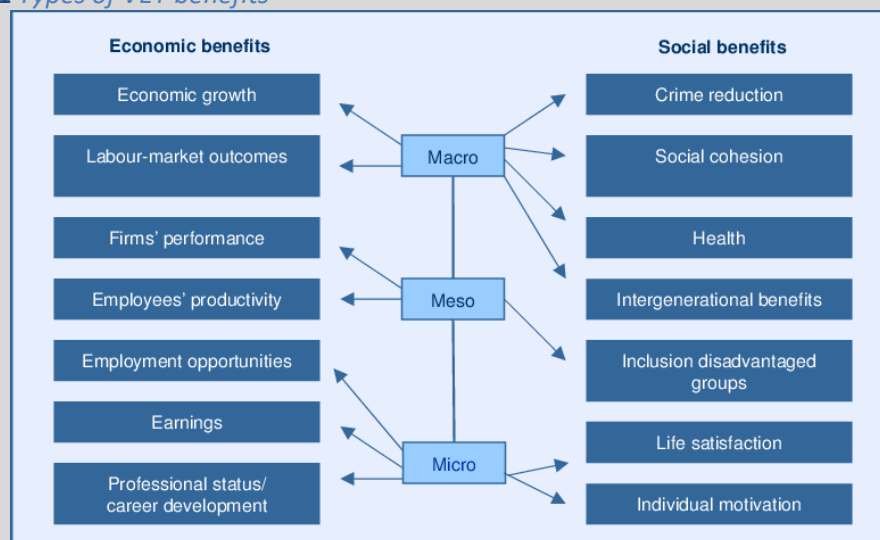
In many countries and societies in the world, there is a difference in the way that young people entranced to labour market including low salaries and periods of unemployment (Biavachi, 2012). Every government has its own system and laws that facilitate young people to enter the vocational world. It is apparent that

unemployment rate is higher between workers who have low level of education or poor training while workers who are well educated can find a job easier.

In many countries, there is a two-step integration of school levels. Some students try to gather skills in order to participate in programs that lead them directly to the labour market, training and education as a first step. Then follows integration at the second step (Cedepof, 2013).

The above Figure 1 gives examples of VET benefits according to the dimension (economic and social) and the level of analysis (Cedepof, 2011).

Figure 1 *Types of VET benefits*



Source: Cedepof, 2011

The vocational educational training (VET) has important differences with the general education. First, there is a bigger choice of subjects taught. Furthermore the program can be economically assisted from businesses or the government body, as there is substantial funding for lifelong learning (Bordeaux Communiqué, 2008; (European Commission, 2020). In addition, the VET promotes the social inclusion.

VET plays an important role in addressing the challenges and supporting the acquisition of key competences linked to its competitiveness, economy, labour market, and growth (CEDEPOF, 2020). Due to the differentiation in the current conditions in the whole world, there is a need to create and organize educational programs which will be able to connect the learning with the vocational world, according to the new trends.

VET is a key element of LLL, which equips people with the knowledge, skills, and competences required for particular occupations in the labour market and to thrive in life. It accounts for about half of upper secondary learners in the EU and enables two thirds of EU employees up skill or reskill (European Commission, 2020).

The Council of European Union (2020, C 417) recommends the following to the member states: To work in order to implement a vocational education system and policy that equips young people with skills, knowledge to adapt to the green and digital economies. It includes equal opportunities and social justice for the posterity of the majority. Also, it promotes European vocational programs and training organized to be acknowledged in other countries and cultures, as well.

The relevant policy in education should address to at least 82% from the VET employed graduates. Moreover, 60 % of recent graduates from VET benefit from exposure to work-based learning during their vocational education and training. Finally, 8 % of learners in VET benefit from a learning mobility abroad (Council of European Union, 2021)

The training is distinguished in the initial training (provided by, among others, the public Institute of Vocational Training), and the continuing training that aims to the upgrade and modernization of their knowledge as well as the renewal of skills that have been surpassed since modern economies require adjustment to the fast rates of production and technological progress. Initial vocational training includes activities that offer basic professional knowledge, skills and abilities in specialties and specializations aimed at the integration, reintegration, professional mobility and development of human resources in the labour market, as well as professional and personal development. Continuing vocational training includes the training of human resources that complement, modernize or upgrade knowledge, skills and abilities, acquired from the systems of Vocational Education and Initial Vocational Training or from professional experience with the aim of entering or re-entering the labor market, job security and professional and personal development (General Secretariat for Vocational Education, Lifelong Learning and Youth, 2021, Law 4763/ 2020).

Initial and continuing vocational education and training are part of the LLL. *“Flexible and permeable pathways are in place between both initial and continuing vocational education and training, general education and higher education”* (European Council, 2020, 417/6). *“Vocational education and training are indispensable instruments for improving labour mobility, adaptability and productivity, thus contributing to enhancing firms’ competitiveness and redressing labour market imbalances”*.

The aims (aspirations) of vocational training in Greece could be divided into four groups, aiming at:

- Acquisition of knowledge and creative skills (physical and mental) that are required for a profession.
- Acquisition of financial knowledge and skills which are required for the organization of the profession and its development
- The preparation and familiarization with the codes of social values, the integration of culture through the process of professional socialization which constitute the principles of the profession, and

- The preparation for the exercise of the rights and obligations of the citizen as an employee (safety, protection, social benefits, taxation, etc.)".

The vocational education differs in each country, as it is shown in figure 1. Only in a number of mostly continental European and Scandinavian countries vocational education is a prominent part of secondary education (Biavaschi et al., 2012).

The coronavirus pandemic seriously disrupted all forms of education and training, including VET, with work-based learning and apprenticeships most affected (European Commission, 2020).

1.2. Purpose and motivation of lifelong learning

The European Pillar of Social Right has a priority the right of everyone to appropriate education, training and lifelong learning in order to maintain and

acquire skills that allow full participation in society and successful transitions in the labour market (European Council, 2018).

This type of qualitative education and vocational training is the key that ensures permanent work, professional recognition, social success, and a good quality of life. The Lifelong learning aims to the specialization of the workforce, taking full advantage of the skills in an ever-changing economy and labour market. The Lifelong learning refers to the complementary training of the people those who the professional qualifications are incomplete, demonstrating those who are changing their profession, and more specifically trains those who wish to upgrade their knowledge and skills in a particular subject of work.

It is one of the most essential components of active employment policies, which aim is to maintain the employment and develop the workforce within the requirements of the modern era. The main object of lifelong learning is the specialization of adult workers to meet the demands of the production process and the labour market. Its purpose is to update the skills and knowledge that have been degraded or diminished, so that the adult learners become competitive again and capable of responding new roles or functions arising from the restructured productive system.

According to Jarvis (2000), there are four goals of lifelong learning:

- The employability
- The Active citizenship
- The Social inclusion
- The Personal integration

The above demonstrates the importance of lifelong learning not only for work, employment and the knowledge society but also for the individual, his/her abilities, as he/she contributes to the creation of a society with educated, trained and informed human resources that can participate in governance.

As motivations are referring all these who promote the adult participation in any educational process. Several scholars through systematic research have attempted to investigate and understand the decisions of adult learners in order to participate in the educational process as well as the factors influencing these decisions.

It should be mentioned that not all people have the same motivation (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Their difference lies not only in the level of motivation but in also where this motivation comes from. The types of motivations are related to attitudes, perceptions, and goals that trigger a behaviour or motivate an action.

The first person who tried to make a systematic survey to explore adult motivation for lifelong learning was Houle (1961), who has proposed a typology of adult learners as follows: The Goal-oriented adults

- The Action-oriented adults and
- The Adult learning oriented

In a program like that people can sustain lifestyle, develop, fulfil their personal dreams, be active in society and in the long run, they can be active and productive in their professional life (Mannonen, 2019). Each domain must support the other, as they acquire critical thinking, problem solving, team work, communication and negotiation skills, analytical skills, creativity, and intercultural skills are embedded throughout the key competences (; European Council, 2018).

The European Council identifies some very important components for learners to have personal fulfilment, healthy lifestyle, employability, active citizenship, and social inclusion. These include Literacy, Multilingualism, scientific, engineering, and digital and technology based skills, activity in society and businesses, as well as cultural awareness (European Council, 2018).

In Greece, according to a nationwide survey conducted in 2013 by the Institute of Working in collaboration with the Institute of Small Business having as a purpose to investigate the incentives of adult participation in lifelong learning, it has emerged that incentives are related to increased financial incentives, fulfilling personal ambitions, taking advantage of leisure time, enhancing qualifications etc. (General Secretariat of Lifelong Learning, 2013).

1.3. The need of vocational training for adults

Vocational education has increasingly been associated with economic competitiveness (EU, 2020). In the Lisbon Agreement, the European Union explicitly stated its goal to become *“the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based*

economy in the world” (Council, 2000, p. 3) later identifying *the “crucial contribution from education and training as factors of economic growth, innovation, sustainable employability and social cohesion”* (Council, 2002, p. 5). The “competitiveness” policies is based on the assumption that improving the quality of VET has a positive effect on competitive advantage through generating greater productivity and facilitating innovation.

This kind of education is considered as a transition step for graduates to find work. In some countries the vocational route is also seen as a vehicle for reengaging disaffected young people and social inclusion. In recent decades, the social and economic developments and, the development of technology has made visible the significance of vocational education and training. The changes that took place in Europe and especially the recent transition from globalization of economy to the globalization of the economic crisis, made strong the need for a vocational training system that it is based on effectiveness, flexibility to the challenges and acquisition of knowledge and methods of its acquisition (European Union, 2015).

A country's education system is definitely a reflection of its development and social level. Its developmental way is a function of its educational system. The social and economic well-being as well as the individual well-being depends on the education. Countries with strong initial VET systems have been relatively successful in tackling youth unemployment, even during the recent economic crisis.

Recently, emphasis has been given on the financial purposes of the education. Therefore, we have a change in the educational policy but also shift to vocational education and training. It is a factor of European development to have a flexible and attractive VET system.

Employees learn many skills in the workplace either informally or through formal training. Specifically, the companies can offer motives for further training, especially for those who have a low education level. Vocational programmes can pay off in the labour market, with studies showing good rates of return for upper secondary VET (OECD, 2011).

Importance of VET can be grouped in two categories: economic and social benefits. These can be divided into the above levels: the micro level (the benefits for individuals); the meso level (benefits for enterprises/groups); and the macro level (benefits for society as a whole).

In particular, the vocational education and training can help to the reduction of unemployment by providing young people who do not have received higher education with the appropriate qualifications so as not to be at risk of being excluded from the works that are needed specialization. The rapid technological and scientific development, which has as a result the multiplication and the continuous differentiation of knowledge, leads to the emergence of new works or to the disappearance of older. This creates unemployment in other sectors while in others there is oversaturation in human resources. This can be overseen with a focus on the vocational training and its careful design (CEDEPOF, 2004).

The vocational training is especially necessary in a specialised category of workers, the immigrants, who have - and should have - equal opportunities and rights with other employees. Their participation in vocational training programs will not only help them to achieve a better standard of living but also to be integrated into the social life of the host countries. With the proper training, it is possible to be avoided "their marginalization which marginalization opposes to the "logic of utilization of human resources in the field of work".

According to Professor Govaris, "the horizon of action of education can no longer be the idea of cultural homogeneity, as a natural rule of the social order of things, but the provision of opportunities for an effortless confrontation and creativity of the subjects with the cultural pluralism " (Govaris, 2001, p. 33).

The pandemic era demands employees who are highly skilled in order to have a change to enter the work force. They should to have special skills to access to digital tools, technologies and guidance measures (European Commission, 2020).

1.3.1. The purpose of institutes of vocational training in Greece and the connection with the labor market

In Greece, VET is provided after the completion of compulsory schooling, mainly at upper secondary and post-secondary under the responsibility of ministry of education in cooperation with the ministry of labour (CEDEPOF, 2019).

According to Law 4763/2020 the purpose of institutes of vocational training is:

- The provision of initial vocational training to non-compulsory secondary school graduates education, i.e. General Lyceums and of Technical Lyceum, as well as to holders of equivalent titles and
- The provision to the trainees of corresponding qualifications, with the teaching of scientific, technical, professional and practical knowledge and similar skills projects to facilitate their professional integration and be ensured adapting them to its changing needs production process.

The institutes of vocational training function as flexible permanent instruments provision, adjustment and modernization of human resources qualifications and mission their purpose is to provide meaningful and formal supplies and qualifications with a view to facilitating solving the mobility of workers, strengthening parallel to the economy of the country, with the contribution increase productivity and the economy legal enlargement.

The public institutes of vocational training of the Ministry of Education and Religion products, as a set of responsibilities, positions, personnel and logistics infrastructure, constitute centralized services of the Ministry of Education and Religions belonging to general secretariat for vocational education, training, lifelong learning and youth from which they are supervised.

In the institutes of vocational training graduates students of non-compulsory secondary education, general lyceum, vocational lyceum as well as the holders of equal title.

Vocational training in institutes of vocational training starts in the winter or spring semester, lasts a minimum four (4) and may not exceed five (5) total semesters, according to the Training Guides of the specialty, including those of internship or apprenticeship period.

The training of high schools graduates' vocational training, vocational lyceum, as well as holders of equivalent vocational training qualifications lasts in institutes of vocational training from two (2) to three (3) semesters, including internships practice or apprenticeship, if it is a title in specialty of the professional field from which graduated from vocational lyceum. or equivalent secondary structure advanced vocational training (Law, 4763/2020).

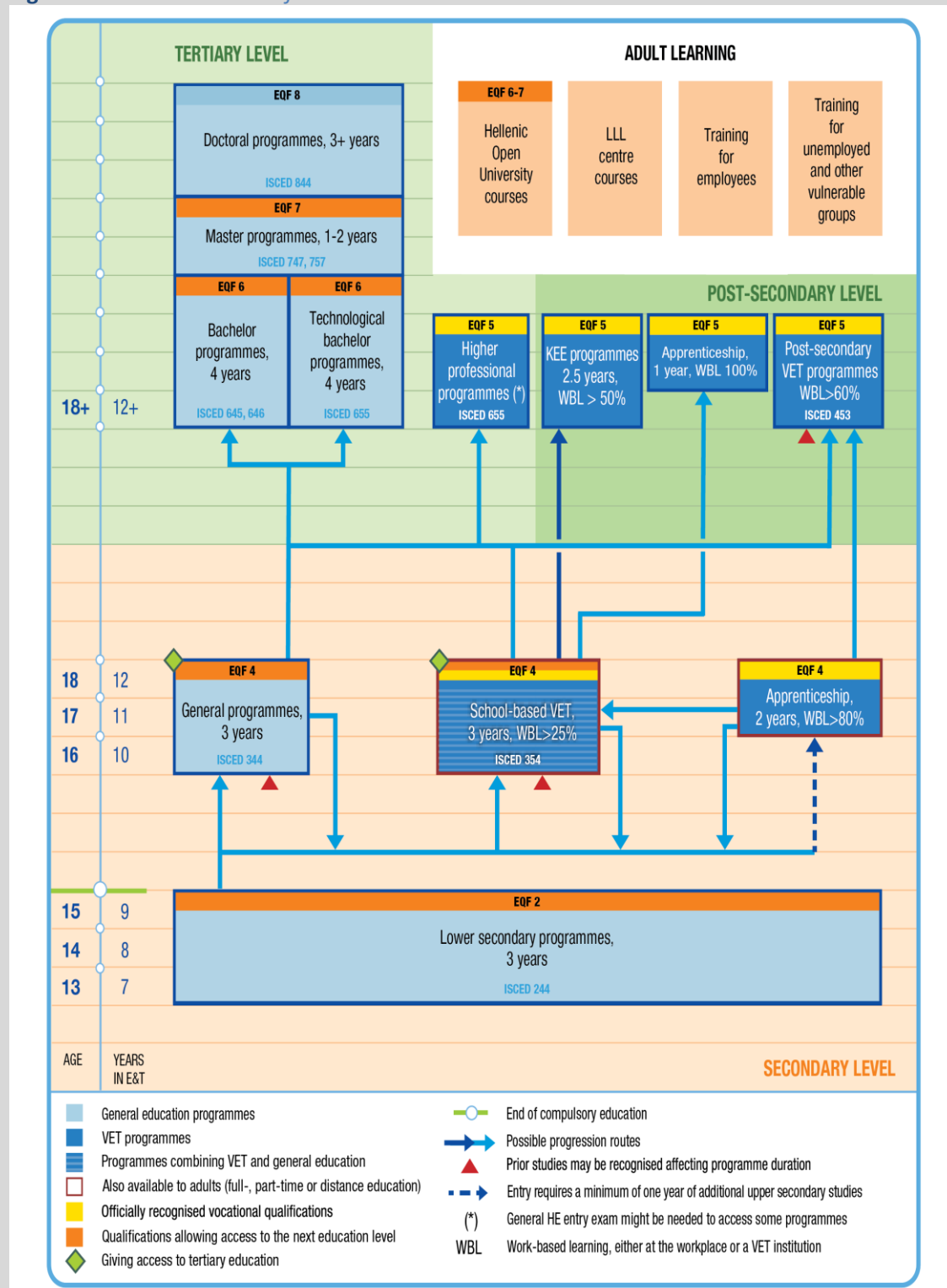
At post-secondary level, VET is offered in three formats, according to Cedepof (2019):

- One-year apprenticeship programmes (EQF level 5, WBL 100%): it is offered only to those who hold an upper secondary school leaving certificate and a vocational lyceum schools specialisation degree, by vocational lyceum schools and is connected with the Manpower Employment Organisation. This programme is offered only to those who hold an upper secondary school leaving certificate and a vocational lyceum schools specialisation degree.
- Two-and-a-half-year: VET programmes (WBL > 60%), which are offered by public and private training providers (Institute of vocational training) to upper secondary graduates. They give learners either the opportunity to take an attestation of programme completion or to take VET certification examinations (practical and theoretical) conducted by the National Organisation for the Certification of Qualifications and Vocational Guidance (EOPPEP) leading to an EQF level 5 certificate. Vocational lyceum graduates who continue their studies in the related field can enrol in the second year directly.
- Two-and-a-half-year: Centre of vocational training programmes leading to a certificate at EQF level 5 (WBL > 50%, including traineeships). The National Education and Human Resource Development Council to match labour market needs approve them. They are offered to vocational lyceum schools graduates.
- Two-to four-year higher professional programmes are offered by higher professional schools, under the supervision of the competent ministry after exams. The diplomas awarded can be either equivalent to technological

bachelor (EQF level 6) in the case of merchant navy academies (3), or are considered non-university tertiary level diplomas (EQF level 5), as with dance and theatre schools (Figure 2).

Continuing vocational training is offered to adults in centres for lifelong learning run by regional authorities, municipalities, social partners, chambers of commerce, professional associations, higher education institutions, and private entities (Cedepof, 2019).

Figure 2 Current structure of VET in Greece



Source: Cedefop and ReferNet, Greece, 2020

Since 2016, the education ministry has tried to upgrade apprenticeships and connect VET with the labour market.

In the Greek constitution of 1975/1986/2001 it is determined by the article 16 & 2 the purpose of education "*the education is the main mission of the state and aims*

at moral, spiritual, professional and physical education of the Greeks, the development of national and religious consciousness and their transformation into free and responsible citizens".

For the first time it is mentioned the vocational training as the purposes of the education. In the Law 1566/85 Article 6 paragraph 3 it is mentioned that it will be provided vocational training which is provided until today on secondary schools (Vocational Lyceum). For the graduates of the general Lyceums who haven't continued their studies in higher education there was none provision for the acquisition of professional qualifications in order to be joined into the productive work. Thus because of the European market and the threat of unemployment, was created the National System of Vocational Education and Training by the law 2009/92. This National System of VET aims to monitor the developments in all the professional sectors and to supply the trainees with all the necessary professional qualifications in order to be easy their access in the labor market and their adaptation to every professional condition.

For the implementation of the objectives of National System of Vocational Education and Training, the organization of vocational education and training (now it is named National Organization of qualification of certification) is responsible. The National Organization of qualification of certification as a national training body, develops international activity, participates in the development of initiatives in Greek and the European area and implements programs about the issues of training.

The work of National Organization of Qualification of certification is, among others, the professional registration of holders of Technical Vocational Education qualifications and Training. For this reason, it was established and constituted in accordance with article 2 of Law 2009/92 the National Commission for the Determination of Professional Rights and until today the professional rights of several specialties have been regulated by law.

The purposes of the National Organization of Qualification and certification, according to law 1098/30.04.2014, p. 15922 are the following:

- The organization and the function of Public Vocational Institutes of Training, which belong to the Ministry of Education.
- The supervision and control of private Public Vocational Institutes of Training,
- The formulation of the operating regulations of Vocational Institutes of Training and other public bodies, around the issues of the provided training (Ministry of Education, The Education System).

For the effective integration of trainees in the work, the National Organization of Qualification of certification makes a research of market in order to be adapted the specialties of institutes of vocational training in the demand of work and the employment opportunities in local level (Ministry of Education, The educational system, law 1098/30.04.2014).

The vocational training institutes function throughout the Greece and offer vocational training, initial or supplementary, in certain fields and specialties. In other words, the trainees acquire professional qualifications that they need for their entry and stay in the labour market, through scientific, technical, professional and practical knowledge that are provided to them through the Institute of Vocational Training .

At the same time, they are given to them the opportunity to develop skills to facilitate their professional integration and to ensure their adaptation to the needs of the productive process, which are constantly changing. The Institute of Vocational Training is the precursor to the entry of trainees into employment. Therefore, because of the effective Correlation of training with the labor market it contributes to the economic development of the country (Law, 1098/30.04.2014).

The research of labour market is very important for the designation of training programs because it identifies the trends in the labour market that determine the demand of professions. For the creation or the abolition of specialties is decided the National Organization of Qualification of certification, after it has taken into account the suggestions of the Three part of Advisory Committees that operate at regional level which is consisted of representatives of employees and employers.

The Commission's main task is to investigate and evaluate the data of the labour market of the region of institute of vocational training the prioritization of professional specialties, which must be operated in the local Institute of Vocational Training for the service of needs in a qualified human potential of the region and the relevant suggestion to the relevant director of institute of vocational training. It is also the task of the Commission to promote in a regional level the social awareness that the vocational education is a continuous and lifelong operation that complements the vital interests of the person throughout his/her productive and evolutionary way (Ministerial Decision 121/1992, 7, 3498).

For the absorption of the graduates of Institutes of Vocational Training in the labour market, Professional offices of development and career exist in some cities of the Institute of Vocational Training. These offices function as a link between the trained graduates and the businesses and they want the absorption of graduates from the Greek market work at: a) practice level and b) mainly permanent level employment (General Secretariat for Vocational Education, Training, Lifelong Learning, and Youth, available at: <http://www.gsae.edu.gr/el/contact-new>).

1.3. The Schools of Second Chance in Europe as an institution

The European Council of Copenhagen in June 1995 said the European Commission to prepare a text about the strategy that must developed in the long run in order to be developed, employed and make society competitive, with the main aim of combating unemployment in the Member States of the European Union (European Council, 1995).

The responsible Commissioner of the European Union Edith Cresson presented in late November 1995 in Spain the text that is requested by the European Commission, now known as the "White Paper" entitled: "Teaching and Learning Towards the Learning Society". The White Paper focuses on continuing education, also setting the guidelines for the building of an educated society and on combating social exclusion. It has coincided with the fact that 1996 was declared as the European Year of Lifelong Learning.

The White Paper has as general objectives to combat the social exclusion, to encourage young people who do not have the necessary qualifications to enter to the labour market, to acquire modern skills, to connect the school with the labor market, to have at least three foreign languages and equal treatment of citizens in training.

The priority for actions is particularly emphasized by the European Commission, as it has been found that the human resource is reduced in the Member States, as it is difficult for many young people to have access to employment or training programs. The solution that is proposed by the Commission in order to overcome the crisis is to implement innovative training programs in cooperation with the various local economic operators, voluntary and community associations and public authorities.

At the same time, in November 1995, a conference of the European Community was held, where it was proposed to include Schools of Second Chance in pilot projects proposed for lifelong learning. The reason for the Schools of Second Chance to participate in the pilot programs was the burning issue of combating social exclusion. So, were formed schools with different characteristics from the formal schools and different priorities in each country, adapted to the respective educational and social needs, and the appropriate measures were taken in order to have better access to knowledge. One of the measures was the employment of well-trained teachers with relevant trainings, the adaptation of the way they are taught to adults, the provision of new motivations to the trainees, the regulation of internships, the use of multimedia and the creation of classes with a few students (European Commission, 2001).

The cities that participated voluntarily in the first pilot phase of the function of the Schools of Second Change from 1997 to 1999 are (European Commission, 2001; Taratori, et al., 2008, p. 15): Denmark (Svendborg), Finland (Hameenlinna), France (Marseilles), Greece (Athens), Italy (Catania), Portugal (Sisal), Sweden (Norrköping), Netherlands (Heerlen), Un. Kingdom (Leeds), Germany (Halle and Cologne) and Spain (Bilbao and Barcelona) .

The interest of European Union is attracted by the social groups of the underprivileged, who do not have the appropriate training to enter to the labor

market, young people without qualifications, adult workers without the possibility of improving their position due to lack of formal qualifications, unemployed and women who want to work and focused on establishing the Schools of Second Change in selected cities (Taratori et al., 2008, p. 15).

The program of Schools of Second Change recognizes that a disadvantaged audience, which at the school age leaked from the compulsory education, needs the best possible training and the best possible support to gain confidence, to complement the gaps that have caused and take the formal qualifications that open up a better professional perspective. Schools of Second Change functions in problem areas of cities and their suburbs with such a young population. Their aim is not only to improve the access of these young people to knowledge, through the teaching of the best possible teachers and through teaching methods that utilize electronic technology and multimedia, but also to make these schools educational meeting places for the whole community. The development of learning motivation, the ability to know how to learn, the possession of basic knowledge and social skills, constitute a first body of pedagogical principles, complemented by small-sized classrooms, reputable and well-paid teachers and their communication network of schools of those who disseminate their pedagogical experiences. Furthermore, the Correlation of the trainees with the labour market requires the formation of a counselling and partnership relationship of these schools with the local economic agents.

The aim of the Schools of Second Change of all EU Member States is to combat social exclusion for those who do not have the necessary qualifications because they have not completed compulsory education and do not even have the skills that are required to find a job or who may not be able to attend any of the training programs offered. The Schools of Second Change aim to retain the personality of the participants and to shield them with social and professional experience that they will be able to use them in the labour market. The School of Second Change aim to reintegrate them into socially and economically active life by offering them a wide range of opportunities that will be able to serve them special training needs. The lifelong learning offered by the Schools of Second Change enables them to have a future of social and professional.

The characteristics of young people who attend the Schools of Second Change can be summarized as follows: They have insufficient basic education, lack of vocational training, lack of motivation and have a bias for education, dropped out of school because they faced problems related to learning and the school itself, are in a sensitive psychological state, have housing problems, are unemployed or in a long-term state of unemployment, are constantly looking for work but are considered socially excluded and unsatisfied, come from troubled families, are related to crime, drugs or and with abuse resulting from alcoholism (Taratori et al., 2008, p. 15) .

In general, the overall spirit of the White Paper is based on the principle that the social exclusion of disadvantaged young people will be combated through positive discrimination in their favour and through a school that will offer them this positive discrimination. Another school education opportunity could not be a repeat of compulsory school, but a quality-upgraded school that offers modern, attractive and effective school education. As a general position, the White Paper also suggests a perspective of substantial changes for formal education, such as:

- The need to provide equal opportunities through positive discrimination for disadvantaged groups of young people,
- Greater flexibility in education, aiming at responding to differentiated needs,
- Search for quality in education and search for new ways of certifying the skills it is provided,
- Search for new methods of financing education and new ways of evaluating them,
- Greater autonomy and decentralization, with the belief that the greater the decentralization, the more flexible the school, the faster in adapting to change and the development of new forms of social cooperation.
- In particular, for the Schools of Second Change the new educational opportunity is determined by the goal of the best possible training and the best framework, which is reinforced by the following pedagogical conditions:
 - Adoption of new didactic approaches
 - Didactic use of information technology and multimedia
 - Selection of the best teachers, highly specialized and paid, as the teachers of privileged schools are paid.

The countries of the European Union, implementing the requirements of the White Paper on the Program of Schools of Second Change, have set up a network of schools and their Union has set the criteria for the inclusion of schools whose policy meets them. The socio-economic criteria's of the Union of the Schools of Second Change refer to the financial needs (unemployment) of the school area and the policy of the school's relationship with local authorities and employers, with the aim of involving them in the financial support, in planning.

The primary pedagogical criterion of the Union is focused on the didactic approach for which three conditions are recorded:

- The individualization,
- The interdisciplinary and
- The innovative character of teaching.

The didactic innovation consider as its core an independent way of learning, tied to the practice and supported by the use of computers and multimedia. The individualization of the teaching has the meaning of provision the possibility for each trainee to formulate the individual program of his/her studies, exactly as it suits in his/her individual situation and his/her needs. The interdisciplinary of teaching means that the teachers, in order to be able to respond to the different problems of their learners, work together as an interdisciplinary team, so as to work out a variety of complex activities that help learners to develop a variety of skills, under individual supervision of teachers and mentors (European Commission, 1995).

In the second criteria of this European network is referred the building, which could be offered for arrangements that will have the ideas and needs of the trainees, which will determine each time the activities that will be developed in it. The Association of Schools of Second Change also recognizes that each such school sets its own priorities, so that together they form an interesting platform with different experiences and practices that will be disseminated from one school to another through the exchange of experiences and visits. It is of particular importance for each school to choose an area of interest in which it will particularly develop its practice and specialty.

The schools of second change function as pilots in thirteen European countries, having about 4,000 students and are members of the European Network. Each

country has put its own stamp on the organization and character of the program. The decisive choice is the question of whether the school will give more emphasis and direction to vocational rehabilitation, or to education, that is, whether their decisive goal is the integration of learners into the labour market, or their reintegration into the student body, so that they can even regain the prospect of being introduced to higher education. The combination of the above directions, to varying degrees, is a Third Choice of the Programs of Schools of Second Change (Pigiaki, 2006).

The European Commission has made a guide for the Schools of Second Change, according to which the programs are radically implemented in areas of urban centres with particular social and economic characteristics. Although Schools of Second Change have many features, each one of which is different from the other. However, according to the European Commission, the following criteria should be at the heart of the work of the Schools of Second Change and should be taken into account by the Member States:

- Target group
- Main objectives
- Environment
- Teaching methods
- Relationship with the Partners of the local community (Papastamatis et al., 2010, pp.6-19).

1.5. Conclusions

The globalization combined with the rapid changes in the society demands from people the upgrading of their knowledge's during their live. Nowadays, presents as urgent need for every active citizen to have digital competences to be adapted to new conditions (OECD, 2007).

In our competitive society where the danger of exclusion from social and labour world is obvious, every active citizen must learn continuously during his life. The lifelong learning is the answer in these demanding conditions. Furthermore, the VET is seen more imperative than ever.

Every country, through its policies, adopts different various ways in order its citizens be adapted and supplied to new conditions. In this framework, the role of a leader of a lifelong learning institute is very crucial and each leader must have different skills and competences in order to be effective and successful in his administrative issues.

Walters (2010) highlights the importance of learning during the life of everyone's if we want to save our planet.

In this framework, it is important the role of school leadership and especially, those of institutes of vocational training and schools of second change, as organizations of VET and LLL.

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Some words about this book...

In this book it is imprinted some aspects and views about the lifelong learning education including the field of vocational training in Greece. It is presented some of the most important aspects about this sensitive field.

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