



**giz**

## **Technical Assistance of the Greek Export Promotion Action Plan**

**Grant Agreement SRSS/S2016/029**

### **Draft Report Activity 3.1.3**

**3.1.3 Definition of eligibility criteria for the financing of training and consultation programs, which are targeting export companies**



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## List of Abbreviations

AdA	Train-the-Trainer (in German "Ausbildung der Ausbilder")
AEVO	German Ordinance on Trainer Aptitude
AHK	Außenhandelskammer – German-Greek Chamber of Commerce
AUEB	Athens University of Economics and Business
BMWi	Federal Ministry for Economy Affairs and Energy (Germany)
CEDEFOP	European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training
EC	European Commission
ECVET	European credit system for vocational education and training
EGSSE	National general collective labour agreement
EIAH	European Investment Advisory Hub
EIEAD	National Labour and Human Resources Institute
EKDDA	National Center for Public Administration and Self-Government
ELGPN	European lifelong guidance policy network
EOPPEP	National Organisation for the Certification of Qualifications and Vocational Guidance
EPAL	Vocational upper secondary school
EPANEK	Managing Authority of Operational Programme Competitiveness, Entrepreneurship and Innovation 2014-2020
EPAS	Vocational/apprenticeship school
EQF	European qualifications framework
ESEKAAD	National Education and Human Resource Development Council
ESYD	National Accreditation Council
ESYP	National Education Council
EU	European Union
EURES	European job mobility portal
GDEE	Vocational education career offices (operated by OAED)
GDVT	German Dual Vocational Training
GEL	General upper secondary school
GIZ	Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH
GSLLYY	General Secretariat for Lifelong Learning and Youth
GTAI	Germany Trade and Invest
ICT	Information & communication technology
IEC	International Electrotechnical Commission
IEK	Vocational training institutes
IEP	Institute of Educational Policy
ISCED	International standard classification of education
ISO	International Organization for Standardization
KESYP	Centres for Counselling and Guidance
KOF	Swiss Economic Institute (Konjunkturforschungsstelle)
LAEK	Special fund for employment and vocational training
LDV	Leonardo Da Vinci program



LLC	Lifelong learning centres
MoE	Ministry of Economy and Development Greece
NEET	Not in education, employment or training
NQF	National qualifications framework
NSRF	National strategic reference framework
OAED	Manpower Employment Organisation
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
PPD	Public-private dialogue
SME	Small & Medium size Enterprise
SRSS	Structural Reform Support Service
STEP	Statistical Classification of Professions
SYEP	Counselling and vocational guidance
VET	Vocational education and training



## Executive Summary

The 3.1.3 deliverable report presents the basic preconditions for the introduction of “minimum criteria for the financing of training and consultation programs, targeting export companies”, and is addressed to the Ministry of Economy (MoE), which has only limited competent jurisdiction over educational matters, but significant responsibility in funding projects and actions related to export related vocational training and business counselling.

On the background of an overview of the manifold stakeholders involved in the educational field in Greece, GIZ recommends that MoE and its subordinate funding monitoring authority (EPANEK) should focus on vocational education & training (VET) and consultation programs that are addressed to or require the direct involvement of *companies* to be implemented, rather than those addressed to *individuals* (i.e. unemployed or those still in the education system). The responsibilities and jurisdictions for the latter reside in the Ministry of Employment and the Ministry of Education.

MoE should define the scope and vision of its involvement in VET programs, aligning them with a clear strategy for export promotion. This can be achieved

- a) by undertaking a more proactive role in the National VET Strategy Committee, as one of the three represented Ministries, and
- b) by initiating a public-private dialogue (PPD) with the Exporters’ and Business Associations in order review the framework regarding the existing occupational profiling, mainly the specific one of the “International Trade Executive”.

The findings of this PPD should then be elevated, by the MoE representative, to the National Committee for VET and Apprenticeship that operates at the level of General Secretariats and is responsible to supervise the respective National Strategic Framework (Law 4336/2015).

As private sector involvement<sup>1</sup> is mandatory by Law for the relevant authority EOPPEP (National Qualification and Vocational Qualifications Organization, supervised by the Ministry of Education) to officially recognize an Occupational Profile. The PPD could thus indirectly lead to the elaboration of minimum criteria for content, curriculum and certifications.

Having set the occupational profiling framework<sup>2</sup>, GIZ suggests that the Greek authorities could benefit from aligning funding eligibility criteria with:

- A. the findings of the “Leonardo Da Vinci” COMINTER (International Commerce) pilot program, as implemented in Greece, along with standards of professional certifications already introduced in Greece through private sector initiatives in the field of exports and international trade (TUV Nord, Unicert etc.).

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<sup>1</sup> GIZ: At least two business associations or collective entities should submit a proposal for an Occupation Profile to be examined by EOPPEP.

<sup>2</sup> See Annex III „Occupational Profiling Process”.



- B. apprenticeship<sup>3</sup> programs based on the German best practice of Dual Education, CEDEFOP recommendations for Greece and the EU “Apprenticeship Toolbox”.
- C. the example of the newly introduced “Advice for Small Business Program” of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), for business guidance and counselling/coaching programs targeting (potentially) exporting companies.

In all cases, the criteria and the outcomes of VET, Apprenticeship and consultation programs, should also be monitored and evaluated by an appropriate mechanism, following EU standards, as described in the European Qualifications Framework (EQF), the European Credit system for Vocational Education & Training (ECVET) guidelines and the National Quality Assurance Framework titled “π3”.

The above suggestions aim to:

- address the social costs of high unemployment rates born during the crisis, including reversing the identified “brain drain” trends
- empower Greek enterprises, through export related capacity building, thus expanding the Greek export basis
- align reforms in education and training with the targets set by Europe 2020 Strategy<sup>4</sup>
- enhance scrutiny over the effectiveness and efficiency of export related education and training programs.

GIZ express concerns over the feasibility to fully integrate export related topics in the National VET Strategy<sup>5</sup> in a unified, formal way (in terms of guidance / counselling, occupational profiling, relevant curricula, learning outcomes, qualifications and quality assurance), due to the fact that a great number of stakeholders are involved in the Greek VET System, and therefore a possibility of duplications of efforts and funding has to be faced, thus decoupling effectiveness and efficiency.

Moreover, MoE relevant agencies (including funding authorities) and staff should be urged to constantly familiarize themselves with EU guidelines and framework (integrated in proposed manuals & summarized in this report), as the basis for future suggestions and adjustments to fellow stakeholders and National Strategy makers.

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<sup>3</sup> GIZ: Apprenticeship was established in Greece by legislative Decree 3971/1959, based on the German dual learning system.

<sup>4</sup> Europe 2020 Strategy: The Europe 2020 strategy is the EU's agenda for growth and jobs for the current decade. It emphasizes in smart, sustainable and inclusive growth as a way to overcome the structural weaknesses in Europe's economy, improve its competitiveness and productivity and underpin a sustainable social market economy.

<sup>5</sup> See paragraph 2.2, below.



## 1. Introduction

Public and private sector stakeholders interviewed as well as institutions such as CEDEFOP acknowledge significant progress made regarding the VET framework in Greece in the past years, but identify weaknesses and challenges still to be addressed.

The major challenges can be summarized as follows:

- Low attractiveness of VET and apprenticeship programs, in the general perception of the public
- Multiplicity and complexity of legal framework,
- Lack of continuity and focus in the design and implementation of VET related policies and
- Problematic linkage of the programs with the labour market.

Consultations with AHK reviewing lessons learned and best practices from the EU and other member-states, as well as the support of a Greek Educational Programs expert, have contributed to the present report.

The report is structured in the form of a rationale to the respective manuals in three major parts: a) Vocational Education & Training (VET), b) Apprenticeship, as a special type of VET, and c) Business Consultation. The proposed manuals are attached in a separate file, due to size and diverse format.

By definition<sup>6</sup> VET mainly addresses to individuals and includes i) initial VET within the education system and ii) continuing VET that takes place after initial education or during the professional life of persons. In both cases, VET programs can be coupled with apprenticeship options introducing dual learning with varying periods of time in the workplace, under labour contracts.

Apprenticeship is defined as the educational system in which the learning time alternates between a workplace and an educational structure. An apprentice is linked to an apprenticeship agreement with the employer, receives a pay or bonus, in accordance with applicable law, and has insurance coverage. The apprenticeship is based on a learning program, which is allocated to the workplace and the educational structure. The employer undertakes to provide the apprentice with training in the workplace, according to a defined program, which, combined with the learning program in the educational structure, leads to the certification of the knowledge and skills acquired by the apprentice and to a particular specialty.

On the other hand, counselling is a learning-oriented process addressed to either persons or entities, which occurs usually in an interactive relationship, with the aim of helping to develop competencies in self-knowledge, explore (professional or business) orientations and plan ahead (career-wise or business-wise).

In each part of the report GIZ maps the existing framework - and the relevant institutions involved – identifying challenges to be addressed, before presenting lessons learned and best practices from other EU member states and concluding with specific recommendations.

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<sup>6</sup> See Annex I “Definitions / Glossary”.



## **2. Vocational education and training (VET)**

### **2.1 Historical background and key figures**

Greek society has always been characterized by a strong demand for general education and university studies. This trend reflects sociological stereotypes, developed after World War II and has affected the overall attractiveness of VET in Greek society in combination with a fragmentary approach with regards to VET related policies.

Today, young people still continue to see vocational education as a last resort, despite unceasing efforts by the authorities to present it as an alternative of equal value with general education. As a result, relevant participation in lifelong learning, which is crucial for providing a highly qualified labour force, tends to stagnate at very low levels, in comparison to EU-28 averages.

OECD labour force statistics<sup>7</sup> show a 3.3% participation rate for 2015, with the European average at 10.7% and, therefore, much lower than the European benchmark of 15% for 2020.

A key issue for Greece reflects on the very high levels (27.1% in 2015) of 18 to 24 year olds that were not in education, employment or training (NEET status), putting them at risk of being excluded from the labour market. Although this represents a decrease from 2013 when the NEET rate peaked at 30.8%, it is still much higher than the pre-crisis period, when the NEET rate stood at lower than 17.5%. Moreover, the gap between relevant Greek and EU-28 rates remains at 11 points, although reduced from a persistent 13 point gap during 2013-14.

In 2014, 15% of 15-19 year-olds in Greece were enrolled in vocational programs, compared to an OECD average of 25%.

In Greece, 31% of students in upper secondary education were enrolled in vocational programs and 69% in general programs, compared to an OECD average of 44% of students in vocational programs and 56% in general programs.

A recent ManpowerGroup<sup>8</sup> survey records that six out of ten Greek employers (59%) cannot easily find fitting staff, mainly due to the significant deficit in: technical skills (hard skills - 29%), required experience (27%), personal skills (soft skills - 12%) and available candidates (11%). The problem of inconsistency between supply and demand is manifested in many different forms. Greece is ranked in the last place of the EU countries in terms of employment of youth graduates, as almost 50% of young Greeks graduates (graduation 1 to 3 years) cannot find work.

Summarizing the above, according to a 2017 study of the Athens University for Economics and Business (AUEB):

<sup>7</sup> OECD, "Skills Matter: further results from the survey of adult skills", (<http://www.oecd.org/skills/piaac/newcountryspecificmaterial.htm>), 2016

<sup>8</sup> ManpowerGroup, "Annual Talent Deficit Survey", Greece (2016).



- Despite unprecedented unemployment rates, most employers find it difficult to find the right human resources to fill specific jobs.
- While the employment map is changing drastically, university curricula do not adapt quickly, with the exception of postgraduate programs.
- 53% of graduates from Greek universities attend courses that do not contribute to the country's development effort.
- Mismatch of skills offered with market needs, knowledge that is not adapted to developments and lack of soft skills is a problem for business.
- Insufficient professional orientation, lack of organized information, indifference from business and university are seen by the students.

As per the mismatch of skills, experts highlight two main reasons: the very low rate of new jobs creation and the mismatch between job offer and demand (i.e. large numbers of civil engineers and architects, when construction is plummeting). A big part of the mismatch is also attributed in the gap between skills that the Greek economy needs today and the studies young people choose to follow. The digital revolution, globalization and other sweeping changes that transform modern societies have drastically altered the economy's needs in human resources.

As a result, Greek economy is confronted with the need for radical and immediate reorientation, and the improvement of vocational education and training and its alignment to the needs of potential employers can contribute to this reorientation.

## **2.2 Institutional framework and stakeholders**

In Greece, schooling is compulsory for all children aged 5 to 15 and soon to be legislated from 4 years to 15 years. Compulsory education includes primary (kindergarten, one year and soon to be legislated from 4 years old and thus 2 years in kindergarten, and primary school, six years) and lower secondary education (three years).

Graduation from lower secondary education completes the cycle of compulsory schooling and students can then choose whether to continue in general or vocational education.

According to the new law regulating upper secondary VET (Law 4386/2016), students have the following options in addition to the general upper secondary school:

- (a) Initial vocational education within the formal education system in the second cycle of secondary education at a vocational upper secondary school (EPAL day or evening school);
- (b) Initial vocational education at an apprenticeship school (EPAS)<sup>9</sup> at upper secondary level.

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<sup>9</sup> GIZ: The function of EPAS schools, supervised by OAED (regulated by law 3475/2006), has been prolonged till the academic year 2020- 2021 (those enrolled into the first class in 2021 may finish their studies in 2022).

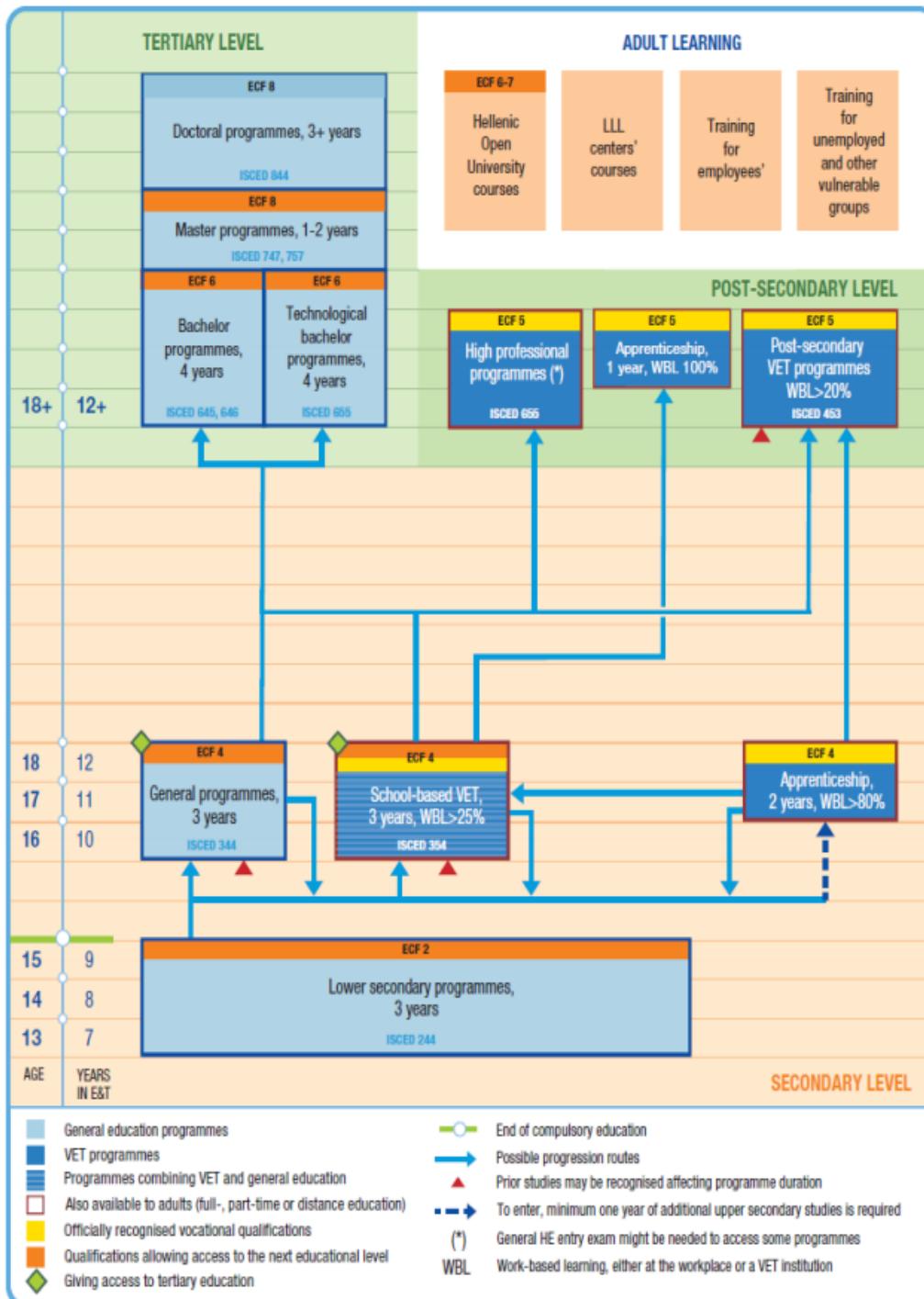


- (c) Vocational training, outside the formal education system (referred to as non-formal)<sup>10</sup>.

The above can be summarized in the graph below:

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<sup>10</sup> See paragraph 2.2.1, below.



NB: ISCED-P 2011

Source: Cedefop and ReferNet Greece.



Regarding relevant institutions involved, the Ministry of Education has established new structures to support policymaking, monitor current reforms and improve links between education and the labour market.

The National Education and Human Resource Development Council (ESEKAAD) was founded in February 2017 to replace the National Education Council (ESYP). Compared to its predecessor, ESEKAAD has a more executive role, is much smaller in size, and less heterogeneous in composition<sup>11</sup>. Also, in addition to its advisory role in designing education policy, its mandate includes employment promotion and the link between education and the labour market. Within this framework, ESEKAAD has already opined (June 2018) to the Minister of Education on policies addressing the mismatch between labour-market-relevant knowledge, skills and competences, and those offered by the education system.

Recent legislation (Law 4485/2017) introduced the National VET Strategy Committee, which was convened for the first time in March 2018. Ministries of Education, Employment and Economy are represented at a General and Special Secretariat level, as well as the accompanying Technical Committee. The purpose of the Committee is to ensure the implementation of the National strategic framework for upgrading VET and apprenticeship (introduced in April 2016), to address challenges posed by the complexity of the Greek VET system, and to achieve unimpeded cooperation among the many actors involved in VET.

More specifically, the National VET Strategy Committee<sup>12</sup> has the responsibility for overall coordination and governance of the VET framework, monitoring the implementation of actions foreseen by the national strategic framework, and will also propose new actions to the Ministers of Education and Employment.

Adding to the above, in 2015, Greek Law 4336 has set specific VET related goals which can be summarized as follows:

- a) Creation of a common Quality framework for VET and apprenticeships,
- b) Creation of skills forecasting mechanism and procedures for the reforming of VET curricula and certification,
- c) Facilitation of partnerships with the private sector as well as with regional and local authorities,
- d) Development of an implementation plan (by the Ministries of Employment, Education and OAED) aiming to offer apprenticeship positions to all IEK and EPAS students and for at least the 33% of the upper secondary VET students (EPAL),
- e) Facilitation of greater involvement by private companies (financing) in order to ensure the sustainability of the apprenticeships schemes.

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<sup>11</sup> See: Ministerial Decision No. 203887/GD1.

<sup>12</sup> GIZ: A VET Technical Committee will support the National VET Committee in implementing and monitoring the national strategic framework. As part of its mission the VET Technical Committee is supposed to also consider Greek development priorities at national, regional and local levels, suggestions by regional VET committees, social partners and other stakeholders, and outcomes of the skills diagnosis mechanism (set up by the labour ministry). It can set up ad-hoc advisory committees to assist its work, while its composition may be broadened, as representatives of shared competence bodies and other ministries can take part when necessary.



## 2.2.1 Non-formal VET

For the purposes of this report emphasizing on vocational education and training programs that are targeting export companies, GIZ focused on the type of non-formal VET at the post-secondary level that includes:

### A. Initial vocational training programs

IEK schools, operated by public and private institutions, are aiming at integrating learners into the labour market. These VET programs, open to graduates of general upper secondary school, graduates of lower secondary school (in a limited number of specialties) and foreign nationals (holding language competence certificates), last six semesters, one of which is practical training<sup>13</sup>.

The “International Trade Executive” program is available as a training option, along with specialties in several sectors, such as applied arts, tourism / transportation, food / beverage, industrial chemistry, informatics / telecommunications / networks, clothing / footwear.

Students who successfully complete all the demanded semesters are awarded an attestation of vocational training. This attestation entitles them to take part in the (practical and theoretical) vocational training certification examinations conducted under the jurisdiction of EOPPEP, with which they acquire an upper secondary VET certificate<sup>14</sup>.

### B. Continuing vocational training

In Greece, continuing vocational training and general adult education is provided by:

#### 1. Public sector bodies:

- Lifelong Learning Centers (LLCs). The Ministry of Education, through EOPPEP, is responsible for safeguarding quality of non-formal education, evaluating these centers and monitoring their operation. LLCs are mostly established by Regional Authorities at a municipality level, offering programs linked to the local labour environment and beyond.
- Most Greek Universities, in a wide range of subjects (including ICT, tourism studies, accounting, economics and administration, energy and environment, food safety, production management, and programs for foreign students and repatriated Greeks).
- All ministries, government agencies, public sector bodies, can also implement continuing vocational training programs for their staff or for broader groups. Recent examples include: distance learning for Greek language teachers (Ministry of Education); inter-cultural mediation (Ministry

<sup>13</sup> For IEK VET programs linked with Apprenticeship options, see Chapter 3.2.

<sup>14</sup> IEK graduates are awarded occupational specialization diplomas at EQF level 5.



of Interior); youth entrepreneurship (National Center for Public Administration); job-seeker training courses in green occupations (National & Capodistrian University of Athens); health professionals (Ministry of Health); judges (Ministry of Justice), etc.

## **2. Social Partners' and Business Associations' VET programs**

Business associations and the Social Partners play an active role in continuing VET providing systematic and organized training programs for employees and professionals (in-house training), mainly through seminars and acceleration programs (focusing on start-ups)<sup>15</sup>. These actions address sectoral or local/regional labour market needs and combine training with guidance and counselling services and work placements to provide on-the-job experience, covering both technical (ICT, safety and quality, sales, energy and environment) and general skills (communications, project management, teamwork, etc.).

In this case, the role of the State is confined to financing and, in some cases, assuring the quality of the services provided, through the accreditation of providers and teachers/trainers. In-house training is usually funded through either the fund for employment and vocational training (LAEK), which is handled by OAED, or is co-financed by the European Social Fund.

The qualifications acquired from this type of training are not recognized by any national authority.

Providers of vocational training (public or private) outside the formal education system are supervised by the General Secretariat for Lifelong Learning and Youth (GSLLY) of the Ministry of Education.

The specialties offered in public vocational training and the sectors under which they are classified are determined by decision of the Minister for Education in accordance with the needs of the national and local economy and proposals of regional administrations, competent ministries and social partners and are also depended on the results of the skills forecasting mechanism.

Curricula for each specialty should take into account related occupational profiles or required occupational qualifications. Curricula for initial vocational training are developed and overseen by the GSLLY and certified by EOPPEP. They can be defined in terms of learning outcomes and linked to credits, following ECVET.

Currently, international trade and export related topics are covered fragmentally and inconsistently, even though EOPPEP has described an International Trade Executive occupational profile. For example, even foreign language learning or logistics topics often fall under the “exports” field, in the case of OAED’s LAEK programs or programs funded by Regional Authorities; while more structured VET programs on international trade (i.e. in Human Resources Operational Program or EPANEK) are characterized by long intervals between calls.

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<sup>15</sup> Startup accelerators, also known as seed accelerators, are fixed-term, cohort-based programs that include seed investment, connections, mentorship, educational components, and culminate in a public pitch event or demo day to accelerate growth.



## **2.2.2 VET best practice**

The EU Leonardo Da Vinci (LDV) COMINTER (International Commerce) program is identified by GIZ as a best practice for the development of minimum criteria for export related VET programs (International Trade Executive), as already adopted by the National Institute of Labour and Human Resources (EIEAD)<sup>16</sup>.

The COMINTER program, developed by 35 professional and business bodies from 10 countries (Italy, Netherlands, Romania, Portugal, Spain, Slovenia, Belgium, Switzerland, France and Greece), set specific guidelines for:

- Implementation of a post-secondary VET program in International Trade, in line with EU framework and ECVET standards
- Cooperation with a European network of VET centers and institutes
- Occupation profile of an International Trade Executive, and the jobs related to it (for newcomers and persons with professional experience)
- Cross-referencing companies with the occupational profile
- Curricula of the VET program

Evaluation is done throughout the training and it includes practical examinations to be carried out during the time of the traineeship.

## **2.2.3 Private sector initiatives in Greece**

### **UNICERT - International Trade Director**

As per certification of export related VET programs, UNICERT (universal certification solutions)<sup>17</sup>, has developed a scheme under the title Director of International Trade and Extroversion, accredited by ESYD in Greece, in accordance with the international standard ISO / IEC 17024: 2012.

UNICERT's testing system is based on examining the candidate both on "scenario" type questions (case studies), during which each trainee is asked to materialize, in a real environment, the requirements set out therein, or "closed type" questions (i.e. multiple choice).

### **TUV – International Trade Executive**

TUV Nord Hellas, also following international standard ISO / IEC 17024: 2012, has developed a VET certification scheme titled "International Trade Executive". It consists of two levels: basic level (individuals with at least compulsory education)

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<sup>16</sup> See [http://www.eiead.gr/publications/docs/stexelos\\_dielousnous\\_emporiosoulouiotis.pdf](http://www.eiead.gr/publications/docs/stexelos_dielousnous_emporiosoulouiotis.pdf)

<sup>17</sup> See <https://unicert.gr/?p=273>



and advanced level (individuals with post-secondary education or related vocational training or professional experience).

The curricula include topics such as:

- Legislation and Business Ethics,
- Sales and Marketing Principles,
- Customer's Purchasing Behavior,
- Contacts with Exporting Bodies,
- Candidate Market Analysis,
- Competition Tracking,
- Management and Optimization of Resources,
- Social Media & Internet Promotion,
- Conferences and Exhibitions,
- Needs and Customer Expectations,
- Development of Purchases, Products and Services,
- Export Plans & Penetration Strategy,
- Costing, Purchasing Decision Process,
- Verbal and Non-verbal Communication,
- Managing Prospective Clients,
- Contacts & Visits to Customers,
- Offers, Proposals for Co-operation & Follow up,
- Product Presentations & Demos,
- Orders & Contracts,
- Negotiations,
- Customer Relationship Management,
- Sales Support,
- Targeting and Monitoring Indicators,
- Managing Oppositions and Complaints,
- Risk Management,
- Incentive Systems,
- Sales network organization.



### **3. Apprenticeship**

Apprenticeship is defined as the educational system in which the learning time alternates between a workplace and an educational structure. As such falls into existing EU and National regulatory guidelines as primarily as framework and not just a funded program. The challenge addressed in this report and respectively in the manual proposed by GIZ focuses on how to integrate exports as a field in the existing framework for apprenticeships in Greece, aligned with EU and national criteria.

#### **3.1 Historical background and key figures**

The apprenticeship framework in Greece was established by legislative Decree 3971/1959, based on the German dual learning system, which combines classroom education with paid practical work in a business.

Nevertheless, just 2% of 15-19 year-olds were enrolled in combined school and work-based programs compared to 7% for OECD member countries as a whole.

Between 2001-02 and 2015 enrolment in OAED's EPAS apprenticeship programs dropped by 44%. Over that period the number of girls in EPAS schools rose from 25% of the student population to 36.5%. It is worth mentioning however that the last years the number of students remains at the level of 10,500 (both years).

The most popular courses offered by these schools are those for electricians, plumbers, car mechanics, computer technicians and hairdressers.

The effectiveness of the apprenticeship system in terms of labour market integration is clearly illustrated by the percentage of apprentices entering employment on completion of their studies. 47% of EPAS graduates are employed, 50% entered the labour market 6 months after the completion of their studies and 70% are employed one year after completing their studies.

#### **3.2 Institutional framework and stakeholders**

In 2016, the National Strategic Framework<sup>18</sup> triggered the upgrading of the VET system by gradually introducing new apprenticeship schemes in addition to the existing ones offered by OAED.

As a result, the apprenticeship system in Greece now includes three schemes:

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<sup>18</sup> GIZ: The institutional framework of apprenticeship is constantly updated and can be found on the website of the Ministry of Education:  
<http://www.minedu.gov.gr/publications/docs2017/publications/docs2016/31-05-17thesmikomathiteias.pdf>



- a) The EPAS scheme offered at upper secondary level, leading to qualifications at level 4 of the national and European qualification frameworks (NQF and EQF) after two years of alternating learning at school and the workplace;
- b) The EPAL (vocational education schools) scheme offered at postsecondary level, leading to qualifications at NQF/EQF level 5 after one year of alternating learning at school and the workplace;
- c) The IEK apprenticeship that will be offered at post-secondary level, leading to qualifications at NQF/EQF level 5 after four semesters of learning at VET institutes and one semester at the workplace (for those IEK opting for apprenticeships instead of other forms of practical training that were the common practice so far).

All three schemes will coexist for a five-year period before the overall system is assessed (2020-21) and further decisions are to be made on its future structure. Alongside these, school-based VET programs are offered at upper secondary level (EPAL lyceum, qualifications at NQF/EQF level 4).

Under the new Law (4386/2016), apprenticeship schemes have been strengthened across the country by the establishment of 30 vocational education career offices (GDEE) operating within the EPAS. These aim to systematically link vocational education to the world of work by placing students in appropriate jobs in private and public sector enterprises.

EOPPEP is the body responsible for certification of qualifications and for awarding specialization diplomas to graduates of 'apprenticeship class', either alone or jointly with OAED. Other ministries that issue corresponding occupational licenses may also participate in the exams framework.

### **3.2.1 Apprenticeship programs**

Apprenticeship programs can be separated into 2 major categories: a) upper secondary apprenticeship programs (mostly run by OAED, the Greek public employment service) and IEKs (both private and public) and b) post-secondary apprenticeship programs (as an option for EPAL School graduates, after completing three-year EPAL upper secondary education programs).

#### **A. Upper-Secondary Apprenticeship Programs**

Mostly run by OAED, the Greek public employment service, and key Ministries (Ministries of Health, Agriculture and Tourism implement up to 5 programs each). OAED operates a total of 51 EPAS apprenticeship schools, which have an average annual attendance of 4,500-5,000 students, depending on the relevant annual call.

The courses have a duration of two school years (four semesters), admitting students aged 16 to 23 who have completed at least one class of the upper secondary school. The paid practical work takes place four or five days a week in public or private sector enterprises on terms specified in the relevant apprenticeship contract.



Participating enterprises are subsidized via OAED. Since 2013, the subsidy amount for enterprises is EUR 11 for each day of learning at the workplace. The subsidy may be paid to the employer or directly to the apprentice. The schools have the mandate and responsibility to find work placements for its students.

The amount paid to the trainee student is 75% of the minimum wage set by the national general collective labour agreement (EGSSE), for all four semesters and amounts to EUR 17.12 per day. A contract between the apprentice and the employer is signed, and social security for the apprentice is fully covered during the duration of workplace learning. On completion of their studies EPAS graduates obtain an EPAS specialization diploma corresponding to EQF level 4, work experience, and accumulate pension rights.

If the specialty is related to a professional license (a work permit or regulated profession)<sup>19</sup>, the graduate receives professional rights and afterwards gets the professional license from the relevant regional authority. These rights are regulated each time by respective Ministerial Acts which are issued by the Minister of Education following a recommendation by the Governing Board of EOPPEP.

Export related or export relevant programs are presently not offered; only indirectly export relevant ones exist, such as a) employees of Administrative Tasks and b) employees of Economic Tasks.

## B. Post-Secondary Apprenticeship Programs

According to Law 4386/2016, the EPAL “apprenticeship class” is an option for those who have completed the three-year upper secondary education programs at EPAL schools. The EPAL apprenticeship programs, while part of the non-formal system, are based on OAED’s dual learning principle and follow the same quality framework for apprenticeships.

With duration of one school year, the programs include learning at the workplace (four days a week), school-based learning aiming at a specialization course, a flexible zone allowing adjustment to local labour market needs and preparatory courses for certification at the school.

Since August 2017<sup>20</sup> apprenticeships are open for graduates with a specialization degree from EPAL and a GEL graduation certificate as well as EPAL graduates over 25 years of age.

<sup>19</sup> A regulated profession is the activity or set of regulated professional activities that constitute this profession in an EU Member State (Article 2 (5) of the PD. 231/1998 (Government Gazette 178 A), which transposes into national law Directives 92/51 / EEC of the Council of the European Communities, 94/38 / EC and 95/43 / EC of the European Communities). A profession is considered to be legally regulated if it requires the possession of specific (academic or non-academic) qualifications and, in several cases, membership of the relevant professional association. The authorization to practice a profession is only necessary for regulated professions. EPAS graduates have limited permeability options as they can only continue their studies in IEKs or enroll to the second year of a relevant EPAL (school-based) program again at upper-secondary level.

<sup>20</sup> Joint Ministerial Decision for the implementation of the post-graduate year of apprenticeship of the EPAL (Government Gazette 2859 (21/8/17), aligned the framework to address challenges met during the first implementation period.



Businesses that employ a student in an apprenticeship position will pay 75% of the unskilled worker's minimum wage (i.e. 439.60 euros), along with employment insurance. The apprenticeship agreement is concluded between an apprentice and an employer and is signed by the director of the relevant educational structure to ensure the conditions for the implementation of the workplace learning program, depending on the type of apprenticeship program.

The vocational upper secondary schools (EPAL) and OAED share responsibility for implementing the apprenticeship class, assigning the students to work placements, and all that this entails. The 'apprenticeship class' is at the time of reporting at a pilot stage since May 2016 for two specialties, i.e. electrical installations and agriculture business. The evaluation of the pilots will inform the final legal and operational aspects of the "apprenticeship class".

From October 2017, apprenticeships include nine (9) new specializations<sup>21</sup>, none of which is export related though. Graduates of the "apprenticeship class" will receive a diploma at EQF level 5 after the procedures for certification of their qualifications by the competent authority (EOPPEP) have been completed. Those who pass certification exams receive both the related specialization diploma and a license to practice their trade (when a license is necessary by relevant legislation).

"Apprenticeship class" programs are to be co-financed in their initial phase, using national, EU and private funds. Apprentices will receive 75% of the basic minimum wage. Participating enterprises will contribute with 35% of the apprentices' wage (private sector contribution) and the rest 65% will be subsidized by the Ministry of Education (co-funding scheme).

### 3.2.2 Best practices

The 2013-16 policy developments and the newly introduced legal and institutional framework for apprenticeships in Greece were examined by CEDEFOP in a thematic country review<sup>22</sup>. Regarding relevant institutions, their mandates, roles, responsibilities, and modus operandi, CEDEFOP states, that "*are not clearly defined, while the two national technical bodies with competence on apprenticeship seem to have overlapping roles*".

The roles and responsibilities of the relevant national institutions and labour market actors need also to be revised and/or confirmed, and the links between these bodies, institutions and actors defined horizontally (on the same level: national, regional, local) and vertically (how the national level governance structures link to the regional and local level ones).

<sup>21</sup> Technician of Food and Drink Technology - Employer of Tourist Enterprises - Graphic Arts - Technician of Electronics and Computational Systems of Installations, Networks and Telecommunications - Ventilation and Air Conditioning Cooling Technician - Assistant of Medical & Biological Laboratories - Assistant Nursing Assistant - Assistant Physiotherapist - Aesthetic Art.

<sup>22</sup> See <http://www.cephop.europa.eu/en/publications-and-resources/publications/4160>.



The role of Social Partners and Chambers of Commerce is still not thoroughly defined and too weak, given that apprenticeship requires shared responsibility between education and labour market and direct engagement of companies. The governance framework of the new apprenticeship system is not complete; social partners and chambers are not part of the national and the technical committees for VET/apprenticeships, two of the new national-level bodies introduced by the recent reforms.

A key challenge for the country is to establish a governance framework that systematizes dialogue, shares responsibilities, promotes mutual trust, balances divergent interests and allows for longer-term planning.

Furthermore, the CEDEFOP review showed that the apprenticeship program offers are not fully aligned with labour market needs. First, the occupational profiles on which the apprenticeship curricula are developed are considered largely out of date; the procedures for their update (or introduction of new ones) are seen as rather heavy and inflexible. In addition, the apprenticeship curricula define only the school-based component of learning; the workplace component is missing completely.

Second, the selection of the occupational profile to be offered as apprenticeship specialties is not yet systematically aligned with labour market needs. It is neither based on any research of needs nor on evaluation of the system outcomes.

Despite recent developments, such as the introduction of an overarching mechanism to anticipate skills needs (2016), provisions for a complete, functioning evaluation mechanism which would inform policy-making on apprenticeships are limited or missing. A further challenge posed by the introduction of two additional schemes is how the provision of apprenticeship specialties across the three schemes<sup>23</sup> will be organized in order to avoid overlaps and/or competition (for learners, companies) among the three providers. Each scheme corresponds to one specific provider (EPAS, EPAL, IEK) and the different State actors in charge of the three schemes promote them in an uncoordinated manner.

As recommended by CEDEFOP, stakeholders need move towards the introduction of a single apprenticeship system and a single governance structure, with the desired result that both companies and learners should be able to understand all offered schemes as different options within a single system.

Improvements to the EPAS apprenticeship scheme are already foreseen by OAED's own reengineering program and through the VET National Strategy. Among other developments, learning agreements will be introduced to EPAS apprenticeships describing the learning outcomes intended to be developed in the workplace, alongside with the appointment of a qualified in-company trainer.

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<sup>23</sup> See chapter 3.2 above.



### The German Dual Education model

In the context of modernizing the Greek apprenticeship system, GIZ recommends to the Greek authorities to benefit from the German Dual Education model and the respectively developed Apprenticeship Tool Box<sup>24</sup>, introducing minimum criteria and guidelines, as follows:

- Professional Descriptions
- Role of the stakeholders
- Dual education operations
- Legal framework
- Roles of stakeholders from public and private sector
- Roles of the trainers
- Evaluation / Certification methodology
- IT tools
- Financing schemes

GIZ suggestions are based in the German Vocational Training Act that codified and standardized the VET system across Germany, serving as the foundation upon which the state, the private sector, and trade unions are able to effectively and efficiently coordinate the dual system.

This high level of coordination allowed for the development public education programs and firm specific apprenticeships that are complimentary and mutually reinforcing.

Such a system also facilitates the transition from learning to employment and responds to the skill needs of the labour market.

The Apprenticeship Tool Box served as the basis for GIZ recommendations to the Greek authorities further elaborated in the attached manual of minimum criteria for state funded apprenticeship programs.

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<sup>24</sup> See attached Manual for Apprenticeship programs, and <https://www.apprenticeship-toolbox.eu/>.



## 4. Consultation programs

### 4.1 Historical background and key figures

While Greece has established a legal and institutional framework for vocational orientation guidance, consultation programs targeting companies are rather limited and sporadic. In most cases, the consultations programs are accompanying actions in VET programs aiming mainly to support individuals in areas such as:

- Support in identifying needs and exploring abilities, skills, inclinations and interests
- Personalized professional orientation / reorientation, aiming at cultivating and/or developing any existing professional skills
- Training in Professional Counselling to acquire knowledge for the fruitful diagnosis and reconciliation of educational needs
- Simulation - real case studies

In the past few years, Exporters' and Business Associations have implemented such consultations programs, through EU funding, by supporting the interaction of (potentially) exporting companies with international trade experts, with the deliverables of the programs being business / export plans.

There is no available data on the impact of the implemented programs or assessment results from the respective managing authorities (Ministry of Labour and Ministry of Economy).

### 4.2 Institutional framework and stakeholders

As vocational counselling for individuals, the Ministry of Education offers in-school vocational guidance to students and parents (information about job and study possibilities, alternative pathways, risks that go with dropping out of school) through the decentralized structures of the Department of Vocational Orientation. The secondary school program includes a vocational guidance class, and vocational guidance can be selected as the focus of inter-thematic projects. There are also counselling and guidance centers for meetings bringing together children or young people (up to age 25) and their teachers and guardians (KESYP).

In addition, OAED has established 30 vocational education career offices within the framework of the EPAS schools, aiming at linking vocational education to the world of work by placing students in appropriate jobs in private and public sector enterprises.

Specialized centers offer counselling and vocational guidance (SYEP) services to students, job-seekers, employed individuals interested in managing their career or in a career change, parents, and to special target groups (such as the disabled, immigrants).



The agency responsible for lifelong counselling and vocational guidance is EOPPEP, which is a member of the corresponding European network (ELGPN) that was set up by the European Commission in 2007.

EOPPEP is responsible for helping to design and implement the national counselling and vocational guidance policy; coordinating the action of public and private SYEP services providers; promoting the training and further education of SYEP staff and specifying the required qualifications; implementing actions in support of the activity of counsellors; and supporting citizens in matters relating to development and career management.

The National strategic framework for upgrading VET and apprenticeships (2016) explicitly refers to the need for an expansion of the guidance services. EOPPEP has developed occupational standards for career counsellors, and a certification legislative framework has been prepared and is expected to come into force. Certification procedures for counsellors are also part of EOPPEP's operational planning.

EOPPEP also administrates and supervises:

- “Ploigos” web portal, as the national educational opportunities database, providing information about studies in Greece at all levels and in all types of education (general, vocational, initial vocational training, adult education, distance learning, etc.).
- “Iris”<sup>25</sup> the electronic lifelong careers counselling forum, which is intended for public and private sector vocational guidance and careers counsellors and aims at encouraging supplementary actions by public and private sector counselling bodies and staff, nationally and in each region separately, and improving the quality of the services provided.

In addition to the above, OAED offers counselling services as well, aimed at mobilizing the unemployed and helping them enter the labour market. These services include:

- Guidance / counselling and vocational guidance – career management, for first-time job-seekers with no clear occupational goal and people obliged to change their occupation;
- Guidance / counselling for people looking for work who have qualifications that are in demand in the labour market;
- Entrepreneurship Guidance / counselling, to encourage the development of entrepreneurial skills and help unemployed persons start businesses with enhanced feasibility prospects.

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<sup>25</sup> See <http://guidanceforum.eoppep.gr>.



### 4.3 Best practices

GIZ underlines public and private sector stakeholders' view, stating that a lot remains to be done for the development of consultation programs, which are targeting export companies. As a benchmarking/starting point, Greek authorities are recommended to examine the proposed minimum eligibility criteria manual, which is based on the criteria set by the EU, the European Investment Advisory Hub (EIAH) and the European Bank for Reconstruction & Development (EBRD) under the program providing consultation support to Small & Medium Size Enterprises (SMEs).

This joint initiative as part of the Investment Plan for Europe (Juncker Plan) focuses on promoting investments for new jobs creation and for sustainable growth, by the use of smart financing instruments, the lift of impediments and the enhancement of visibility for technical assistance in investment projects.

The program targets 240 SMEs in Greece, Bulgaria and Romania for a period of 2 years, financing customized consultation services, adjusted to each company's needs. The services will be provided by local and international consulting experts aiming at supporting eligible SMEs to become more competitive and to grow. SMEs eligible to participate are local enterprises with annual turnover up to €50 million and with a working force of less than 250 employees.

Service provision includes consultation on business operations, finance, marketing strategies and export promotion. In cooperation with EBRD, each enterprise will assess needs and opportunities to grow, before interacting with the consulting experts from EBRD's pool.

The program is accompanied with VET options for business consultants and enterprises.

Cross-referencing EBRD's program with best practices from EU member states, GIZ has elaborated a manual of minimum criteria for state funded consultation programs, which is attached to the present report.



## 5. Trainers

### 5.1 Background

Educational adequacy of trainers in VET programs in Greece is considered a "horizontal skill". VET trainers and counsellors are not registered or certified by field of expertise (i.e. economist, graphic designer, agronomist, etc.), but as educational experts with the necessary knowledge, skills and capacity to teach groups of adults and in structures of non-formal education.

Each certified trainer is assigned with respective STEP Codes (Statistical Classification of Professions for tax purposes, as registered by the National Statistical Authority ELSTAT) corresponding to their specialty / field of specialization.

The above does not apply – contributing further to the complexity and non-existing unification of trainer-related standards – for Professors and Lecturers of the Higher Education Institutions, the educators belonging to the register of the main teaching staff of the National Center for Public Administration and Self-Government (EKDDA), as well as the trainers who belong to the Trainer's Register of the Pastoral VET programs, which are independent registers for the needs of educational programs that EKDDA and the IEF implement respectively.

### 5.2 Institutional framework and stakeholders

Since September 2017<sup>26</sup>, certification of educational adequacy is a prerequisite for a trainer to participate in state funded, non-formal education programs. EOPPEP is the competent and implementing authority of the relevant procedure<sup>27</sup>.

Candidates who apply to EOPPEP<sup>28</sup> in order to take part in the examination for the certification of their educational adequacy can be registered under one of the following categories:

- a) Those holding a Master's degree in Adult Education or Lifelong Learning or Continuing Education and Training or Continuing Education and Education Policy from a Higher Education Institution of the country or from equivalent recognized Institutions abroad.
- b) The trainers who are registered in the Adult Educational Register<sup>29</sup> or in other Trainers' Registries and have successfully attended the 300 hours training course of the Ministry of Employment; or have successfully completed training programs for trainers of public and wider public sector bodies with a duration of at least 100 hours.
- c) Trainers with at least 150 hours of teaching experience with adults.

<sup>26</sup> GIZ: As foreseen in article 39 of Law 4342/2015.

<sup>27</sup> Ministerial Decision 20082/2012 on "Certification System for Educational Adult Education of Adult Teachers of Non-Formal Education", as supplemented with Ministerial Decision 10472/2013 and amended in article 67 of Law 4386/2016.

<sup>28</sup> Law 4386/2016, article 67 (Official Gazette 83 / A / 11-5-2016).

<sup>29</sup> Ministerial Decision 113613 / 03.11.2006.



### 5.3 Best practices

GIZ considers trainer qualification as a crucial quality element for the success of the VET, apprenticeship and consultation programs. Using the German Dual Vocational Training (GDVT) as an example, trainer qualification should be at the heart of these programs.

Trainers should be selected with specific criteria including proven professional and pedagogical skills in order to inspire enthusiasm about a profession in young people and to communicate business orientation to enterprises.

In Germany, this is guaranteed by the Ordinance on Trainer Aptitude (AEVO) and the 79 Chambers of Commerce and Industry. Following those principles, the Association of German Chambers and Commerce (DIHK) has developed a Train-the-Trainer qualification concept for the international use. It is called "AdA-International" (in German "Ausbildung der Ausbilder – AdA") and is based on the AEVO; therefore tailor-made for Dual Vocational Training abroad.

The objective is to train the company trainer according to the German model. At the same time, it also considers the circumstances of the host country. Over 35 German Chambers of Commerce and Industry abroad offer courses including examination and certification services already and very successful. Greece is among them.

The role of the trainers is based on the training framework plan and consists of main responsibilities such as:

- Create a training plan
- Demonstrate and prepare the appropriate documentation and written evidence of training (logbooks). The trainees have written proof of training during the training period.
- Prepare the midterm exam (Zwischenprüfung), which takes place in the middle of the whole training period. This intermediate examination<sup>30</sup> covers the learning outcomes/technical skills of the first half of the training period according to the framework curriculum.

Introducing minimum criteria for trainers in state funded VET and consultation programs is perceived by GIZ as a cross-cutting issue, thus relative recommendations are included in all three attached manuals - for VET, apprenticeship and consultation programs - of the present report.

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<sup>30</sup> GIZ: the duration of the intermediate examination is 180 minutes.



## 6. Quality Assurance and Credit System

Assurance of the quality of VET and consultation programs is a prerequisite for the recognition of qualifications obtained (especially in the case of non-formal and informal learning) and for enhancing the transparency of qualifications and the reputation of VET.

The Law on lifelong learning (Law 3879/2010) sets quality standards for lifelong learning, instituting a requirement of teacher and trainer competences and professional development for teachers and trainers in adult education, and stipulating continuous monitoring and evaluation of the national lifelong learning network.

Specifically, it envisages (Article 18) evaluation of lifelong learning service providers participating in state funded programs, according to specific objectives set out in VET programs and their effectiveness in meeting such objectives.

It also establishes (Article 19) a system for the evaluation of adequacy of the trainers and staff involved in non-formal education and teachers in 'second chance' schools.

Greece has incorporated EU Parliament's recommendations<sup>31</sup> on basic principles and quality criteria in the National quality assurance framework for VET programs, titled as "π3", which defines the quality as the outcome produced when evaluation criteria are applied to:

- a) the components of the education process (structures, teaching material, programs, teachers and trainers);
- b) the procedures (teaching methods and delivery);
- c) the learning outcomes (the knowledge, skills and competence acquired).

Therefore the National quality assurance framework "π3" is the methodological tool, intending to support VET providers in further improving the provision of their educational services as well as to set quality objectives in a field that was until recently poorly controlled.

The "π3" quality framework is supervised by EOPPEP<sup>32</sup> as the statutory body for the development and implementation of the Hellenic Qualifications Framework (NQF) in correspondence with the European Qualifications Framework (EQF).

EOPPEP develops the regulatory framework for the certification of qualifications, i.e. the learning outcomes of non-formal education and informal learning, in response to labour market needs and priorities and in liaison with the accreditation of inputs, i.e. providers, trainers, occupational profiles and curricula standards also is designing and developing a national system for the certification of qualifications is EOPPEP's principal policy priority in the field of lifelong learning (LLL).

<sup>31</sup> See Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 June 2009 on the establishment of a European quality assurance reference framework for vocational education and training.

<sup>32</sup> See <http://en.nqf.gov.gr/>.



EOPPEP also organizes at national level the accreditation examinations for IEK graduates of all specialties. Upon successful examination results, IEK graduates are awarded the Vocational Training Diploma recognized both in Greece and in EU member states (for lower secondary education graduates) or the Certificate Level I (for upper secondary education graduates).

### Credit System

Recent legislation in Greece has followed ECVET (European Credit system for Vocational Education & Training) guidelines, but the implementation procedure of that legislation in Greece is questioned as many stakeholders interviewed by GIZ consulting expert (i.e. Ministries, VET providers etc.) find its technical specifications extremely complex and some even doubt it in policy terms.

The ECVET calls on Member States to “create the necessary conditions and adopt measures so that as from 2012 it is possible for ECVET to be gradually applied to VET qualifications at all levels of the EQF<sup>33</sup>”. The recommendation also endorses the European Commission’s intention to support Member States “by facilitating testing, cooperation and mutual learning promotion”<sup>34</sup>.

ECVET and the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) support learners in shaping their own learning pathway through accumulation of credits – whether within a certain institution, from institution to institution, from country to country, or between different contexts of learning (i.e. formal, non-formal and informal learning).

In general, the detailed curriculum of each specialty has to be designed in accordance with the relevant occupational profile (wherever this exists) and the principles and guidelines set by ECVET. The curricula of formal upper secondary VET are developed by Institute of Educational Policy (IEP)<sup>35</sup> and issued by form of Ministerial Acts. New legislation in Greece also requires that the duration and details of the timetable and curriculum have to be assessed and, if this is deemed necessary, revised.

<sup>33</sup> Recommendation of the Council of Europe (European Parliament, 2009), p. C115/13.

<sup>34</sup> Recommendation of the Council of Europe (European Parliament, 2009), p. C115/13.

<sup>35</sup> Public body supervised by the Ministry of Education.



## 7. Recommended action plan

Public and private sector stakeholders interviewed by GIZ, as well as institutions such as CEDEFOP acknowledge significant progress made regarding the VET framework in Greece in the past years, but identify weaknesses and challenges still to be addressed.

Major challenges can be summarized as follows:

- Low attractiveness of VET and apprenticeship programs, in the general perception of the public
- Multiplicity and complexity of legal framework,
- Lack of continuity and focus in the design and implementation of VET related policies and
- Problematic linkage of the programs with the labour market.

The Ministry of Economy as a key stakeholder and part of the National VET Strategy Committee should focus on programs and initiatives targeting (potentially) exporting companies, mainly SMEs, rather than those targeting individuals that fall mainly in the competent jurisdiction of the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Employment.

MoE should define the scope and vision of its involvement in VET programs, aligning them with a clear strategy for export promotion. This can be achieved

- a) by undertaking a more proactive role in the National VET Strategy Committee, in which MoE is represented at Special Secretariat level and
- b) by initiating a public-private dialogue (PPD) with the Exporters' and Business Associations in order review the existing framework regarding the existing occupational profiling, mainly the specific one of the "International Trade Executive".

As a first step, MoE should decide upon its role and the degree of its involvement in strategic planning, specifically regarding programs that target companies; rather than maintaining its current status of a generic funding source and monitoring authority (EPANEK) over fund allocation. When decided this role needs to be underlined in communication with the involved public and private stakeholders (i.e. in the National VET Strategy Committee, Exporters' and Business Associations). Thus, unnecessary overlaps and duplication of efforts might be avoided, and a common vision and shared goals, especially in export related VET programs, could be achieved.

The findings of the dialogue should then be elevated, by the MoE representative, to the National Committee for VET and Apprenticeship that operates at the level of General Secretariats and is responsible to supervise the respective National Strategic Framework (Law 4336/2015).

**Recommendation 1 – VET Strategy**

MoE should:

- define the scope and vision of its involvement in VET programs, aligning them with a clear strategy for export promotion
- take over a more proactive role in the National VET Strategy Committee
- initiate PPD for the integration of export related topics in the Greek VET system

The review of the existing framework should start from the occupational profiling of export related professions. As private sector involvement<sup>36</sup> is mandatory by Law for the relevant authority EOPPEP (National Qualification and Vocational Qualifications Organization, supervised by the Ministry of Education) to officially recognize an Occupational Profile. The PPD could thus indirectly lead to the elaboration of minimum criteria for content, curriculum and certifications.

To support this procedure, GIZ suggests that the Greek authorities could benefit from aligning funding eligibility criteria with the findings of the “Leonardo Da Vinci” COMINTER pilot program, as implemented in Greece, along with standards of professional certifications already introduced in Greece through private sector initiatives in the field of exports and international trade (TUV Nord, UNICERT etc.).

**Recommendation 2 – Occupational Profiling**

MoE should:

- Cooperate with public sector bodies and EOPPEP to modernize export related occupational profiles
- Follow minimum criteria set by the LDV COMINTER program and private sector initiatives, based on ISO standards (ISO / IEC 17024: 2012)
- Introduce these criteria (content, curricula, beneficiaries, certification etc.) to its funding authority (EPANEK) in order to adjust or redesign future Calls for VET programs

It is important to diversify educational programs according to the level of trainees (young, unexperienced, professionals, already trained etc.), as well as to identify sectors of the economy with potentially higher impact, focusing mainly on SMEs, as depicted in the attached manuals.

Having set the occupational profiling framework, GIZ envisages further interventions in the field of apprenticeship programs based on the German best practice of Dual Education and CEDEFOP recommendations for Greece.

<sup>36</sup> GIZ: At least two business associations or collective entities should submit a proposal for an Occupation Profile to be examined by EOPPEP.



As recommended by CEDEFOP, MoE is urged to contribute (potentially by reallocating funds) towards a single apprenticeship system and a single governance structure. That includes facilitating companies and learners to understand and familiarize with the different options within the single system.

The first step in that direction should be to trigger the integration of export related topics during the on-going reengineering of the existing apprenticeship programs, insisting in the option of appointing qualified in-company trainers.

### **Recommendation 3 – Apprenticeships**

MoE should:

- Be familiarized with the German Dual Education guidelines and criteria, as a suggested good practice
- Contribute to the stability of a single apprenticeship system
- Trigger the integration of export related topics in the apprenticeship system

It is considered crucial that SMEs participating and benefiting from apprenticeship programs will continue to financially contribute to the wages of the trainees, in order to ensure their full commitment to the programs.

As per business guidance and counselling programs targeting (potentially) exporting SMEs, the example of the newly introduced consultation program of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) should be endorsed by the Greek authorities.

Following on recommendations for apprenticeships, the consultation programs should be based on the interaction of enterprises with (in-company) trainers, foreseeing (at least) a minimum of financial contribution on behalf of the beneficiaries.

### **Recommendation 4 – Consultation programs**

MoE should:

- Endorse EBRD's newly established consultation programs for SMEs
- Include funding of such programs in future EPANEK calls
- Insist on schemes in which beneficiaries undertake a part of the cost (against fully subsidized actions)

The trainers' role in VET, apprenticeship and consultation programs is of paramount importance. The German model for Dual Education showcases minimum criteria for ensuring high-quality training and consultation from certified experts, enabling the support towards the internationalization and growth of Greek enterprises.

**Recommendation 5 – Trainers**

MoE to:

- Follow criteria set by the German Dual Education model
- Contribute to the inclusion of export related experts in Adult Trainers Registry

In all cases, the criteria and the outcomes of VET and consultation programs, should also be monitored and evaluated by an appropriate mechanism, following EU standards, as described in the European Qualifications Framework (EQF), the European Credit system for Vocational Education & Training (ECVET) guidelines and the National Quality Assurance Framework titled “π3”.

Moreover, a study by the KOF Swiss Economic Institute<sup>37</sup> concludes that the main features of VET in top performing countries include the fact that employers are involved in setting qualification standards, deciding when an update is needed, and setting the examination form. In these systems, students spend most of their time in the workplace instead of in the classroom.

In that context, GIZ emphasizes the need for developing competencies for international trade training education and consultation programs that actively involve employers and employees.

Concluding, the development of effective VET, Consultation/coaching and Apprenticeship programs needs to enable and involve in an organized way all key factors and stakeholders:

- Public institutions (competent Ministries and government agencies)
- Regional authorities
- Chambers of Commerce
- Exporters' and Business associations
- Employees associations
- Education and knowledge providers (Institutes, Universities, IEK, EOPPEP, private companies)

**Recommendation 6 – Quality Assurance and Credit System**

- Follow criteria set by the relevant European bodies, thus ensuring more efficient and effective integration of EU guidelines in Greek legislation framework
- Foresee active involvement of employers' associations in setting qualification standards

<sup>37</sup> Feasibility Study for a Curriculum Comparison in Vocational Education and Training Intermediary Report II: Education-Employment Linkage Index (DRAFT). Available: <http://e-collection.library.ethz.ch/eserv/eth:49542/eth-49542-01.pdf>)



The above suggestions aim to:

- address the social costs of high unemployment rates born during the crisis, including reversing the identified “brain drain” trends
- empower Greek enterprises, through export related capacity building, thus expanding the Greek export basis
- align reforms in education and training with the targets set by Europe 2020 Strategy
- enhance scrutiny over the effectiveness and efficiency of export related education and training programs.

GIZ express concerns over the feasibility to fully integrate export related topics in the National VET Strategy in a unified, formal way (in terms of guidance / counselling, occupational profiling, relevant curricula, learning outcomes, qualifications and quality assurance), due to the fact that a great number of stakeholders are involved in the Greek VET System, and therefore a possibility of duplications of efforts and funding has to be faced, thus decoupling effectiveness and efficiency.

Moreover, MoE relevant agencies (including funding authorities) and staff should be urged to constantly familiarize themselves with EU guidelines and framework (summarized in this report), as the basis for future suggestions and adjustments to fellow stakeholders and National Strategy makers.

The attached manuals (separate documents) on VET, Apprenticeship and Consultation/Coaching programs serve the purpose of introducing to the Greek Authorities guidelines and minimum criteria.

The manuals are elaborated in detail according to the extent of MoE's competent jurisdiction in each category and the dependence on other public stakeholders' (i.e. Ministry of Education and Ministry of Labour) institutional consensus for implementation.

Taking the above into account, the Consultation/Coaching manual correlates with a high degree of competency within MoE and EPANEK and ability for (autonomous) implementation, as the proposed program targets export companies, rather than individuals.

Regarding the manuals for VET and Apprenticeship programs, a number of other relevant authorities must agree on the suggested adaptation in the existing EU and national framework, to institutionally include the field of “international trade”.



## Annex

### I. Definitions / Glossary

**Lifelong learning:** All learning activity undertaken throughout life with the aim of acquiring and improving knowledge, skills and competences that foster the development of a well-rounded personality, employment-related prospects, social cohesion, the capacity to take part in civic affairs, and social, economic and cultural development. It includes formal and non-formal education and informal learning.

**Formal education system:** The system of primary, secondary and tertiary education.

**Formal education:** Education which is provided within the formal education system, leads to qualifications recognized at national level by public authorities and is part of the education ladder. Formal education also includes general formal adult education.

**Non-formal education:** The education which is provided in an organized educational framework outside the formal education system and can lead to the acquisition of certificates recognized at national level. It includes initial vocational training, continuing training and general adult education.

**Informal learning:** Learning resulting from activities that take place outside of an organized educational framework, throughout a person's life, in the context of leisure time or occupational, social and cultural activities.

**General adult education:** Includes all organized educational activities for adults undertaken to enrich knowledge, to develop and improve abilities and skills, to develop the personality of the individual and of the active citizen and as a means of reducing educational and social inequalities. It is provided both by formal and non-formal education entities.

**National qualifications framework:** An instrument for the classification of qualifications in the form of learning outcomes, according to a set of criteria for specified levels of learning achieved. In the national qualifications framework, the learning outcomes are defined in terms of knowledge, skills and competence, without fragmenting the unified character of the learning.

**Initial vocational education and training (IVET):** General or vocational education and training that is provided in the framework of the initial education system, usually before entry into professional life but including certain cases of training after entry into professional life (e.g. retraining). It can take place at any level of the general or vocational education pathway of apprenticeship.

**Continuing vocational education and training (CVET):** Education or training that takes place after initial education or entry into professional life and which aims at improving or upgrading knowledge and/or competences, acquiring new skills for a change of career or retraining and at continuing personal or professional



development. It includes any form of education (general, specialized or vocational, formal or non-formal).

**Post-secondary (non-tertiary) education ISCED 4:** The level between upper secondary and tertiary education. It serves to broaden the knowledge of graduates of upper secondary education. These programs are designed to prepare students for the first tier of tertiary education or for immediate entry into the labour market. They do not lead to the award of a tertiary level qualification. Students admitted to this level will typically have completed upper secondary education.

**Apprenticeship:** Systematic periods of dual learning with varying periods of time in the workplace and at an educational institution or training center. The apprenticeship is governed by a labour contract with the employer, and the apprentice receives some form of remuneration. The employer undertakes to provide the apprentice with training that will lead to employment in the specific occupation.

**Qualification:** The formal outcome of an assessment and validation process which is obtained when a competent body determines that an individual has achieved learning outcomes to given standards.

**Learning outcomes:** ‘Statements’ of what a learner knows, understands and is able to do upon having completed a learning process.



## **II. Legal / Institutional Framework**

### Relevant national legislation

- Law 3996 (GG I/177 of 25.8.2008) concerning the establishment and operation of colleges and other provisions.
- Law 3191 (GG I/258 of 7.11.2003) concerning the national system linking vocational education and training with employment.
- Law 3369 (GG I/171 of 6.7.2005) concerning the systematization of lifelong learning.
- Law 3879 (GG I/163 of 21.9.2010) concerning the development of lifelong learning and other provisions.
- Law 4186 (GG I/193 of 17.9.2013) concerning the restructuring of secondary education and other provisions.
- Law 3848/2010 (GG 71/I/2010) concerning upgrading the role of the instructor – establishment of norms for evaluation and meritocracy in education and other provisions.
- Law 4009/2011 (GG I/195 of 6.9.2011) concerning the structure, operation, quality assurance of studies, and internationalization of institutions of higher education.
- Law 4336/2015 (GG I/94 of 14.8.2015) concerning the axes of VET reformation.
- Law 4327/2015 (GG I/50 of 14.5.2015) concerning modifications of Law 4186/2013.
- Law 4368/2016 (GG I/21 of 21.2.2016) concerning the establishment of a skills forecasting mechanism.
- Law 4386/2016 (GG I/83 of 11.5.2016) concerning Research and VET provisions.



### **III. Occupational Profiling Process**

According to the existing institutional framework, the process of developing the occupational profiles involves the following steps:

- (a) Identification of the key purpose of the occupation;
- (b) Disaggregation of the occupation into main functions and sub-functions, developing the functional map of the occupation;
- (c) Elements of competence followed by the relevant performance criteria and range of indicators.

The title of the elements, the performance criteria and the range of indicators together constitute an occupational standard which is not far from what is being described as a Learning Outcome. This methodology is based on job analysis and in particular functional analysis.

Greece has chosen the shift from 'task' (used in the past) to 'function', as it has been argued that function provides a broader perception for the content of an outcome.

A complete occupational profile study also includes:

- (a) A background history of the occupation;
- (b) The current legislative framework regarding practising the occupation;
- (c) The required knowledge, skills and competences to practise it and indicative ways of assessing them;
- (d) The proposed pathways for acquiring the necessary qualifications.

# Technical Assistance of the Greek Export Promotion Action Plan

Grant Agreement SRSS/S2016/029

## Activity 3.1.3

### Manual with minimum criteria for VET programs

#### Disclaimer

*This document is a draft and is provided for information only.  
The information contained herein is subject to update and change and does not commit  
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## List of Abbreviations

BMWi	Federal Ministry for Economy Affairs and Energy (Germany)
CEDEFOP	European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training
EC	European Commission
ELOT	Hellenic Organization for Standardization
EOPPEP	National Organisation for the Certification of Qualifications and Vocational Guidance
EPANEK	Managing Authority of Operational Programme Competitiveness, Entrepreneurship and Innovation 2014-2020
EQF	European qualifications framework
ESF	European Social Fund
EU	European Union
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GIZ	Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH
ICT	Information & communication technology
IEC	International Electrotechnical Commission
ISO	International Organization for Standardization
MPO	Main Professional Operations
SME	Small & Medium size Enterprise
SRSS	Structural Reform Support Service
VAT	Value Added Tax
VET	Vocational education and training



## 1. Introduction

Currently, for financing vocational education & training (VET) relevant State authorities in the EU use several different ways (subsidy, employee equity, business financing, etc.). The present Manual of minimum criteria for financing VET programs is based on existing guidelines for EU co-funded operational programs, such as those of EPANEK Program (Axis 02S, Call 089: Upgrading the skills of professional groups), co-financed by the European Social Fund (ESF). Under this scenario, there is no private sector financial contribution.

The implementation of a VET program in the field of "International Trade", should also be based on the standards of certification of ISO / IEC 17024, thus providing significant added value to both employees to be trained and companies that employ or intend to employ them in the future, while ultimately giving overall impetus to strategically important export sectors

In terms of trainees, the proposed criteria have been designed in order to enhance their competitiveness, employability, market visibility and employment efficiency through the acquisition of certified, valuable and competitive skills, according to labour market needs in the targeted sectors.

As far as the (potential) exporting enterprises employing or expecting to employ the beneficiaries of the Program in the field of International Trade, the impetus will come from enhancing their capacity to:

- be aware of and comply with the institutional and legal framework of cross-border trade
- familiarize with commercial transport and transportation operations and procedures
- successfully carry out the considerable amount of procedural documentation that is required in the context of export and import activities
- benefit from available financial instruments intended to support cross-border trade.
- expand export activities by identifying new business opportunities and markets
- empower enterprises to in-house coordinate export procedures, thus reducing dependence in high cost outsource services

The Program should also focus on strategic sectors of the economy (i.e.: Agri-food - Supply Chain, Materials - Construction and Health), aiming in an accumulation of benefits, as follows:

- Increase profitability by reducing losses resulting from the inability to accurately calculate the cost of export activity due to the financial fluctuations in the international economic environment.



- Increasing profitability by improving the risk assessment of the financial part of export activity, which is particularly important in the light of the growing international monetary instability.
- Increasing the volume of export activities and the sectoral turnover, by attracting new companies to export.
- Increase the volume of export activities and sectoral turnover by increasing the managerial capacity of companies to carry out export procedures.
- Increasing the contribution of the sectors to the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP), improving the trade balance and increasing their employment and competitiveness.

For the successful implementation of the VET program, it is important to introduce a structured selection procedure of beneficiaries, ensuring the alignment of qualifications and skills with the curriculum and the requirements of the certification scheme.

It is also of significant importance that the VET program should be widely publicized in all the Regions of the Country. For this purpose, any appropriate means of publicity (newspapers, the Internet, radio messages and other information and information actions such as workshops, info desk, invitation to local chambers and workers and businesses associations) should be eligible for use.

GIZ envisages an active role for regional and local authorities, exporters' and business associations, as well as chambers of commerce both in the implementation and the raising awareness activities.

Finally, Greek authorities are urged to simplify and digitalize at the maximum possible degree all the required documentation (i.e. Application Form and attached supporting documents) from the potential beneficiaries.

The Criteria Manual also takes into account that businesses are knowledge-based organizations with learning ability, and aims to further empower this capacity. In this sense, the Manual embodies - and applies as an innovation - the concept of the "learning organization"<sup>1</sup> that has not only the ability to learn but also the ability to transfer the knowledge it has already acquired to other organizations.

More specifically, the objective of the Manual is to guide VET programs in the direction of developing human resources skills in financial, informational and cross-

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<sup>1</sup> In business management (Senge et al.), a learning organization is a company that facilitates the learning of its members and continuously transforms itself. Learning organizations develop as a result of the pressures facing modern organizations, which enable them to remain competitive in the business environment



border processes, in which a significant deficit of information and expertise is encountered by executives of extrovert businesses.

In this context, companies and their executives (and employees) as well as those interested in acquiring this knowledge are distinguished from those who already have knowledge and experience and are ranked accordingly.

In particular, it is proposed to develop a professional profile of "International Trade Executive", which includes specialized training on financial, informational and cross-border procedures. At the same time, a certification scheme is being proposed. Certification of beneficiaries by assessing the knowledge and ability of beneficiaries of accredited certification bodies in accordance with ISO / IEC 17024 is a critical factor in the success of the VET program to be implemented.



## 2. Eligibility Criteria

The Criteria Manual is introducing minimum eligibility criteria in three levels: a) by sector, b) by company, c) by individual trainee and d) by training service providers.

### Sectors

At the first level<sup>2</sup>, GIZ cross-referenced Smart Specialization<sup>3</sup> sectors with export performance<sup>4</sup>, resulting to the following table:

Priority sectors (National Smart Specialization Strategy)	Value of exports in 2017 (billion euros)
<b>GOODS</b>	
Energy	8,9
Construction & Materials	>7,5
Agrifood	5,5
Life Sciences & Health	1,5
<b>Sub-total of Goods</b>	<b>23,4</b>
<b>TOTAL EXPORTS OF GOODS</b>	<b>28,4</b>
<b>SERVICES</b>	
Tourism – Culture – Creative Industries	>14,6
Transport and Logistics	9,1
<b>Sub-total of Services</b>	<b>23,7</b>
<b>TOTAL EXPORTS OF SERVICES</b>	<b>28,2</b>
<b>OTHER</b>	
Information and Communication Technologies	N/A
Environment and Sustainable Development	N/A
<b>Sub-total of Priority Sectors</b>	<b>47,1</b>
<b>TOTAL EXPORTS OF GOODS &amp; SERVICES</b>	<b>56,6</b>

<sup>2</sup> GIZ: Ahead of any application of methodology for identifying export prospects and priorities. See Deliverable Report 3.1.2.

<sup>3</sup> See <https://www.espa.gr/el/pages/staticRIS3.aspx>.

<sup>4</sup> GIZ estimates based on 2017 data of ELSTAT, Bank of Greece and Panhellenic Exporters' Association.



## Companies

As per company eligibility the focus applies on Small and Medium Sized Enterprises<sup>5</sup> (of the above sectors), regardless of their legal entity status, while introducing priority clauses for the eligibility of start-ups and clusters.

Company Size	Staff headcount	annual turnover/ annual balance sheet
Very Small (SME)	0-10<	2M euro<
Small (SME)	10-50<	10M euro<
Medium Sized (SME)	50-250<	50M euro /43M euro<

Company Establishment Date	Years
Startup	0-3<
Existing	>=3
Clustering / Synergies	Status
Existing scheme	Yes/No
Planned scheme	Yes/No

In order to facilitate the selection procedure, GIZ suggests the introduction of specific “relative weight criteria”, in-line with the existing funding framework (EPANEK), as follows:

A/A	CRITERIA	Relative weight
<b>A</b>	<b>Performance criteria</b>	<b>25%</b>
<b>1</b>	Increasing turnover during the last 3 years	5%
<b>2</b>	Profits before tax and depreciation during the last three years	5%
<b>3</b>	Increasing number of employees over the last three years	5%
<b>4</b>	Company's organizational and staffing structure	10%
<b>B</b>	<b>Criteria related to the existing business's outward orientation</b>	<b>25%</b>
<b>5</b>	Current international presence	7%
<b>6</b>	Existing international presence level/experience	10%
<b>7</b>	Adequacy of specialized infrastructures and human resources for customer service/international sales activities.	8%
<b>C</b>	<b>Criteria for expected benefits and impacts</b>	<b>50%</b>
<b>8</b>	International Presence and New Corporate Infrastructures	10%
<b>9</b>	Extractive Orientation of the investment plan	10%
<b>10</b>	Completeness of design / programming of the investment	15%
<b>11</b>	Benefits:	15%

<sup>5</sup> COMMISSION REGULATION (EU) No 651/2014/ Regulation (EC) No 800/2008.



	Enhance company competitiveness Utilization of innovative ideas and / or new technologies Expansion to new markets Reorientation of production base / service provision to new markets Strengthen / expand presence in existing markets Increase in productive activity Exploitation of industrial and / or intellectual property Quality upgrade of products / services with higher added value Making use of green opportunities Contribute to local development Making use of a local competitive advantage Exploit and expand existing local (regional) productive activity	
<b>total</b>		<b>100%</b>

## Trainees

Taking into account that the proposed VET program should lead to the training and certification of "International Trade Executives", specific criteria should also be introduced at the trainees' level.

Targeting (potential) exporting companies, eligible for training should be those:

- already employed in exporting companies
- employed in existing enterprises not currently exporting, but intending to
- employed in start-ups with export orientation

The key features of the target group should include:

- high and middle level management employees
- employees involved in planning/implementation of company's export strategy
- employees familiar with basic knowledge of international
- graduates of higher and upper secondary schools in relevant fields (economics, management, marketing etc.)
- graduates of secondary or post-secondary education with at least 5 years' experience in the fields of sales, marketing or computerized accounting
- holders of English language degree at a minimum level (first certificate)

For the successful implementation of such a VET program, it is important to introduce an appropriate selection process, aligning qualifications, experience and skills with the curriculum and the requirements of the certification scheme. The following table aims at facilitating relevant authorities in such a procedure:

TRAINEES		Criteria					Gravity factor by criterion
K4 <sup>6</sup>	WORK EXPERIENCE						0,35
K4	EMPLOYMENT						
	Employed in exporting companies	Yes / No					
	Employed in companies intending to export	Yes / No					
	Employed in start-ups	Yes / No					
K4	EXPERIENCE						
	Position in the company	Sales	Marketing	Accounting			
	Position in the Organization chart	Director	Manager	Middle Manager	Employee	Trainee	
	Participation in the exports process	Yes / No	Describe				
	Years of work experience	0-2	2-5	5-10	>10		
	Years of work experience in exports	0-2	2-5	5-10	>10		

<sup>6</sup> K1 - K5 = Candidate evaluation criteria

Export Promotion Project Greece



K1	SKILLS						0,3
K1	EDUCATION / SKILLS						
	Higher education	Yes / No					
	Degree Title	Describe					
	Graduate of upper secondary education	Yes / No					
	Degree Title	Describe					
	Education in Management	Yes / No					
	Education in Economics	Yes / No					
	Education in Marketing	Yes / No					
	Education in Computers	Yes / No					
	Education as an Engineer	Yes / No					
K1	PROFESSIONAL SKILLS /Self-Assessment						
	Digital skills	Basic user	Independent user	Experienced user			
	Data processing						
	Communication						
	Creating Content						
	Problem solving						
	Other skills						
K2	FOREIGN LANGUAGES KNOWLEDGE	UNDERSTANDING	SPEAKING	WRITING			0,2



	English	Yes / No	Yes / No	Yes / No	Yes / No		
	Language 2	Yes / No	Yes / No	Yes / No	Yes / No		
	Language 3	Yes / No	Yes / No	Yes / No	Yes / No		
K3	PARTICIPATION IN VOCATIONAL TRAINING PROGRAMS						0,05
	Subject of training						
	Education and Training Organization						
	Title of diploma certificate						
	Main subjects covered or professional skills acquired						
K5	PERSONAL SKILLS / Self-Assessment						0,1
	Communication skills						
	Organizational / managerial skills						

In addition to the criteria mentioned above, a quantitative evaluation system needs to be developed ensuring as much objectivity as possible. Each of the criteria can be rated at a scale of 1-10 classifying all in a strictly quantifiable manner. For each criterion, a weighting factor is calculated to give a total score for each criterion group per candidate.

The resulting grading score can be further multiplied by coefficients of gravity, applying more qualitative criteria, as follows:

CODE	CANDIDATE / TRAINEES	Gravity factor by criterion
K1	Skills	0,3
K2	Foreign Languages Knowledge	0,2
K3	Participation in other VET programs	0,05
K4	Work experience	0,35
K5	Personall Skills / Self-Assessment	0,1

The final rating of the candidate is based on the formula:

$$TCG = (K1 \times 0,30) + (K2 \times 0,20) + (K3 \times 0,05) + (K4 \times 0,35) + (K5 \times 0,10)$$

where:

TCG = Total candidate grade

K1 - K5 = Candidate evaluation criteria

Implementing an integrated strategy to promote gender equality is crucial to alleviate inequalities. Gender mainstreaming in all policies and not just those aimed at removing inequalities against women is a painful and often lengthy process, however necessary for the success of the individual measures. In this direction, the gradual implementation of the National Equality Action Program is expected to play an important role.

All necessary actions to inform men and women about the possibilities of certification of knowledge and skills and the benefits they will gain in strengthening their professional position should be foreseen. In this context, women will participate equally in the VET program (at least 30% of all trainees).



### **Training service providers**

Eligibility criteria must also be foreseen for the training service providers. The training provider should be selected through a tendering process.

Best practices showcase that VET programs in EU include a mix of asynchronous (tele-) training and conventional (classroom) training. In that context, eligibility of training providers should be examined upon proven ability to support both options in training methods.

GIZ suggests that only certified training providers should be able to participate in the tendering processes. Such requirements are met in the ISO certificates ISO 9001:2015 Management system and 29990:2010 for Learning services in non-formal education and training.



### 3. Occupational Profiling Criteria

An International Trade Executive should develop a set of diversified skills in terms of being able to perform Main Professional Operations (MPOs). GIZ envisages the following three MPOS:

A. MPO 1: Management of export related financial operations

- The executive manages the business correspondence with international (potential) clients and providers
- The executive identifies, evaluates and recommends the use of appropriate export financing instruments and processes
- The executive evaluates and recommends the means of securing payments, export credits and financing and manages the respective operations

B. MPO2: Management of shipping/forwarding operations

- The executive is responsible for the monitoring of shipping/forwarding procedures and related contracts/agreements
- The executive is responsible for the preparations of all relevant documentation (i.e. bills of lading, etc.)

C. MPO 3: Management of export related ICT instruments

- The executive is responsible for identifying export opportunities and for the processing of respective on-line procedures (i.e. use of databases, e-registration procedures etc.)
- The executive is responsible for the management of electronic customs clearance procedures for imported and exported goods through the use of corresponding information systems - in Greece, the Customs' ICISnet Information System
- The executive is responsible for the electronic procedures related to Value Added Tax (VAT) on imported and exported products



#### 4. Curriculum Criteria

The training curriculum should be aligned with the already suggested occupational profiling of the International Trade Executive, as follows:

Proposed curricula of training		Hours
<b>Financial instruments</b>		<b>30</b>
International Commercial Terms (Incoterms)		
Export finance		
<b>Risk managements</b>		<b>8</b>
Export credit insurance and securing of payments		
<b>ICT instruments</b>		<b>20</b>
Databases and Information Systems for export related information		
Databases and Information Systems to process cross-border procedures and transactions		
E-commerce		
<b>Logistics</b>		<b>30</b>
Contracts		
Procedures		
<b>International Trade Documentation</b>		<b>10</b>
Trade agreements		
Accompanying documents & certificates		
Health and safety at work		<b>3</b>
Basic Principles of Labor Law		<b>3</b>
Basic Business / Marketing Principles		<b>3</b>
Information on the application of the principle of non-discrimination		<b>3</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>120</b>



## 5. Implementation Criteria

The proposed VET Program is structured in three phases: a brief phase aimed at diagnosing the training needs of learners (Phase A); the main phase of the implementation of the educational process is realized in Phase B; and (Phase C) the assessment of the trainees in view of the certification process that follows, as well as the evaluation of the training program itself. Thus, the general structure of the Training Program is structured as follows:

International Trade Executive VET Program		
Phase A:	Phase B:	Phase C:
Introduction - Diagnosis of Educational Needs	Implementation of the VET program	Assessment of trainees and of the VET program

### Phase A: Introduction - Diagnosis of Educational Needs

The two distinct objects of Phase A are:

Phase A	
A1. Introduction of the trainees on the educational content and objectives of the program	A2. Diagnosis of pre-existing knowledge of applicant trainees, aiming to optimizing the educational content and adapting the educational methodology to the specific needs of trainees.

The whole of Phase A could be completed through a 5-hour seminar of conventional training (classroom).



## **Phase B: Implementation**

Implementation of the training includes seminars in each of the curricula's correspondent topics. It is suggested that the whole of Phase B is implemented through asynchronous training, with the use e-learning platforms

A total of 10% of the total hours of the program, i.e. 12 hours, should be allocated to the training of the beneficiaries in the following modules:

- "Health and safety at work"
- "Basic Principles of Labor Law"
- "Basic Business / Marketing Principles"
- 'Information on the application of the principle of non-discrimination'

## **Phase C: Evaluation**

The evaluation process extends on both trainees (as per acquired skills and qualifications) and the whole VET program (as per meeting educational objectives).

Education outcomes can be measured in terms of skills or qualifications. The Europe 2020 Strategy focusses on qualifications, while in the case of Greece the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) aims to correlate the learning outcomes and acquired skills from all forms of formal and non-formal education, so that they can be certified, classified and referenced to the levels of the European Qualifications Framework (EQF).

The proposed evaluation methodology takes also into account the latest CEDEFOP findings, as well as work developed within relevant EU funded projects, elevating quality assurance of a VET program as a prerequisite for the accreditation of acquired skills and qualifications.

In Greece there are several private certification bodies that offer professionals' certification (certification of individuals) in a wide scope of disciplines such as technology, commerce, administration, tourism, computer science and other. In most cases, certification procedures follow the international standard ELOT EN ISO / IEC 17024.

The certification process should include the following steps:



1. Application for certification
2. Evaluation of the application as to the completeness of the data, and on the basis of the criteria to be described in the respective Special Certification Regulation
3. Theoretical examination of the candidates based on the specific questionnaires foreseen to confirm the theoretical knowledge of the candidates
4. Certification decision, based on the results of the theoretical and practical examination
5. Assessment of the certified individual to confirm his compliance on a continuous basis with the certification requirements until the expiry date of the certificate (usually 5 or 7 years)

### **Examinations**

The format of the certification exam should include tests with theoretical questions.

The system administrator of the VET system in cooperation with the Examiners appointed should develop a database of questions, which will be divided into thematic groups, according to the training curricula.

Exams should include a dynamic user interface, user-friendly features, diverse options of exercises / questions (multiple choice, right / wrong, text development, etc.), classification of questions by degree of difficulty, provision of time limits (total time and / or time per question) etc.

The system administrator, in cooperation with the examiners, should be able to set the test's success threshold, and the system should provide final grade automatically, ensuring transparency.



## 6. Trainers

Trainers of the VET program should meet the proficiency standards of Certification of Educational Adequacy Adult Teachers of non-formal education, as set by EOPPEP<sup>7</sup>.

In order to enrich the pool of (potential) trainers, Greek Authorities should urge interested parties to participate in EOPPEP's certification exams. According to the provisions of article 67 of Law 4386/2016, eligible for participating in such exams are:

- a) Holders of a Master's degree in Adult Education or Lifelong Learning or Continuing Education and Training or Continuing Education and Education Policy from a Higher Education Institution.
- b) Trainers that are already registered in the Adult Educational Registry<sup>8</sup>, Trainers registered in other Registries and have successfully attended the 300 hours training course of the Ministry of Employment, or Individuals that have successfully completed training programs for trainers of public and wider public sector bodies with a duration of at least 100 hours.
- c) Trainers with at least 150 hours of teaching experience in adults.

GIZ suggests that further criteria could be introduced, as follows:

Trainers Criteria	
EOPPEP Certification	Prerequisite
Record of Educational experience	Optional
Post graduate studies & degrees	Optional
Higher education studies & diplomas	Trade and Business related
Working experience	Export related (at least 5 years)

<sup>7</sup> Ministerial Decision No. G/20082 (Government Gazette 2844/23.10.2012) on "System of Certification of Educational Adequacy of Adult Teachers of Non-formal Education".

<sup>8</sup> Law No. 113613 / 3.11.2006.



## **Annex**

### **Drafts of VET program related documents**

#### **CANDIDATE APPLICATION**

##### **CANDIDATE DETAILS**

1. SURNAME: ..... NAME: .....

2. FATHER NAME: ..... FATHER NAME: .....

##### **3. RESIDENCE DIRECTORATE**

ROUTE: ..... NUMBER: ..... MUNICIPALITY: .....

MUNICIPAL MODULE: ..... PC .....

TELEPHONE: ..... EMAIL: .....

4. DATE OF BIRTH: (date) ..... / (month) ..... / (year) .....

5. Gender: Male  WOMAN

6. IDENTITY OR PASSPORTS NUMBER: .....

7. TYPE: ..... ΔΟΥ: .....

8. SOCIAL SECURITY (AMKA) NUMBER: .....

##### **9. FULFILLMENT OF MILITARY OBLIGATIONS (MEN ONLY):**

YES  NO  LEGAL DISCHARGE

10. NATIONALITY: .....

11. WORK PERMIT LICENSE: .....

12. IDENTITY LICENSE: .....

##### **2. EDUCATIONAL LEVEL**

School: ..... Year of Graduation:

##### **3. LANGUAGES**

Language: ..... Level / Certificate:  .....



### **PARTICIPATION IN VOCATIONAL TRAINING PROGRAMS**

Have you been involved in another subsidized training program in the past?

YES  NO

If YES, please fill in the following table with the details of your previous training programs (starting with the most recent)

Subject of training	Education and Training Organization	Title of diploma certificate	Main subjects covered or professional skills acquired

**PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE**

Company/ Body	Job description	Time period
		From: Month ... Year: ...
		From: Month ... Year: ...
		From: Month ... Year: ...
		From: Month ... Year: ...
		From: Month ... Year: ...
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		From: Month ... Year: ...
		From: Month ... Year: ...



## INDIVIDUAL SKILLS

### 6a: Communication Skills

Communication skills	Specify under which conditions obtained (Example: good communication skills acquired through my experience as Export Manager)
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### 6b: Organizational / Managerial Skills

Organizational / managerial skills	Specify under which conditions obtained. Example: leadership skills (currently responsible for a 10-member team)
------------------------------------	--

### 6c: Professional skills

Professional skills	Replace with any professional skills not mentioned elsewhere. Specify under which conditions obtained. Example: good handling of export procedures (current export manager)
---------------------	---

### 6d: Digital skills

Digital skills					
	Data processing	Communication	Creating Content	Security	Problem solving
	(level)	(level)	(level)	(level)	(level)
	Levels: Basic user - Independent user - Experienced user				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Certificate-s: ..... .....</li></ul>				

Other skills	Replace with other related skills that have not been reported ..... .....
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### **ACCOMPANYING DOCUMENTS**

- Recent photograph
- Filled application
- Copy of Identity Card or Passport Photocopy
- Certification of a place of residence in a municipality belonging to the Regional Unity
- Proof of qualifications (photocopy)
- Certificates of professional experience
- Training program certificates (if any)

I declare responsibly that:

- a. All the details mentioned in the above application are true
- b. The photocopied accompanying documents are exact copies of the originals

The applicant / s (full name).....

(signature) .....

Date: ..... / ..... / .....

# Technical Assistance of the Greek Export Promotion Action Plan

**Grant Agreement SRSS/S2016/029**

## Activity 3.1.3

### Manual with minimum criteria for consultation programs

#### Disclaimer

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## List of Abbreviations

BMWi	Federal Ministry for Economy Affairs and Energy (Germany)
EBRD	European Bank for Reconstruction & Development
EC	European Commission
EIAH	European Investment Advisory Hub
EPANEK	Managing Authority of Operational Programme Competitiveness, Entrepreneurship and Innovation 2014-2020
EU	European Union
GIZ	Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH
IHK	Industrie- und Handelskammer (Chamber of Commerce)
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
SME	Small & Medium sized Enterprise
SRSS	Structural Reform Support Service
VET	Vocational education and training



## 1. Introduction

This document serves as a manual of minimum criteria for introducing state-funded, export-related “consultation” programs in Greece, which are targeting companies and not to be mistaken or confused with initiatives focusing on educational or career/professional guidance and counselling.

The term “consultation” rather reflects a process in which an organization’s management opens formal and informal communication channels between the organization itself and its stakeholders. By definition, “guidance” and “counselling” are the terms which describe the more individualized process of receiving advice (most often for personal issues).

GIZ approaches “consultation” programs from the coaching<sup>1</sup> and transferring of know-how point of view, aiming to address the needs of (potentially) exporting Greek companies, and especially SMEs.

In that context, the proposed export-related program should target companies that:

- Want to deploy export planning and strategies
- Seek to build capacity for their employees in specific competencies
- Plan to introduce a new product or service
- Intend to expand to new markets

Currently in Greece, only educational/career guidance and counselling programs are structured and legislated, while coaching towards enterprises remains fragmental and inconsistent.

If coaching programs are to be introduced and funded by the Greek state a series of minimum criteria need to be met in order to:

- empower Greek enterprises, through export related capacity building, thus expanding the Greek export basis
- align recent reforms in education and training with companies’ needs
- enhance scrutiny over the effectiveness and efficiency of export related coaching programs.

The suggested criteria are based on practices introduced in Germany and in the “Advice for Small Business Program” of the European Bank for Reconstruction & Development (EBRD), as implemented in the case of Greece in a joint initiative of EBRD with the EU and the European Investment Advisory Hub (EIAH).

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<sup>1</sup> GIZ: Coaching significantly differentiates from mentorships and mentoring programs, which are usually based on more long-term relationships between the experts (mentors) and the beneficiaries.



## 2. Coaching programs' minimum criteria

“Advice for Small Business” program is part of EBRD’s Small Business Initiative aiming to provide SMEs with business advice and know-how to improve their performance and grow.

The main concept is to connect SMEs with EBRD’s network of international advisers and local consultants, covering a wide range of businesses and looking at areas including strategy, marketing, operations, quality management, energy efficiency, financial management etc.

Since 1995 EBRD committed over €300 million of donor funds to assist nearly 16,000 small and medium-sized businesses in 26 countries.

The key pillars of the Program are:

- stakeholder cooperation
- involvement of companies
- financing
- (specific) fields of support
- advisers and matching process (with companies)
- attractiveness and monitoring

It is important to note that the EBRD branch in Greece is chaired by the Ministry of Economy and Development.

### 2.1 Stakeholder cooperation

The development of coaching programs is a procedure characterized by a shared responsibility. The nature of cooperation and the division of roles and responsibilities at all system levels are stipulated in the institutional framework that governs the program. In all cases, responsibility has the advantage of consensus building and costs sharing, which is critical to ensuring a dynamic system serving export companies’ needs.

A first step is to clearly define roles among the Competent Bodies according to tasks. These tasks include developing coaching regulations, supporting companies, and recording statistics, among others.

A consistent legal and strong institutional framework is a key feature. The legislative framework clearly spells out the objectives of the system and defines the division of roles and responsibilities of key actors. It may also set rules for interaction and cooperation between companies and advisers.



## **2.2 Involvement of companies**

Social partners should be involved in topics such as definition of standards, task development, quality assurance and funding. Their role is central to ensuring that the coaching content and advice outcomes correspond to the requirements of the beneficiaries. In all cases, companies constitute the core of such programs. Companies have to be assessed in terms of eligibility.

EBRD uses the following criteria:

- **Size:** Companies with up to €50 million in annual turnover or with a balance sheet total of less than €43 million, with fewer than 250 employees.
- **Ownership:** Private businesses owned by local nationals
- **Maturity:** Businesses in operation for more than two years.
- **Sector:** Almost every sector and industry (excl. military activities or production, tobacco, gambling or financial services).
- **Integrity:** No eligibility for businesses that have ongoing or previous legal proceedings in place that might affect the implementation of the project.

## **2.3 Financing**

GIZ suggests a co-financing model between the company and the state and/or the region. The state and/or the regions pay a part of the cost of the in-company training. These co-funding models ensure a demand driven development and ownership by the beneficiaries.

This scheme could be integrated in the EPANEK Operational Programme (for Competitiveness and Innovation).

In addition there may be other forms of incentives, particularly to stimulate SMEs to participate, such as tax deductions or priority in grant schemes.

## **2.4 Fields of support**

The coaching program should reflect the characteristics and requirements of the economy. EBRD envisages the following “specialized areas of expertise”:

- strategy
- marketing
- organization
- operations
- technology
- engineering solutions
- quality management
- financial management



- energy efficiency and environment

Ensuring a task oriented and performance driven process, the program should lead to concrete results (i.e. an export plan, export promotion strategy, target-market analysis).

The programs of EBRD have supported SMEs regarding their decision-making and cost-cutting. Other SMEs benefited from introducing new product lines, expanding to new markets, qualifying for new certifications, cutting their energy usage and their energy costs or redefining their approach to human resources.

## 2.5 Advisers & Matching

A coaching program should be a demand driven system, but the matching of companies with the advisers plays also a central role. This effort may be supplemented by specific studies to analyze supply and demand in more depths, which are to be undertaken by the social partners or by research organizations and consultants. The monitoring of the developments in supply and demand should also be supported by data collection.

Advisers should have a proven professional and coaching experience track record, and this may be supplemented by VET certificates or different qualifications depending upon the area of specialization.

For example, in the EBRD program advisers for companies who want to compete internationally bring more than 15 years of senior-management experience gained in the same industry.

Furthermore, EBRD ensures that:

- the consultants network is growing (by 20 per cent annually)
- the consultants are trained in core consulting skills
- new and more sophisticated services are introduced (i.e. advice on energy and resource efficiency)
- pools of local expertise will be created

More specifically, advisers are supported to build their competencies, from introductory courses to help new consultants establish their business and learn essential consulting skills, to training for more experienced consultants to improve their marketing, business diagnostics and project management.

EBRD also enables consultants to expand their services with specialized training in technical areas such as energy efficiency and export promotion.

## Export Academy

GIZ also recommends to the Greek authorities that the practice of the German Export Academy should also be examined, in terms of creating a pool of export advisers. Federal states in Germany, in order to support companies in exporting, have developed export academies. For example, since April 2010, an educational institution of the Baden-Württemberg Chamber of Commerce and Industry has been providing know-how in the foreign trade. At the IHK Exportakademie, specialists and executives from companies can attend seminars and courses on foreign trade topics that go beyond the usual range of events offered by the IHKs.



The IHK Exportakademie offers in-depth seminars specializing in the fields of export control, air freight security, customs, financing, country reports analysis, law and organization. The training topics take up the typical issues of export practice: how are foreign trade relations organized, how and when do you need binding customs tariff and origin information, how do you obtain these or how is export control recorded in contracts?

Topics such as customs procedures, export related and compliance legislation and export promotion activities are covered in the seminars, leading to respective specializations.

The IHK Exportakademie hosts even larger event formats such as the "Zollforum" of the Baden-Württemberg Federal state which offers multi-day certificate courses as part of the event. The "Zollforum" regularly provides up-to-date export knowledge in customs matters. Furthermore, certificate courses are offered which provide information and training on customs operations, or extensive one-week courses offer the opportunity to be trained as "country manager", for example regarding China or Russia. In addition, the IHK Export Academy organizes individual education in companies upon request.

The operations of the academy are financed from the private sector. Participants and companies finance these operations.

## **2.6 Attractiveness & Monitoring**

As noted above, coaching programs are demand and market driven. To ensure a match between supply and demand many supplementary measures shall be put in place through targeted marketing efforts undertaken by the government, the social partners and business associations. The marketing efforts may be organized as dedicated campaigns about the advantage of know-how transferring. Marketing campaigns may also be in the form of outreach to companies to encourage them to benefit from receiving specialized advice.

As an ad hoc task oriented process, coaching cannot easily be fitted or unified in standardized quality assurance provisions. Nevertheless, monitoring of the program and its outputs are of critical importance, in terms of cost-benefit analysis and of showcasing examples that could trigger interest from new companies to participate.

According to EBRD data, within one year after the coaching project:

- 77% of the participating companies increase their turnover – by an average of 23% – and improve their productivity by an average of 8%, as they expand their business,
- 57% see significant job creation, increasing their employee numbers by an average of 14%
- 17% of companies secure external funding to finance their growth.

The above figures should be the base for the introduction of key performance indicators (KPIs) and impact indicators, facilitating the monitoring and the continuous improvement of the program in the long-term.

# Technical Assistance of the Greek Export Promotion Action Plan

**Grant Agreement SRSS/S2016/029**

## Activity 3.1.3

### Manual with minimum criteria for apprenticeship programs

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## List of Abbreviations

AdA	Train-the-Trainer (in German "Ausbildung der Ausbilder")
AEVO	German Ordinance on Trainer Aptitude
BBIG	Vocational Training Act (Berufsbildungsgesetz)
BIBB	Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training
BMBF	Federal Ministry of Education and Research
BMWi	Federal Ministry for Economy Affairs and Energy (Germany)
CVET	Continuing Vocational Education & Training
EC	European Commission
EPANEK	Managing Authority of Operational Programme Competitiveness, Entrepreneurship and Innovation 2014-2020
EU	European Union
GDVT	German Dual Vocational Training
GIZ	Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
SRSS	Structural Reform Support Service
VET	Vocational education and training



## 1. Introduction

This document serves as manual of minimum criteria for state-funded, export-related Apprenticeship programs, based on the best practice of the German dual education system and standards. The development of high quality vocational education and training is also the guiding principle of the cooperation under the Berlin Memorandum of December 2013 with Greece, Portugal, Italy, Slovakia and Latvia<sup>1</sup>.

In Germany, the dual education system formally emerged after the Vocational Training Act came to effect in 1969, and was significantly enhanced by reforms in 2005. Historically, vocational training was organized by the various guilds through apprenticeships, as their members sought to ensure that they had a talented labor pool to perpetuate their respective industries.

The Vocational Training Act codified and standardized this system across Germany, serving as the foundation upon which the state, the private sector, and trade unions could effectively coordinate to deliver the dual system for a modern Germany. This high level of coordination allowed for the development of public education programs and tailor made solutions for apprenticeships that are complimentary and mutually reinforcing.

Such a system also facilitates the transition from learning to employment and the alignment of human resources skills with the needs of the labour market. In order to export this type of education and at the same time strengthen the bilateral relationships between the countries, Germany during the last ten years has attempted implementing a real transfer of know-how to other countries, like Spain, Greece and Portugal.

This manual focuses on the updated list of training professions in Germany<sup>2</sup> which relate to the needs of an exporting department of a company. The learning outcome for the apprentice should focus on matters like:

- Global Markets & International Trade
- Business Development & Business Strategy
- International Business & Market Research

Furthermore, the manual foresees a categorization of eligible companies in three large subcategories: commerce, wholesale & services. Each subcategory has different characteristics, since a company's needs for example that produces and exports marble is much different from a company that exports telecommunication services. Independently from the selected specialization field, the apprentice should firstly get to know the industry and the product and then the export procedures.

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<sup>1</sup> See: [http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/education\\_culture/repository/education/policy/vocational-policy/doc/alliance/ms/de\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/education_culture/repository/education/policy/vocational-policy/doc/alliance/ms/de_en.pdf).

<sup>2</sup> See: [https://www.anerkennung-in-deutschland.de/media/liste\\_ausbildungsberufe\\_en.pdf](https://www.anerkennung-in-deutschland.de/media/liste_ausbildungsberufe_en.pdf).



## 2. Methodology for introducing Dual Education

The vocational training systems that exist today are the result of certain historical and cultural forces. Germany's dual system, like those of other countries, has been shaped by prevailing legal norms, traditions, pedagogical principles and institutional structures. This leads to two main conclusions:

- A national vocational training system is a tool for achieving certain objectives, and these objectives can differ from one country to another. There is no "best" system; each one can be judged only by its success in achieving those objectives.
- A vocational training system is influenced by other social subsystems, and exporting it is possible only if conditions in the respective countries are comparable. Rather than having just one system, nearly every country has various types of vocational training that are implemented using a range of pedagogical approaches. Vocational training systems are generally "mixed systems" that include varying proportions of both dual and school-based training.

The German system of vocational training is acknowledged for its combination of three goals (see below). These three goals are determined by consensus among policy makers in the field of education at the state and federal level. The purposes of education relate to the individual's capacity for self-regulation, equality of opportunity and participation in society, as well as human resources (Autorengruppe Bildungsberichterstattung 2008: 2).

Collectively, the three goals reflect the interests of society, business and the individual. In the context of vocational training, they can be defined as follows:

- The individual dimension refers to the role of vocational training in developing the skills individuals need to meet challenges on the job as well as in other aspects of their life. Vocational training should provide an opportunity for individuals to shape their own life, develop to their full potential, and increase their self-efficacy and motivation to learn.
- The social dimension refers to vocational training as a means of promoting the social integration of the younger generation, both in the workplace and in society at large. A vocational training system should be designed to prevent social marginalization and integrate young people smoothly into training and employment.
- The economic dimension refers to the role of vocational training in ensuring a high level of economic, business and individual productivity. The economic focus is on developing human resources by ensuring that there are enough workers with adequate skills, and increasing their number and level of qualification. The business goal is to make sure that companies have an adequate supply of qualified workers. At the individual level, the goal is to ensure that individuals are employable and able to earn a living. Also important from an economic perspective is the efficiency of the vocational training system itself.

The above can be summarized in the following three keywords: 'international competitiveness,' 'productivity' and 'employability'<sup>3</sup>.

The broader the objectives of vocational training, the greater its potential significance in society – provided that those objectives are not merely programmatic.

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<sup>3</sup> See Argüles, Gonczi, cited in Deißinger 2013, page 337.



When (adapted) versions of a dual vocational training system promote economic, social and individual goals, they gain greater legitimacy. This seems to be particularly significant in countries where a university education is the prevailing standard, while vocational training is only an afterthought.

Together with the relevant ministries from countries which also have a dual system (Austria, Switzerland, Luxembourg and Denmark), Germany has launched an online “Apprenticeship Toolbox”<sup>4</sup> to provide support for decision-makers throughout Europe who want to implement the key principles of dual apprenticeship schemes.

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<sup>4</sup> See: <http://www.apprenticeship-toolbox.eu/>.



### 3. Apprenticeship tool box and minimum criteria

The apprenticeship toolbox is a joint project of five countries, which all have successful apprenticeship systems - namely Denmark, Germany, Luxembourg, Switzerland and Austria. Co-funded by the Erasmus+ programs of the European Union, the toolbox provides a structured and searchable overview of key features of the apprenticeship systems and how they are implemented in the five countries.

The key features are: governance and regulations, social partners and companies, financing, programs and pathways, standards and matching, training and teaching, attractiveness and excellence. By comparing similarities and differences, the toolbox shows that apprenticeships are built on some common features; its implementation however is highly diverse.

Thus the toolbox supports policy decision making and provides best practices that can be further developed.

#### 3.1 Governance & Regulations

##### **Stakeholder Cooperation**

Apprenticeship systems are characterized by a shared responsibility for development and management of the system. The nature of cooperation and the division of roles and responsibilities at all system levels are stipulated in the legislative framework that governs an apprenticeship system. The way the shared responsibility is practiced and divided between different systems actors varies from country to country. In all cases, responsibility has the advantage of consensus building and costs sharing, which is critical to ensuring a dynamic system serving labour market needs and students.

##### **Competent Bodies**

The Competent Bodies have different tasks and responsibilities for steering and ensuring quality in dual VET systems. These tasks include developing training regulations, supporting training companies, and recording statistics, among others. The term "Competent Bodies" is used differently in the five countries. Government assigns specific tasks to agencies or stakeholders of the system following legal regulations and practices. The institutional settings and the scope of the responsibilities of those agencies vary among the different systems.

##### **Legal Framework**

A consistent legal and strong institutional framework is a key feature in countries with mature apprenticeship systems. The legislative framework clearly spells out the objectives of the system and defines the division of roles and responsibilities of key actors. It may also set rules for interaction and cooperation and regulate the division between company-based training and school-based training.

##### **Monitoring & Research**

Apprenticeship systems are market driven and demand led. Monitoring of the system therefore plays an important role in ensuring its dynamism, which builds on matching supply and demand. The social partners play an active role in monitoring



developments. A range of different actors including social partners, universities, consultancies and the government undertake research and studies, which feed into the development and management of the system.

## 3.2 Social Partners & Companies

### Involvement of Social Partners

Apprenticeship systems are characterized by a high degree of involvement of social partners at all system levels in the management and development of the system. Social partners are typically involved in such topics as definition of standards, curriculum development, quality assurance and funding. Their role is central to ensuring that the training content and learning outcomes correspond to the requirements of the labour market, and this enables a smooth transition to the labour market.

### Involvement of Companies

Companies constitute the core of apprenticeship systems, as the major part of an apprentice's training occurs in a company supported by apprenticeship training agreements and in-company trainers. Companies have to be approved as training and learning venue to ensure that they live up to specific standards in terms of learning as well as work and salary conditions. At times companies can be very specialized so that they cannot cover all the learning outcomes. In that case, in some systems two or more companies may jointly offer an apprentice place.

## 3.3 Financing

### Funding Arrangements

The governance arrangements in apprenticeship are mirrored in its financing, which is based on a co-financing model between the company and the state and/or the region. The state and/or the region pays for the costs of part time schools including buildings, salaries of teachers and the equipment of the schools. The company covers the expenses for the in-company training. These co-funding models ensure a demand driven development and ownership by stakeholders of the apprenticeship system.

### Incentives

The key incentive for the companies to participate in the apprenticeship system is that engagement in apprenticeship is a recruitment channel for future skilled workers, which is a growing challenge due to aging and changing educational choice among youth in many countries. Over time apprentices contribute to the income of the company as apprenticeship is based on learning through productive work. The net-profit margin varies however between companies and sectors. In addition there may be other forms of incentives, particularly to stimulate SMEs to take on board apprentices or to open up apprenticeship for youth from vulnerable social groups, such as tax reductions or grant schemes.



## Company Costs & Benefits

The company bears the costs of the remuneration of the apprentice and the costs of the in-company training. The level of remuneration of the apprentice will often be laid down in the collective agreements. If not, it will be specified in the contract between the training company and the apprentice.

## 3.4 Programs & Pathways

### Programs

In the mature apprenticeship systems there is a wide offer of programs at different qualification levels. The obtained qualifications, which are included in the national qualifications frameworks, target both the private and the public sector. Due to the involvement of the social partners the programs mirror the characteristics and requirements of the economy. Social partners play a key role in the monitoring and identification of emerging trends, which have implications on the future demand for skilled workers. Key success factor of apprenticeship is that it leads to a nationally recognized qualification, which eases the transition to labour markets and provides access to further and continuing education.

### Access & Guidance

Access to apprenticeship is based upon completion of compulsory schooling, but there may be additional requirements in practice which apply to particular occupational profiles or countries such as requests for particular school graduation certificates, a minimum grade point average, or that student have found an apprenticeship company in advance. Guidance of students already takes place in compulsory education informing them about the range of opportunities and career pathways offered through the VET system, and it continues throughout the VET program to ensure a good match between students and companies.

### Pathways & Permeability

VET programs provide learners with solid professional competences and pave the way for lifelong learning. Programs vary in duration from two years up to five years for specific high tech programs. Apprenticeship programs are characterized by horizontal and vertical permeability to ensure that there are no dead ends in the systems, that graduates are employable and that gifted VET graduates have rich opportunities to continue in education.

### Dealing with Diversity

In order to deal with the diversity of students and meet the demands of the labour market the VET offer is highly diverse. For challenged students there might be a pre-apprenticeship training offer. Programs may also be offered at different qualification levels in areas where the labour market may demand a diverse profile of the skilled worker. The apprenticeship systems usually have embedded features to meet the demands of gifted students. This may take many forms such as opportunities to take a dual qualification providing direct access to the labour market as well as to general higher education, some subjects being offered at higher levels, or enriched opportunities to undertake company training abroad. In some systems there are also accelerated pathways for more mature students.



## 3.5 Standards & Matching

### Developing Qualifications

The social partners have the key role in defining standards for VET qualifications to ensure the relevance to the labour market and the certification of the training. A VET qualification in apprenticeship systems covers a broad spectrum of topics, embedding key competences and laying the foundation for lifelong learning.

### Examination & Certification

The apprenticeship period usually ends with the final exam or a journeyman's test. The final exam will cover both the school part of the education as well as the practical in-company training. The social partners and/or the chambers of commerce are responsible for the practical part of the exam. The apprenticeship certificate is nationally recognized in the labour market, which is one of the key success features of apprenticeship.

### Matching Supply and Demand

Apprenticeship is a demand driven system. This is the reason why skills assessment and skills forecasting play a central role in all apprenticeship system to ensure system dynamism and that students who have completed apprenticeship are thus attractive to the labour market. The social partners play the key role at all system level in monitoring developments in the labour market, aiming at ensuring a match between supply and demand. This effort may be supplemented by specific studies to analyze supply and demand in more depths, which are undertaken by the social partners or by research organizations and consultants. The monitoring of the developments in supply and demand is also supported by data collection on such issues, i.e. the number of apprenticeship openings across regions and sectors, or transition pathways to the labour market for different occupations and regions.

## 3.6 Training & Teaching

### In-Company Training

The implementation of an apprenticeship program in a company is preceded by a formal approval of specific prerequisites. Typical requirements for approval include a) the obligation of the company to employ at least one person with an upper secondary VET qualification within the occupation that the apprentice wishes to be trained in, and b) the alignment with requirements specified in the training plan (i.e. equipment, etc.). Precondition to start training is an apprenticeship contract signed by the company and the apprentice. Two or more companies may be able to share an apprentice, which can be an opportunity for example for highly specialized companies. Apprentices learn by working on actual tasks in a real work environment with other colleagues being supervised and supported by the trainer as needed.

### School Based Training

In apprenticeship based training, students also attend vocational schools on a part time basis. The duration of school-based versus in-company training vary from country to country. The school based training is aimed to reinforce what is learned through company based-training and to ensure that the student acquire knowledge,



competences and skills, which are relevant to the occupation and occupational mobility. The aim is also to ensure that the school part of the programs develop students' general competences and lay the foundation for lifelong learning.

### **Linking Learning Venues**

The training plan is the key to linking the company based part of the training and the school education. A clear distribution of responsibilities, communication and cooperation between the company and the school and clear feedback mechanisms on student progress are essential features in successful apprenticeship. The VET schools or social partner representatives will often take lead in ensuring mechanisms which can support efficient cooperation.

### **Teachers & Trainers**

Trainers in apprenticeship companies will have a VET qualification in the field for which he/she trains, and this may be supplemented by a certificate as in-company trainer, which is compulsory in some apprenticeship systems. The VET teacher at schools will have different qualifications depending upon the subjects they teach. If they teach theoretical subjects they will need to have a minimum qualification at a bachelor level supplemented by pedagogical training. Teachers that teach more practice oriented topics will usually have a vocational qualification supplemented by pedagogical training. Teachers at VET schools will typically also have some labour market experience prior to teaching.

## **3.7 Attractiveness & Excellence**

### **Marketing**

Apprenticeship based systems are demand and market driven, which implies that there can be challenges to match supply and demand within particular occupations, regions or in periods of economic recession. To ensure a match between supply and demand many supplementary measures shall be put in place through guidance and through targeted marketing efforts undertaken by the social partners, the government and the schools. The marketing efforts may be organized as dedicated campaigns about the advantage of apprenticeship targeting potential apprentices, their parents and companies. Marketing campaigns may also be in the form of outreach to companies to encourage them to take on-board apprentices.

### **Quality Assurance**

Quality assurance is a shared responsibility between the public authorities, the social partners and the VET schools. Quality assurance takes place at all system levels. It is outcome and result oriented and it is monitored through different mechanisms as specified in the legal act for VET as well as in training ordinances.

### **Excellence in VET**

Excellence in VET takes many forms. It is shaped by the comprehensiveness of quality assurance mechanisms, by horizontal and vertical permeability in VET systems, by national recognition in the labour market and labour market employability, mobility and career prospects and by the rich opportunities to participate in lifelong learning. Furthermore considerable efforts need to be spent on innovations in the VET system and in VET research to improve the attractiveness of VET for all key stakeholders, as well as in monitoring this attractiveness.



## **4. The German paradigm**

### **4.1 Governance & Regulations**

All the parties in Germany involved in the dual education (Federal Government, Federal States, employers, unions and chambers) act within the legal framework determined by the Vocational Training Act (Berufsbildungsgesetz - BBiG). In addition, further labour law provisions of various branches of law are also obligatory for the professional education and further training. So legal provisions and legal principles which are valid for the labour contracts are also valid for this training contract, provided that special regulations are not stipulated in the BBiG.

#### **Federal Government**

The Federal Government is responsible for the contents of the qualified jobs acknowledged by it, except for the training parts taking place at schools. Through the obligatory acknowledgement of qualified jobs in the whole Federation the framework criteria, elaborated together with the federal states, are implemented. At the same time it is ensured that the training for the acknowledged qualified profession may be performed only according to the training regulations issued by the Federal Government.

The German Federal Education Ministry is also closely cooperating with the OECD in the context of work-based learning.

#### **Federal States**

The Federal States are fully and solely responsible for the school system. In dual education this means that – according to the agreement of the states between each other and with other parties involved in the dual education – in respect of the corresponding qualified profession each state shall issue a curriculum for its training at the vocational school.

The federal states perform legal supervision of the chambers. They create controlling and audit mechanisms to investigate if the chambers perform and act under the Vocational Act (BBiG). For example, in order to perform exams, the examination boards include an equal number of representatives of employers, employees and master craftsmen. The Federal State is obliged to investigate if the Chamber follows this rule.

The curricula for the general teaching at the vocational school are developed by the federal states, because culture and education in Germany are subject to the sovereignty of the federal states. The legal basis for the educational relationship between the enterprise and the apprentice is established by the training contract which must be concluded in writing before the beginning of the training.



## 4.2 Social Partners & Companies

### Employers & Workers' unions

Suggestions for the development or revision of training regulations provided by the employers and the unions are taken up by the Federal Government. Independently from the Federal Government the social partners stipulate further regulations for the vocational training on the basis of their tariff autonomy, especially the amount of training remunerations.

In some labour contracts in addition thereto other agreements are stipulated, for example related to the temporary further employment of apprentices after the completion of the training.

### Chambers

The chambers are assigned various tasks within the framework of the dual training. These include:

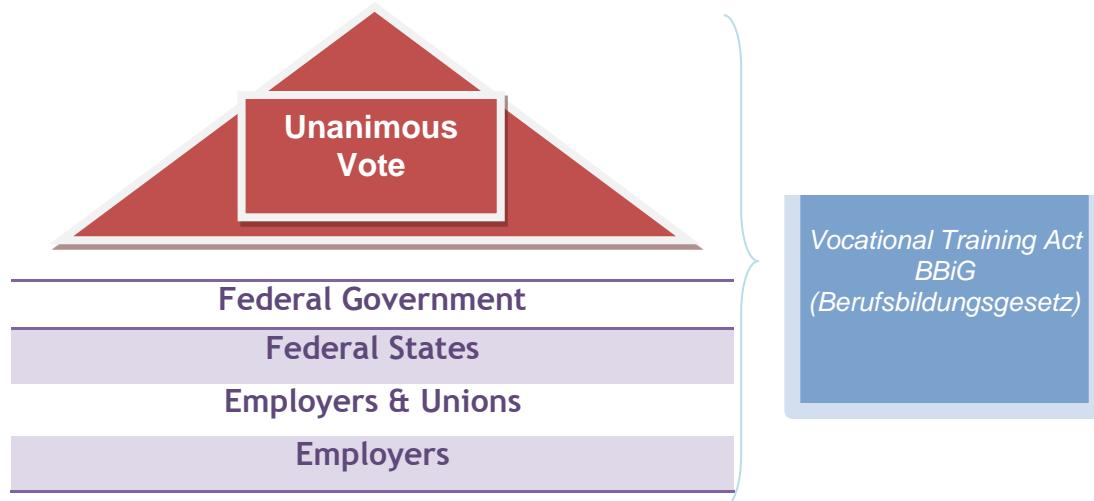
- consulting and supervision in respect of separate training relationships
- training consultants of the chambers
- checking the training suitability of enterprises and trainers
- counselling enterprises and the trainees
- accepting training contracts, checking and registering them

The chambers organize the whole examination procedure by determining the terms and appointing examination commissions which conduct the examinations. In addition to that, the chambers issue examination and graduation certificates. Examination commissions consist of representatives of employers, employees and vocational schools.

The regional Chambers of Commerce and Industry, which represent a group of firms in the same industry sector, are responsible for supervising the vocational training process and validating the examinations. An equal number of employers and employees are represented in the vocational training committees set up by the Chambers. These committees are responsible for assessing a firm's ability to provide training, that is, whether or not it has the required equipment and trainers.

For important issues of vocational training which may arise, they shall be consulted as well. Advisors appointed by the Chamber must ensure that firms comply with the training regulations. In the event that a firm does not carry out the training according to the core curriculum prescribed, it is the advisor's task to request the company to correct the situation. In an extreme case where the problem persists, the Chamber would be obliged to cancel the existing contracts and stop the firm from signing new apprenticeship contracts.

The above can also be depicted in the following graph and table:



### Role of the stakeholders

(Federal) Government	Federal States / Regional Authorities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Designing training occupations</li><li>Implementing binding requirements</li><li>Promoting the dual training system</li><li>Funding of research projects (e.g. by the Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Each federal state drafts curricula for instruction at vocational schools (after coordination process)</li><li>The federal states finance teachers</li><li>The federal states supervise chambers</li></ul>
<b>Employers (Business Associations) &amp; Workers unions</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Draft proposals for the creation of new and the updating of existing training occupations</li><li>Nominate experts for participation in the drafting of training regulations</li><li>Negotiate provisions in collective agreements, e.g., concerning the amount of allowance paid to trainees</li><li>Give expert statements in parliament during the drafting process of curricula</li></ul>	<b>Chambers (of Commerce)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Counseling and monitoring with regard to individual training contracts</li><li>Verifying the aptitude of companies and instructors</li><li>Checking and registering training contracts</li><li>Organization of examinations, incl. setting up examination boards</li><li>Awarding certificates</li><li>Setting up vocational training boards</li></ul>



### 4.3 Financing

Each of the stakeholders plays also significant role in the financing schemes of dual education, as presented below:

<b>Stakeholder</b>	<b>Activity</b>
<b>Federal Government</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▫ The Federal Government conducts research on vocational training (Federal Ministry, Federal Institute for Vocational education and training) therefore it supports the research mechanisms on Vocational Training</li><li>▫ The Federal government has developed additional programs like Jobstarter+plus, which supports companies. The program provides them with know-how and organizational services so that companies can find suitable applicants and train their own specialists.</li></ul>
<b>Federal State</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▫ Each federal state is responsible for the payment of teachers in the vocational schools</li></ul>
<b>Employers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▫ Each company is obliged to pay the wage of the apprentices, according to the relevant laws</li><li>▫ The companies through their membership support financially the chambers independently of the dual education process (differentiated depending on the region)</li><li>▫ The companies are obliged to pay the chambers in order to perform exams (differentiated depending on the region)</li></ul>



## 4.3 Programs & Pathways

Export related skills are identified in the following occupational profiles in Germany:

Profession in German	Profession in English
Fachangestellte/r für Markt- und Sozialforschung	Specialist in market and social research
Kaufmann / Kauffrau im Groß- und Außenhandel	Management assistant in wholesale and foreign trade

### **Specialist in market and social research**

Specialists for market and social research are involved in the planning, organization, and carrying out of market studies and research projects in empirical social research. They work with the conception and creation of questionnaires and conversation guides. They research data, analyze it, evaluate it using statistics software, and create reports and presentations from the results.

Even though they predominately work in an office, they often have contact with the different target groups, such as customers, interviewers, or test persons. For surveys, those who study this profession train interviewers, organize their assignment, gather the responses to the questionnaires, and implement quality control.

A convincing manner and verbal skills are necessary for this work. You plan and organize project plans, set project guidelines and work from project documentation to project settlement in a team. Working in a team on a collective project require cooperation, autonomy, and independence from all those involved.

### **Management assistant in wholesale and foreign trade**

Management assistants in the fields of wholesale and foreign trade work in all sectors of business in trading companies or in production. Their fields of activity are: the purchase of goods at home and abroad, and their re-sale to traders, craft companies and the industrial and service sectors, as well as the provision of goods-related services.

Management assistants in the fields of wholesale and foreign trade sell goods, services and customer support packages, and calculate sales prices, assure quality standards, monitor the market and assess sales opportunities, identify sources of supply, assess offers and purchase goods, make use of product knowledge, plan and conduct purchasing and sales negotiations, inform and advise customers, handle complaints, develop and implement marketing measures, process customer orders and payment transactions, and assess credit risks, evaluate parameters and statistics in order to monitor success, and use these as a basis for further measures.

Moreover, they plan, control and monitor logistical business processes in the area of goods receipt, storage and goods dispatch, select logistics services and apply them, record goods receipts, monitor warehouse stocks and conduct inventory counts, make use of information in other languages and provide information in a foreign language.



Other fields of the management assistants of wholesale and foreign trade are: planning, controlling and monitoring logistical transport processes in cooperation with service providers, complete foreign currency calculations, including foreign exchange transactions, observe foreign trade and customs legislation regulations as well as international trade clauses, conclude international transport contracts and observe the payment conditions specific to foreign trade transactions, process documentary transactions, conduct correspondence and communicate in a foreign language.

### **Management assistant in e-commerce**

It is important to note that occupational profiling should be considered as a dynamic procedure, subject to change. For example, addressing the booming of online trade, a new dual training occupation of “management assistant in e-commerce” will be introduced in Germany, starting for 1 August 2018. This is the first new commercial training occupation to be launched in ten years and has been specially tailored to the needs of this specific growth market. Management assistants in e-commerce will work for companies which sell goods or services online. These include manufacturers and service providers as well as firms involved in the wholesale sector, foreign trade, retail or tourism. The Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training (BIBB) worked with the social partners and experts from the field of company practice to draw up training regulations for the new three-year programs of VET in this area.

## **4.4 Standards & Matching**

The German Chambers of Commerce and Industry play the central implementation role in dual education programs in Germany. The Chambers register qualified trainers and examiners, encourage businesses to provide apprenticeships, recognize foreign certificates and organize visits abroad for trainees.

In addition they support and advise apprentices and employees with all questions relating to education and training, as well as mediate in the case of problems, determine the suitability of businesses and trainers, register the training contracts, organize examinations and issue certificates.

Around 190,000 volunteer examiners work on more than 30,000 examination committees and ensure the practical relevance of the vocational and further training examinations. They ensure that skilled employees are trained in line with requirements, provide examinations on subjects which are relevant to business and operational requirements and strengthen the autonomy of the regional economy. Moreover, the trainees are examined on generic topics, independently of their professions. For example, on these two professions that were mentioned above, when the middle exams (Zwischenprüfung) take place, the trainees are examined on a topic called economic and social studies (Wirtschafts- und Sozialkunde).



## 4.5 Training and teaching

A crucial quality element for the success of the German Dual Vocational Training (GDVT) is the trainer qualification. Trainers must have a solid professional footing and pedagogical skills in order to inspire enthusiasm about a profession in young people and communicate its content professionally. In Germany, this is guaranteed by the Ordinance on Trainer Aptitude (AEVO) and the 80 Chambers of Commerce and Industry. Train-the-Trainer (in German "Ausbildung der Ausbilder – AdA") is based on the AEVO and is therefore tailor-made for Dual Vocational Training.

The participants of the seminar "Ausbildung der Ausbilder – AdA", in order to be qualified as trainers, acquire the basic knowledge of the core areas of GDVT and the skills to design, prepare and conduct effective training sessions for their companies' trainees. Among others, they gather practical knowledge on guidance techniques and for handling difficult situations when the training takes place in the company.

For example, the dual education programs for the Management assistant in wholesale and foreign trade on this profession lasts 3 years. The learning outcome of this profession contains the below learning knowledge/technical skills:

Chapter	Knowledge/Technical skills
The company	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Position, legal form and structure</li><li>• Organizational and decision-making structures</li><li>• Vocational training, human resources, labor, social and collective agreements</li><li>• Safety and health at work</li><li>• Environmental protection</li></ul>
Procurement and logistics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Trade-specific logistics</li><li>• Procurement planning</li><li>• Purchase of goods</li><li>• Goods and data flow</li><li>• Assortment of goods &amp; Shipping of goods</li></ul>
Sales and customer orientation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Marketing</li><li>• Calculation and price determination</li><li>• Sales and customer service</li></ul>
Information and cooperation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Information and communication systems,</li><li>• Teamwork, communication and work organization</li><li>• Applying a Foreign Language in Specialized Tasks</li></ul>
Commercial audit and control	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Posting Business Transactions</li><li>• Cost and Performance Accounting Controlling,</li><li>• Payments and credit</li></ul>



On the subject of vocational training in the company, the following skills are learnt:

1. in the field of wholesale:

- Goods receipt, goods storage and goods issue
- Merchandise management system

2. in the field of foreign trade:

- Foreign trade and foreign markets
- Foreign language communication

### **Role of the trainers**

The role of the trainers is based on the training framework plan for the trainees. Their main responsibilities are to:

- create a training plan
- demonstrate and prepare the appropriate documentation and written evidence of training (logbooks). The trainees thus have written proof of training during the training period.
- prepare the midterm exam (Zwischenprüfung), which takes place in the middle of the whole training period. It covers the learning outcomes/technical skills of the first half of the training period according to the framework curriculum. The duration of the intermediate examination is 180 minutes.

The candidate is examined in practice-oriented tasks or cases from the following areas:

- Work organization
- Merchandise management
- Economic and Social Studies

<b>Final Examination</b>	
Field of wholesale	Field of foreign trade
<p><b>A)</b> <u>The candidate is examined on practical tasks on the below subjects:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Merchandise management and logistics in trade</li><li>• Planning and implementation of procurement</li><li>• Marketing and sales<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◦ Procedures</li><li>◦ Contextual relationships</li><li>◦ Value chains</li><li>◦ Developing/presenting possible solutions</li></ul></li><li>• Legal provisions/complaints</li></ul>	<p><b>A)</b> <u>The candidate is examined on practical tasks on the below subjects:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Initiation and conclusion of foreign trade transactions</li><li>• Settlement of foreign trade transactions</li><li>• Foreign language processing of a case in the field of foreign trade business</li></ul>
<p><b>Duration of the exam:</b> 180 minutes</p> <p><b>B)</b> <u>The candidate is examined on practical tasks in:</u></p>	<p><b>Duration of the exam:</b> 180 minutes</p> <p><b>B)</b> <u>The candidate is examined on practical tasks in:</u></p>



<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Commercial audit and control</li><li>• Work organization and human resources management</li><li>• Information and communication technology</li><li>• Cost and performance accounting, controlling</li><li>• Accounting transactions</li><li>• Payments and credit</li><li>• Operational analysis</li><li>• Evaluating conclusions</li><li>• Performing calculations</li><li>• Mathematical and organizational tasks</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Commercial audit and control</li><li>• Work organization and human resources management</li><li>• Information and communication technology</li><li>• Cost and performance accounting, controlling</li><li>• Accounting transactions</li><li>• Payments and credit</li><li>• Operational analysis</li><li>• Evaluating conclusions</li><li>• Performing calculations</li><li>• Mathematical and organizational tasks</li></ul>
<b>Duration of the exam:</b> 90 minutes	<b>Duration of the exam:</b> 90 minutes
<p><u>C) The candidate is examined on practical tasks on the below subjects:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Labor law and social security</li><li>• Vocational training</li><li>• Economic system and economic policy</li><li>• Economic &amp; social relationships</li></ul>	<p><u>C) The candidate is examined on practical tasks on the below subjects:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Labor law and social security</li><li>• Vocational training</li><li>• Economic system and economic policy</li><li>• Economic &amp; social relationships</li></ul>
<b>Duration of the exam:</b> 90 minutes	<b>Duration of the exam:</b> 90 minutes
<p>Moreover, the candidate will be examined orally in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Purchase of goods</li><li>• Marketing</li><li>• Sales and customer service</li></ul>	<p>Moreover, the candidate will be examined orally in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• International Trade</li><li>• Foreign Markets</li></ul>
<p>The candidate should develop solutions and make business talks with the examiner analysing particular situations, and show knowledge of goods.</p>	<p>The candidate should develop solutions and make business talks with the examiner analysing particular situations, and show knowledge of goods.</p>
<p><b>Preparation exam:</b> 15 minutes <b>Duration of the exam:</b> 30 minutes</p>	<p><b>Preparation exam:</b> 15 minutes <b>Duration of the exam:</b> 30 minutes</p>



## 4.6 Attractiveness & Excellence

In Germany, employers' organizations and trade unions are the drivers when it comes to updating and creating new training regulations and occupational profiles or modernizing further training regulations. As a result, training, testing and certificates are standardized in all industries throughout the country<sup>5</sup>, thus ensuring that all apprentices receive the same training regardless of region and company. Moreover, employers have trust in these certificates as they provide evidence of what an individual knows and is able to do.

The shared responsibility between government, employers and trade unions also helps in responding to emerging new challenges such as digital innovations like the Internet of Things which will have an increasing impact on manufacturing and the way work is organized.

The digital revolution is about to bring significant changes to occupational profiles and training regulations as well as to continuing vocational education and training (CVET), providing challenges that are already being addressed, for example, by the joint "Skills for the digital workplace of tomorrow" initiative of the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) and the Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training (BIBB).

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<sup>5</sup> Each federal state is responsible individually for their curriculum in the vocational school, not for the in-the-job training process. The training, testing and certificates are standardized because they are based on the in-the-job training regulations, not the vocational school curriculum. However, federal states should act under certain regulations for the vocational school operations.