

# Education Policy in Greece

## A Preliminary Assessment





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## FOREWORD

In a highly interconnected world, where technological progress is surpassing our expectations and putting high pressure on education systems, OECD countries need to continue improving their education outcomes. Greece is not the exception and although its results from the OECD Programme for International Students Assessment (PISA, measuring the performance of 15-year-old students in reading, mathematics and science) are close to the OECD average, it is lagging behind many countries, and it has not shown improvement in recent years. In addition, the basic skills of adults in Greece are lower than average, as measured in the Survey of Adult Skills, a product of the OECD Programme for International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC). These challenges come at a time when Greek education expenditure has, unsurprisingly, declined in the current very harsh economic context; now is the time to begin assessing how to improve the education system and strengthen school outcomes.

To help the Greek government address these challenges, this report assesses the current situation of the education system and proposes a number of policy options. Among others – and in line with international best practices – the report focuses on the current organisation of the education system and proposes measures so that schools can have the capacity and the support to deliver high quality education by advancing devolution and professional autonomy; developing school leadership; providing and developing assessment and evaluation capacities; and ensuring that high quality schooling is available to all students. It also looks at the need to ensure a smooth transition between schools and further learning opportunities or the labour market.

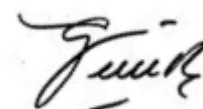
This report was prepared in response to a request by the Government of Greece in line with the Memorandum of Understanding concluded between Greece and the European Stability Mechanism (ESM) in August 2015, and it is part of the work that the OECD is doing under the OECD-Greece Joint Steering Committee, established in March 2015. It follows up on the 2011 OECD education review of Greece focusing on a series of underlying issues that can contribute to raising the quality of education. They include:

1. *Procedures for budgeting expenditures for education* (Chapter 3).
2. *Ways to increase the autonomy of (a) schools, (Chapter 2) and (b) universities and other post-secondary institutions; study the functioning and governance of tertiary education institutions (TEI) as well as measures to ensure transparency* (Chapter 7).
3. *Training and development for effective school leadership* (Chapter 4).
4. *The development of all-day schools* (Chapter 6).
5. *Links between research institutions, universities and the technological educational institutions* (Chapter 7).
6. *Procedures for the reliable monitoring of the implementation of reforms at all levels of education* (Chapter 5).

The report addresses these issues and presents a preliminary assessment that aims to contribute to policy discussions in Greece, building on a short review visit to Greece by an OECD education policy review team. It will be followed by a more in-depth analysis and review of Greece's education system which will include recommendations for action. It has been supervised by Gabriela Ramos, Chief of Staff and Sherpa, who heads the OECD-Greece Joint Steering Committee, and co-ordinated by Mario López-Roldán and Kostas Panagiotopoulos. The report was drafted by Pauline Musset, Simon Field and Fani Stylianidou, with contributions from Beatriz Pont, under the supervision of Richard Yelland, Head of the Education Policy Advice and Implementation Division, Montserrat Gomendio, Deputy Director of the Directorate for Education and Skills and Andreas Schleicher, Director of the Directorate for Education and Skills. Administrative support was provided by Manon Thiebaut and Célia Braga-Schich. The report also benefited from collaboration with the European Commission and contributions and coordination by Krzysztof Kania, Country Desk Officer for Greece in the Directorate General for Education and Culture (DG EAC).

The elaboration of this report received financial support from EU structural and investment funds (ESIF), and in particular the European Social Fund (ESF), under the national Operational Programme Human Resource Development, Education and Lifelong Learning' for Greece.

The OECD would like to thank the Greek Ministry of Education, Research and Religious Affairs and Kostas Gavroglu, the national co-ordinator at the time of the project, who together with John Pantis, the Secretary General of the Ministry of Education, Pafsanias Papageorgiou, Secretary General for Lifelong Learning and Youth at the Ministry of Education and Gerasimos Kouzelis, the President of the Institute of Educational Policy, provided guidance and background information for this report and their support throughout the process.



Gabriela Ramos  
Special Counsellor to the Secretary-General,  
OECD Chief of Staff and Sherpa



## SUMMARY

### Introduction

This report was prepared at the request of the Greek government. It is a preliminary assessment of future more in-depth analysis, undertaken in the context of an agreement between the European Commission and the Greek government (European Commission/Hellenic Republic/Bank of Greece, 2015). There are challenges in the Greek education system. While dropout rates are low in Greece, educational outcomes remain weak and the system is highly centralised. The economic crisis has been accompanied by dramatic social and economic changes, with sharp increases in unemployment and poverty. Public funding for education has also declined. All of these elements have had a major impact on the demands on the Greek education system, and on those working within it.

Education is the key to a brighter future for Greece and investment in education and training needs to be prioritised, with attention being paid to the improvement of teaching quality and educational leadership, more emphasis on early childhood education and care, and directing resources to the neediest schools. In the context of an economic crisis and pressing immediate difficulties, delegating formal legislative, financial and human resource responsibilities to local actors needs to take place gradually, and be linked to sustained efforts to develop the capacity to exercise new responsibilities. This report provides a preliminary assessment with a set of policy options to respond to some of the challenges of the Greek education system presented below. Future OECD work on Greece will build on this assessment.

### Devolution and the development of professional autonomy

Recently there have been modest moves towards decentralisation. In principle, school autonomy, balanced by strengthened local capacity and accountability, could make schools more efficient and responsive to local needs. More autonomy could also lead to the schools being more open to engaging with local communities. There is consensus that school self-evaluation should be reintroduced, together with some form of external accountability.

#### *Immediate policy options*

*Policy option 2.1: granting local educational actors, including schools, local education leaders and teachers, more control over how they realise learning outcomes, combined with investment in capacity and greater accountability.*

*Policy option 2.2: developing a school quality and outcomes framework through consultation with stakeholders.*

*Policy option 2.3: reintroducing school self-evaluation through that framework.*

### **Budgeting for decentralisation and more autonomous schools**

In Greece, school and post-secondary funding decisions are centralised, so any delegation of budgets to local actors would have to address how teaching staff are allocated to different schools across the country. Reorganisation of school funding would also have to look at how to direct funds to the neediest schools. In the longer run, consideration might be given to a school funding formula. Formula funding should reflect instructional costs and varying student needs. It is also important to prioritise early childhood education and care. To support schools, an important issue to review is the high number of adjunct teachers which seems to create pedagogical problems.

#### ***Immediate policy options***

*Policy option 3.1: moving towards a system of more decentralised budgets balanced by accountability for outcomes.*

*Policy option 3.2: giving more resources to the neediest schools. Schools would need to be accountable for their use of additional funds for disadvantaged students.*

#### ***Policy options for subsequent steps***

*Policy option 3.3: prioritising the earliest phases of education, including early childhood education and care.*

*Policy option 3.4: developing a school funding formula.*

### **Developing educational leadership**

School leaders in Greece currently have limited responsibilities, and at present new school leaders have little leadership preparation or training. The development of local leadership capacity is needed to support more school autonomy and provide the foundation for giving more responsibilities to school leaders. Strong leaders need well-defined roles and have to be accountable. Local education leaders could play a big role in transforming schools into learning organisations open to engagement with the community, using data to assess performance and learning from others. Effective leadership is linked to educational improvement. Immediately, educational leaders can learn from each other.

#### ***Immediate policy options***

*Policy option 4.1: developing educational leadership skills among existing leaders through collaborative learning.*

#### ***Policy options for subsequent steps***

*Policy option 4.2: making school leadership an attractive career option, and selecting candidates carefully.*

*Policy option 4.3: designing effective training programmes for school leaders. Training support for new school leaders is vital.*

## Developing an assessment and evaluation capacity

In Greece, there are few national assessments of student learning. There is also no external evaluation of schools. The introduction of student national assessments can define the standards to which all students need to achieve at different stages, and helps identify and support those students and schools lagging behind. School outcome data need to be handled carefully, and teachers and education leaders need to have ownership of the evaluation process so that it is not seen as something alien and punitive. Some public bodies potentially have evaluation and monitoring responsibilities, but at present this function is relatively undeveloped. Assessment of student learning needs further development.

### *Immediate policy options*

*Policy option 5.1: building the capacity and the institutions for data use.*

### *Policy options for subsequent steps*

*Policy option 5.2: collecting data on students and schools to foster improvement, and implementing sample student assessments using national standards defined by independent bodies.*

## The development of all-day schools

In Greece the intention is that all primary schools should eventually become "all-day" schools. But despite some positive evidence, the development of these schools also presents equity challenges, as enhanced instruction is not available to the entire student population, and it tends to direct additional resources to schools that are already advantaged and that have students that may not come from low-income families. New government proposals are addressing this issue. Additional instruction hours need to be used effectively, and this means developing the skills needed for teachers to realise stronger learning outcomes. As a principle, augmented schooling ought to be available to all or aimed at the disadvantaged, and it should be developed in coherence with teacher policy.

### *Immediate policy options*

*Policy option 6.1: ensuring either a) that the augmented schooling and additional resources of all-day schools are available to all, or b) that they are targeted at the most disadvantaged.*

*Policy option 6.2: developing both initial teacher education and subsequent professional development, to make good use of instruction time in schools; strengthening the practical component of initial teacher education, and aligning continuing training to the needs of the schools.*

### *Policy options for subsequent steps*

*Policy option 6.3: when allocating teachers to schools and determining how to distribute the time of instruction between teachers, taking into account their experience levels.*

*Policy option 6.4: attracting, supporting and retaining high quality teachers in all-day and other schools that need it most. Better teacher allocation, mentoring for novice teachers, financial incentives and support in hard-to-teach schools.*

**Post-secondary education: Issues of autonomy and relationships between different post-secondary sectors**

Many young people in Greece transition between school and the labour market via some form of post-secondary education. The way the university entrance examination is organised and the linked "shadow education" sector have many adverse effects on the whole of the education sector. In the context of an exceptionally difficult youth labour market and very high rates of graduate unemployment, this phase of education is critical to labour market outcomes. But the mechanisms that would normally link provision of post-secondary opportunities with labour market requirements are very weak in Greece. The central allocation of student places reflects neither student preferences nor labour market requirements. Institutional funding could be linked to student completions, particularly in fields of study for which there is labour market demand. The post-secondary sector is also highly fragmented and Technological Educational Institutions (TEIs) have failed to acquire a distinct mission with sufficient labour market focus. Issues remain regarding quality assurance mechanisms.

***Immediate policy options***

*Policy option 7.1: giving institutions of tertiary education the incentives and the capacity to respond to student preferences and labour market needs, using funding incentives to encourage completion and labour market responsiveness.*

***Policy options for subsequent steps***

*Policy option 7.2: strengthening post-secondary vocational programmes, and encouraging work-based learning.*

*Policy option 7.3: balancing the strengthening of institutional capacity with enhanced measures of accountability.*

**Conclusions**

The Greek education system already had some challenges before the crisis, and the crisis – especially the budget cuts and high youth unemployment, has exacerbated them. Reforming the education system in these conditions is difficult but essential task. The policy options presented in this report propose the development of more autonomy for educational institutions to achieve better student outcomes, strengthening teacher professionalism, and providing institutional support, with accountability and tools to support the education system as whole, such as better data. It also aims at improving the learning and labour market outcomes of students, to ease the transition into adult life and the labour market. A second phase of work is proposed to build on this initial report, and to expand it into a full policy review. It would further pursue the topics examined in this report while also including an examination of other key challenges.

## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

*This report was prepared at the request of the Greek government, following a previous OECD education review of Greece in 2011. Since 2011, there have been a number of education reforms – including some rationalisation in the institutional networks at the primary, secondary and post-secondary levels, but many features of the education system remain unchanged. The system is highly centralised, with central government exercising close control on inputs into the system. Most teachers are public or civil servants, selected and allocated to individual schools by central government. Post-secondary education is also highly centralised. The crisis has added to these challenges: there has been a significant decline in GDP, reductions in public expenditure and increased unemployment, in the midst of a profound economic crisis. A major refugee crisis is ongoing, and there have been significant reductions in education budgets. But education will be the key to a brighter future for Greece and investment in education and training therefore needs to be prioritised.*

## Background and methodology

*This report was prepared at the request of the Greek government*

This report was prepared at the request of the Greek government to provide advice on selected education policy issues. Following an OECD education review of Greece (OECD, 2011), this report takes stock of the changes in the different education policy areas since 2011 and provides an assessment of the current education context and a set of policy options.

The context has changed significantly since 2011, with a combination of a significant decline in national income, reductions in public expenditure and increased levels of unemployment, in the midst of a devastating economic crisis. A major refugee crisis continues, and there have been significant reductions in education budgets, resulting in an intense and difficult context for education policies. Education can be the key to a brighter future for Greece and investment in education and training therefore needs to be prioritised.

At an initial meeting with the Greek authorities in January 2016 it was agreed to focus the report on six topics that address some of the underlying issues that can contribute to raise the quality of education in Greece, issues that are covered in different chapters of this report:

1. Procedures for budgeting expenditures for education.
2. Ways to increase the autonomy of (a) schools, and (b) universities and other post-secondary institutions; study the functioning and governance of tertiary education institutions (TEI) as well as measures to ensure transparency.
3. Training and development for effective school leadership.
4. The development of all-day schools.
5. Links between research institutions, universities and the technological educational institutions.
6. Procedures for reliably monitoring the implementation of reforms at all levels of education.

*An OECD team visited Greece and the authorities provided information*

An OECD team visited Greece on 15-19 February 2016 and held discussions with a wide range of policy officials, experts and other stakeholders in the Greek education system, with separate sessions on each of the six topics. A representative from the European Commission also participated as an observer. Subsequent to the visit, the Greek authorities provided the OECD with a wide range of factual information and data on the Greek education system and its workings, and a group of Greek academic experts prepared short reports on each of the issues.

*This is an initial report that will be followed by more thorough analysis*

As this report is linked to a Memorandum of Understanding between Greece and the European Commission (European Commission/Hellenic Republic/Bank of Greece, 2015) with specific deadlines, the timeframe for preparing the review was adapted and shortened (normally such reviews require several meetings with stakeholders and institutional visits, multiple missions, and a more



thorough discussion of policy options with the education authorities). As a result, this report is brief and not comprehensive: policy advice in this report is presented as preliminary policy options for further exploration rather than recommendations, as the timescale did not permit fuller and deeper analysis to support full recommendations. A more in-depth study could explore further the viability and practical implementation challenges surrounding the different policy options advanced in this initial report and target education system improvement more broadly.

## The Greek education system and its outcomes

### *A brief description of the Greek education system*

The Greek education system is under the central responsibility and supervision of the Ministry of Education, Research and Religious Affairs (MofERRA). Early childhood education usually starts at age 4 (although with low enrolment rates); and pre-primary, primary and lower secondary education is compulsory between the ages of 5 and 14/15. Primary education (*Dimotiko*) lasts six years, lower secondary education (*Gymnasio*) lasts three years and upper secondary education – unified upper secondary school (*Eniaio Lykeio*) and technical vocational school (TEE) – lasts three years (see Figure 1.1). Grade repetition is low. Student tracking starts at age 15 at the end of *Gymnasio*, when students choose between vocational or academic tracks. Enrolment in vocational programmes is relatively low: in 2014, 15% of 15-19 year-olds were enrolled in such programmes, and only 2% in apprenticeships (OECD, 2016a; European Union, 2015).

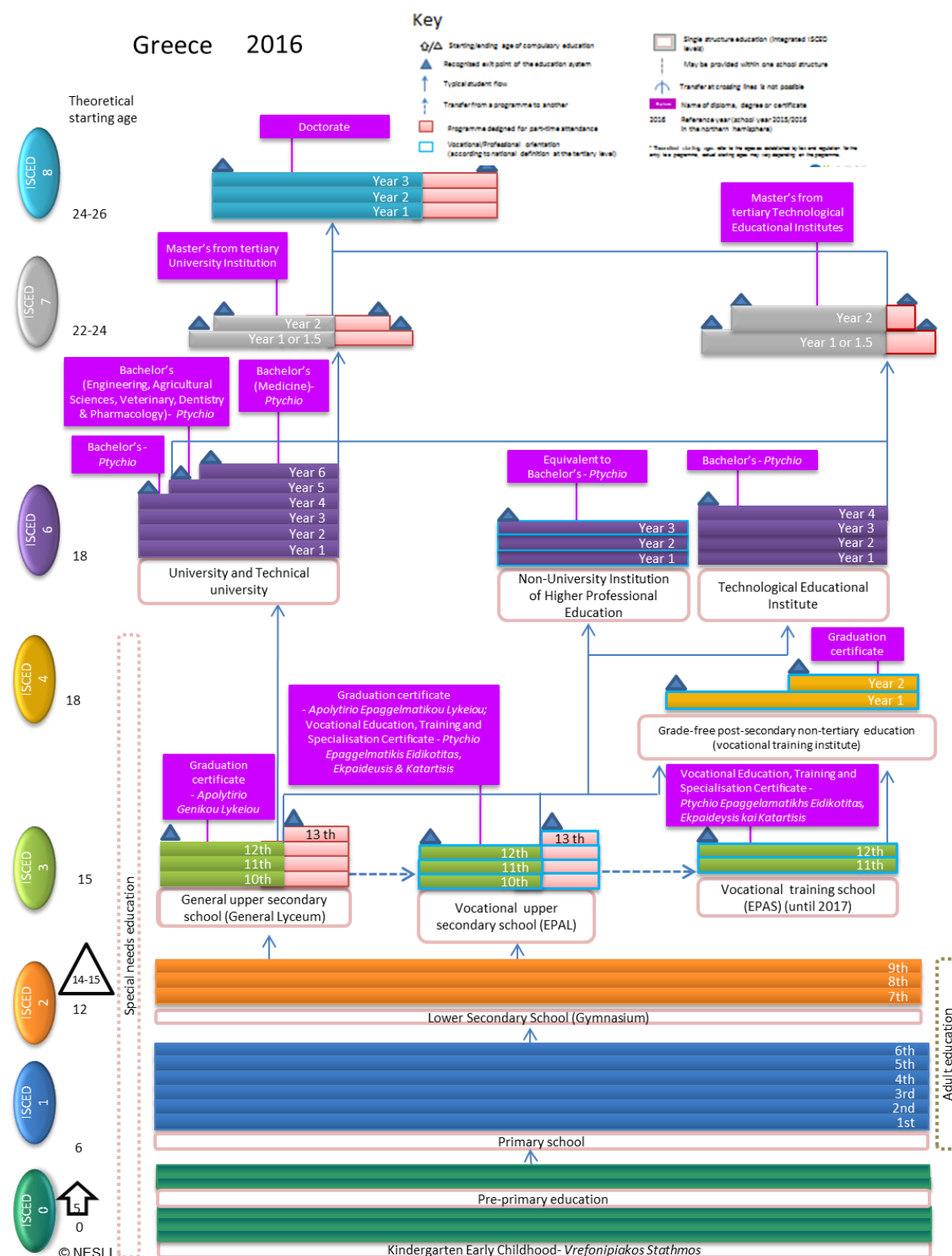
In 2015 there were about 13 000 pre-primary to secondary schools in Greece, with around 1 368 000 students and about 135 000 teachers (see Table 1.1 for more details).

**Table 1.1 Number of schools, students and permanent teachers in Greece (2015)**

School Types	Number of schools	Number of students	Number of permanent teachers
Kindergarten (all kinds) [ <i>Nipiagogeio</i> ]	5 224	143 217	11 511
Primary School (all kinds) [ <i>Dimotiko Scholeio</i> ]	4 566	607 589	55 038
Secondary School (all kinds and levels)	3 437	617 280	69 181
Lower Secondary School (all kinds)[ <i>Gymnasio</i> ]	1 747	308 493	34 160
Upper Secondary Vocational School [ <i>Epaggelmatiko Lykeio</i> ]	399	88 622	13 089
Upper Secondary General School [ <i>Geniko Lykeio</i> ]	1 059	217 161	21 130
Other	232	3 004	803

Source: IEP (2016), "Experts' Reports", Report prepared by the IEP and academic experts for the OECD review team, March 2016.

Figure 1.1 The structure of the Greek education system



Source: OECD (2016d), "Diagram of the education system: Greece", <http://gpseducation.oecd.org/CountryProfile?primaryCountry=GRC> (accessed on 4 November 2016).

*Educational outcomes are relatively weak*

According to the latest PISA assessment, in 2015, the average performance of Greek 15-year-old students is one of the lowest among OECD countries (454 in mathematics in comparison to 493 OECD average). More than one-third of Greek 15-year-olds were low achievers (scoring below Level 2) in mathematics (36% compared to an OECD average of 23%), and only 4% scored at Level 5 and 6 (compared to an OECD average of 11%). Low achievers in mathematics cannot compute the approximate price of an object in a different currency or compare the total distance across two alternative routes. Results have been stable since PISA 2006 in mathematics, but results in science and reading have declined since then. The impact on PISA performance of students' socio-economic background is comparable to the average of OECD countries (OECD, 2016e).

At 8%, the early school leaving rate<sup>1</sup> was below the EU-28 average of 11% in 2015 (Eurostat, 2016a). While the number of people with at least upper secondary education in Greece is roughly equivalent to the OECD average, the number of those with tertiary education, at around 39%, is slightly over EU-28 average but lower than OECD average (OECD, 2015).

*More than 2 million adults in Greece have low basic skills*

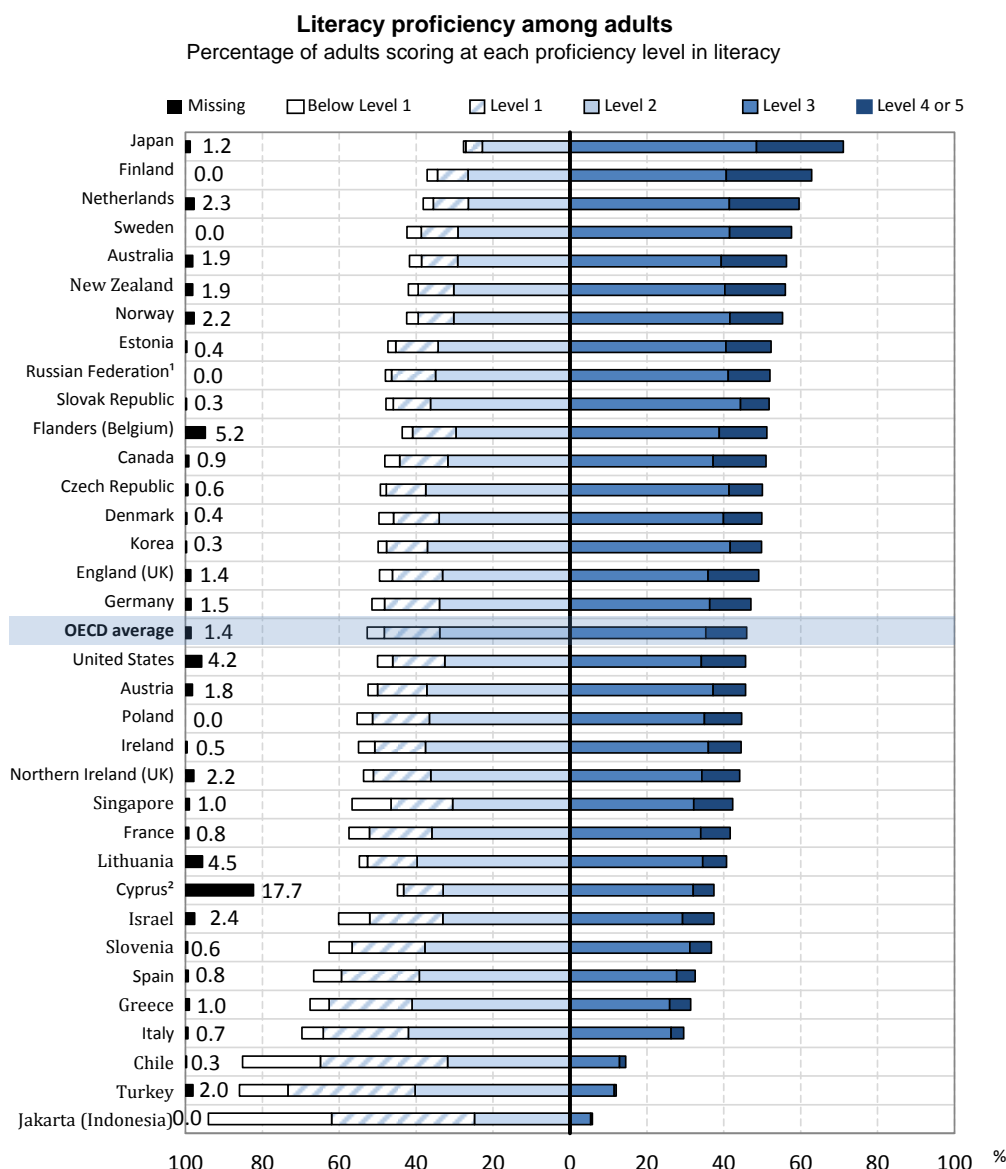
The literacy and numeracy skills of adults in Greece are relatively low in comparison to the OECD average. According to the Survey of Adult Skills, a product of the OECD Programme for International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC), which assessed the skills of adults in literacy, numeracy and problem solving in technology-rich environments in 33 countries, Greece<sup>2</sup> did not perform very differently from many comparable countries in southern Europe. But on average, the share of adults who score at the highest levels of proficiency in literary and numeracy is considerably smaller than the OECD average, while weak basic skills are an issue for many Greek adults.

Almost 2 million adults (27% of the adult population) between the ages of 16 and 65 have low literacy skills, and 2.03 million individuals have low numeracy skills (29%) (below Level 2 in the Survey of Adult Skills)<sup>3</sup>. These are people who struggle with basic quantitative reasoning or have difficulty with simple written information, and for them, entering and progressing in working life, and engaging in civic life, is becoming increasingly hard. One-third of people aged 55-65 have weak foundation skills (in both literacy and numeracy). In contrast to what is observed in other countries, 25-34 year-old younger adults in Greece perform similarly in literacy to 55-65 year-olds. Figure 1.2 shows that about 5% of adults in Greece perform at the highest levels (Level 4/5) on literacy compared to the average of 11% of adults aged 16-65 in all participating OECD countries.

Problem solving in technology-rich environments was also measured in the Survey of Adult Skills. Proficiency in this skill reflects the capacity to use ICT (information and communication technology) devices and applications to solve the types of problems adults commonly face as ICT users. In Greece only 17% of adults perform at the highest levels of problem solving, which is a significantly lower than the average of participating countries (31%) (OECD, 2016c).

*Differences in skills proficiency linked to socio-demographics characteristics are smaller in Greece than in other countries*

In most countries, including Greece, there are differences in skills proficiency related to socio-demographic characteristics, such as age or level of education and socio-economic status. But in Greece, differences related to age, gender, immigrant background, education and parents' education are smaller than in most other countries. Also adults in Greece who are out of the labour force perform similarly in literacy as those who are looking for work and as well as their employed counterparts - which is not the case in other participating countries (OECD, 2016c).

**Figure 1.2 In Greece, a relatively large proportion of adults has low literacy skills****Notes:**

Chile, Greece, Israel, Jakarta (Indonesia), Lithuania, New Zealand, Singapore, Slovenia, Turkey: Year of reference 2015. All other countries: Year of reference 2012.

Adults in the missing category were not able to provide enough background information to impute proficiency scores because of language difficulties, or learning or mental disabilities (referred to as literacy-related non-response).

- Note by Turkey: The information in this document with reference to "Cyprus" relates to the southern part of the Island. There is no single authority representing both Turkish and Greek Cypriot people on the Island. Turkey recognises the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC). Until a lasting and equitable solution is found within the context of the United Nations, Turkey shall preserve its position concerning the "Cyprus issue".

Note by all the European Union Member States of the OECD and the European Union: The Republic of Cyprus is recognised by all members of the United Nations with the exception of Turkey. The information in this document relates to the area under the effective control of the Government of the Republic of Cyprus.

- The sample for the Russian Federation does not include the population of the Moscow municipal area.

Countries and economies are ranked in descending order of the combined percentages of adults scoring at Level 3 and at Level 4 or 5.

Source: OECD (2016c), *Skills Matter: Further Results from the Survey of Adult Skills*, OECD Publishing, Paris, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264258051-en>.

## Education policy context and challenges

*Since 2011, there have been many changes in the direction of education policy*

Since 2011, there have been a number of education reforms across primary, secondary and tertiary education. At primary and secondary levels, the Greek education system underwent significant rationalisation between 2011 and 2014.

- From having one of the lowest rates of weekly teaching hours per teacher and one of the smallest number of pupils per class in the OECD, the number of students per classroom and the number of teaching hours were increased and are closer to the OECD average.
- The school and pre-school networks were consolidated.
- A new electronic database of schools ("MySchool") was developed.
- Legal changes were introduced to allow for more teacher mobility.
- Education offices, operating at the district level, were closed, and responsibilities passed on to the directorates of education (prefecture level) and the regional education directorates.
- Changes in the way school boards at the municipal level operate were introduced. The wage bill and operational expenditures have been significantly reduced, leading to approximately 24% less in human resources costs. These changes have also had a significant impact on the teaching force. For instance, the 2015 national reform programme for Greece estimated there were approximately 25 000 posts vacant for teachers in primary and secondary education schools.

At the post-secondary level, there were reforms in governance of higher education institutions:

- New regulations were drawn up to improve internal governance and management.
- University councils were created.
- Responsibility for adult education was passed from the central to the regional level.
- The Hellenic Quality Assurance Authority carried out an evaluation of all the university departments and almost all universities by the end of 2015. As part of the *Athina* project<sup>4</sup> which aimed at increasing efficiency gains and at consolidating the network of higher education institutions in Greece, it completed a wave of consolidation of higher education institutions, including some mergers, while also addressing the issues of the increase in the number of study fields and the geographical dispersion of departments and faculties. An upper limit on years of study was first enforced but then reversed.

Since December 2015, two committees have been established by the ministry with the mandate to develop recommendations for education development and policy: the Committee of National and Social Dialogue on Education and the Parliamentary Committee on Educational Affairs<sup>5</sup>.

*Many features of the education system remain unchanged*

Despite these reforms, the main features of the Greek education system, described in 2011 (OECD, 2011), remain largely unchanged. The system is highly centralised, with central government exercising close control on the inputs into the system. Most teachers are public servants, selected and allocated to individual schools by central government. Post-secondary education is also highly centralised. There is little in the way of evaluation tradition that might fuel a culture of continuous improvement.

*The current social and economic context is challenging*

Since 2011 an economic crisis in Greece has been accompanied by dramatic social and economic changes, with sharp falls in real incomes, increased unemployment and poverty and sometimes material deprivation. On average, Greek households have seen their income decrease by one-third between 2010 and 2015 (OECD, 2010; OECD, 2013; OECD, 2016b). The OECD 2016 Economic Survey argues that tackling poverty and inequality must be urgent policy priorities, and that emphasis should be given to getting the unemployed back to work, alongside an increased emphasis on vocational education and training is recommended (OECD, 2016b).

While poverty has risen to reach one-third of the population, not all groups have been equally affected: the impact was greater for men than women, for children and young adults (30-44 years), students and the unemployed. Employment rates have fallen for those with only upper secondary education (European Union, 2015). While relative poverty also declines sharply with the level of educational attainment, no group, including university graduates, was spared (OECD, 2013). The broader social and economic environment has therefore changed a great deal since the 2011 OECD report on Greece was published, and this has had a major impact on the demands on the Greek education system, and on those working within the education system.

*There have been budget cuts*

Public funding for education has also declined by an estimated 36% during the crisis (Hellenic Government cited in European Union, 2015). Greece is also undergoing some demographic changes, including a decrease in the number of births. From 118 000 in 2008, births have fallen to about 92 000 in 2014, a 22% drop. In the next six years the number of pupils at primary level is expected to fall by 25%, when not taking into account migrant and refugee inflows into the country (ELSTAT, 2016). Also more than 427 000 Greeks have emigrated and left the country since 2008 (Lazaretou, 2016).

*The migrant and refugee crisis is having large effects*

It is estimated that 730 000 persons arrived by sea in Greece in 2015, mostly from Syria, Afghanistan and Iraq and of these more than one-quarter were children. In a snapshot of more recent arrivals, the Hellenic police estimated that 40% of arrivals in March 2016 were children (see UNHRC, 2016). Relatively few children are currently seeking asylum in Greece – only just over 1 600 in the first 9 months of 2015. But although many of them travelled on, or will travel on to other parts of Europe, and others may return to Turkey, some will stay in Greece either temporarily or permanently. The Greek Ministry of Education in co-operation with UNCHR has estimated that there are more than 16 000 refugee children and adolescents in need of education and training currently in Greece.

The Greek educational system has little experience with which to address the needs of migrant sub-populations who do not speak Greek and, who, in some cases have experienced directly or indirectly the trauma of war. This has further added to the pressures on schools, teachers and



educational leaders. In February 2016, the Ministry of Education presented an outline of an action plan dealing with the recent refugee crisis in education, which includes the psychosocial support of children and their parents, the provision of basic literacy skills and the basic training of refugees prior to their relocation to other European countries. This is a potentially ambitious proposal.

### **Investing in education is key for a brighter future in Greece**

#### *Current spending on education is relatively low*

Within the education system that seeks to respond to these new demands, there are yet further pressures. Public expenditure on education at 4.6% of GDP in 2013 and 4.4% in 2014, was below the EU-28 average of 5.0% and 4.9% respectively (Eurostat, 2016b). The education budget decreased by 6% between 2014 and 2015 (European Commission/EACEA/Eurydice, 2015). At the same time, while budgetary cuts and restraints on the recruitment of teachers and university professors mean that many vacancies are unfilled, the inflow of migrants and refugees has added to student populations. This means that there are growing pressures on the education system and those working in it. Some official estimates suggested a preliminary cost of around 0.35% of GDP of the refugee crisis in 2015 (OECD, 2016b).

#### *Education expenditure is a priority*

Education and training for young people provide the seed for future economic growth, and even in the context of extraordinarily difficult public expenditure decisions, it will be important to maintain and improve the quality of the education and training system, and ensure it is adequately resourced. To this end, it is important that Greece reviews its education system and takes action to respond to its challenges of low performance and low skills. This report proposes a set of policy options which are important to ensure that the preconditions for educational improvement exist in Greece.

#### *But spending needs to be targeted to be effective*

Yet, spending money is not a solution in itself: it needs to be spent wisely on the things that matter most. The evidence tends to show that investment in quality teaching, quality teachers and effective school and education leadership pays off. It also shows that investment in early childhood education and care, particularly for disadvantaged families is vital. And resources, both financial and human (often meaning the best teachers) need to flow to the disadvantaged schools and school populations that are most in need of support.

#### *The development of policy measures has to be sensitive to the challenges of implementation*

Partly because there are some longstanding weaknesses in implementation capacity both in central government and in local education leadership, and partly because the economic crisis has undermined some of the capacity that exists, top-down reform, driven by legislation, may be difficult to bring to fruition. In any case, high quality teaching is not something that in its nature can be legislated into existence, as it depends on actions taken by many different stakeholders throughout the education system, most centrally teachers themselves, but also school and educational leaders, parents and students, alongside government policy. It also needs to build on the existing strengths of individual teachers and educational leaders.

#### *Much educational improvement needs to take place bottom-up*

This report therefore argues that alongside some necessary steps taken by central government, educational improvement will depend heavily on the actions of diverse stakeholders throughout the

education system, with central government often playing a facilitating role and starting the sequence of initiatives that will eventually empower teachers and schools by improving their quality. It should be clear that Greece, despite all the challenges it faces, has some strengths on which it can build. Some of those strengths lie in scattered individuals, like strong teachers and professors, thoughtful and effective educational leaders, supportive parents. Given the right conditions, these strengths could be mobilised and shared with others in the system, building the strengths of the system, and at the same time transforming it, bottom-up. The philosophy of continuous improvement would provide the fertile ground for such a development.

*Underlying this report is a vision of what education could become in Greece*

This report suggests a vision for Greece of a school system that provides high quality learning to its students. In this system, teachers, professors and other education practitioners are high status professionals with the capacity and freedom to work together and develop their own approaches to learning outcomes, innovating and using data to learn. They would use a variety of approaches to assess learning outcomes and to see what is working well and less well at different levels, in terms of school and post-secondary institution organisation, methods of instruction, funding approaches, and other features of the education system. In an atmosphere of mutual trust, practitioners and institutions would debate and share conclusions from these measures to engage in the continuous improvement of the education system. The information would also be used to ensure that the system is working well, is fair to both students and practitioners, and that it gives learners the opportunities to fulfil their potential, regardless of their social origins. Strong performance by teachers and education institutions would be celebrated, while weaknesses would be identified and robustly addressed through measures which would be supportive rather than punitive. Outcomes would be strong and equitable. To achieve this, the policy options in this report include reviewing the conditions for schools to have the capacity and support to deliver high quality education, by supporting devolution and professional autonomy, developing leadership, providing and developing assessment and evaluation capacity and ensuring that schools are available to all students and that there is a smooth transition between schools and tertiary education or the labour market.

*This long term vision underlines the approach of this report*

Of course the realisation of this vision requires much effort by a wide range of stakeholders, including all those working in the education and training system, parents, students and government. The practical obstacles are significant. But especially in the context of an economic crisis, and pressing immediate difficulties, it is important not to lose sight of a longer term vision of what the education system might be able to achieve and how it might contribute to economic recovery in Greece.

The longer term objectives linked to this vision cannot be realised overnight, as they depend as much on cultural change and the development of capacity throughout the education system as on legislation and central government policy decisions. This means there is a need for a plan on how to realise these objectives, focusing on first steps in particular. With this in mind this report argues that the formal legislative, financial and human resource delegation of responsibilities to local actors needs to take place gradually, and be linked to sustained efforts to develop the capacity to exercise new responsibilities. Local educational leadership in schools, universities and other post-secondary institutions and municipalities will be particularly critical. Pursuing this step-by-step approach, the report sets out policy options both for the immediate future and for subsequent steps.

## NOTES

1. Early leavers from education and training denotes the percentage of the population aged 18-24 having reached at most lower secondary education and not being involved in further education or training.
2. The Survey of Adult Skills was conducted in Greece from 1 April 2014 to 31 March 2015. Some 4 925 adults aged 16-65 were surveyed (OECD, 2016c).
3. Demographics estimates for this calculation based on Indexmundi (2016).
4. The intention of the *Athina* project was also to make universities more innovative and create regional excellence hubs. At the same time, the authorities envisaged to better connect the academic sector with the development needs of the regions. In practice it seems that the *Athina* project did not produce the expected financial rationalisation, as many departments which were consolidated did not, in fact, have any academic staff and/or any students (European Union, 2015). Questions have also been posed about its planning and implementation.
5. The National and Social Dialogue for Education was initiated in Greece with the aim of developing a National Plan for Education. More specifically, several committees were formed including stakeholders, practitioners and social partners, on different education policy topics. The final report of the dialogue was published in May 2016 and a separate report prepared by the Education Committee of the Greek Parliament was also issued in parallel (National and Social Dialogue on Education, 2016a, 2016b).

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## CHAPTER 2: DEVOLUTION AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF PROFESSIONAL AUTONOMY

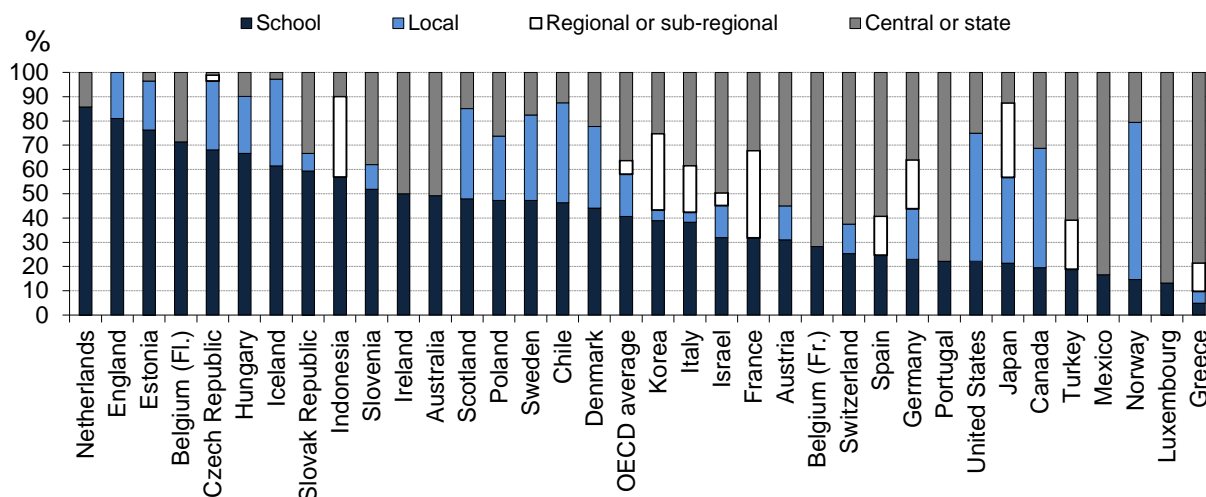
*Recently there have been modest moves towards decentralisation. In principle, school autonomy, balanced by strengthened local capacity and accountability, could make schools more efficient and responsive to student needs. More autonomy could also lead to the schools being more open to engagement towards local communities. There is consensus that school self-evaluation should be reintroduced, together with some form of external accountability.*

## The challenge: A highly centralised education system

*Schools in Greece have very little autonomy*

PISA indicators suggest that secondary schools in Greece have relatively little autonomy. PISA 2012 has two indices of school responsibility: a) for resource allocation (i.e. appointing and dismissing teachers; determining teachers' starting salaries and salary raises; and formulating school budgets and allocating them within the school); and b) school responsibility for curriculum and instructional assessment within the school (i.e. establishing student-assessment policies; choosing textbooks; and determining which courses are offered and the content of those courses) (OECD, 2013a). Both indices are very low for Greece. Similarly, evidence shows that Greece is an outlier, relative to many other countries with respect to the small proportion of decisions taken at school and local level (see Figure 2.1). The Ministry of Education is responsible for all normative and policy-making functions, including the formulation of study plans and curricula.

**Figure 2.1. Percentage of decisions taken at each level of government in public lower secondary education (2011)**



Countries are ranked in descending order of the percentage of decisions taken at the school level.

Source: OECD (2012a), *Education at a Glance 2012: OECD Indicators*, OECD Publishing, Paris, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/eag-2012-en>.

*Most school expenditure is devoted to teachers' salaries, determined centrally and not under the control of the school*

Beyond teacher salaries determined centrally, other resources for schools are either attached to specific centrally-funded programmes, or raised by parents and the community. The infrastructure spending is channelled through local authorities by the Ministry of Infrastructure. School leaders therefore have minimal discretion. This means that even though there is nothing in theory that forbids school principals to decide on how to spend some of the money allocated to a school, in many schools there is little money and little flexibility.

The organisation and structure of education, with strong central control, is not very conducive to greater autonomy. The system is not at present ready to immediately promote large scale autonomy of

schools; many principals are not equipped to be autonomous, and the distribution of resources is uneven. Selection and deployment of teachers depends of the Ministry of Education for tenure teachers, but there is also a high proportion of adjunct teachers that have a high turnover and mobility rate, which can be disruptive for schools and children. For example, changes can happen with little notice and adjunct teachers can be appointed only after the beginning of the school year.

*Recently there have been modest moves towards devolution*

Setting aside some flexibility associated with the all-day school described in Chapter 6 in the primary and lower secondary compulsory curriculum, there is provision for a flexible zone of interdisciplinary work and projects over which teachers have some discretion (three hours a week in the first four years and two hours in the subsequent five and in the remaining two primary and the three lower secondary school years). There has also been some devolution of teacher education to the regional level, and regional directorates of education have acquired greater responsibility for scientific and pedagogical guidance of teachers through their school advisors (IEP, 2016).

### **Policy considerations**

*There is a good theoretical argument for devolution of decision-making balanced by increased capacity and accountability*

Most OECD education systems have tended to decentralise decision-making, and the 2011 review of Greece already argued for decentralisation. The argument, consistent with the vision set out in Chapter 1, is that local actors at all levels, professors, teachers, parents, students, if well prepared and supported, are often best able to judge how to achieve learning goals in the light of local circumstances, and best able to align educational goals with different student and school needs.

*School autonomy, linked to accountability, may improve outcomes, when capacity and support are provided*

PISA 2012 data suggest that 94% of school principals in OECD countries can decide on budget allocations within their school, in some cases together with the educational authorities (see Figure IV.4.2 in OECD, 2013a). Woessmann (2003) finds that when schools had the freedom to set their own standards in terms of learning outcomes (rather than being held to a national standard) student performance tended to be lower, while if schools had the freedom to manage their own internal affairs, including staffing, this was associated with stronger performance. Similarly, in countries where schools are held to account for their results through publication of achievement data, schools that enjoy greater autonomy in internal resource allocation tend to do better than those with less autonomy. But in countries where there are no accountability arrangements, the reverse is true (OECD, 2012b).

This suggests that school systems should seek to devolve the power to locally manage resources, but hold schools accountable for realising learning outcomes, and build capacity and a strong culture of evaluation and transparency. This is a general principle, but its applicability in particular country circumstances depends on the capacity at the local level, and needs to be tested, and Greece, in the context of the economic crisis, is something of an extreme case. Schools need support structures that help them to use newly devolved powers, because what happens in schools and classrooms is affected by the decisions of school directors and regional authorities. There is also a need to develop equity criteria across schools in a context of decentralisation to ensure that all students are able to have a quality education.

*Further devolution would need to be accompanied by increased accountability*

Accountability policies could concern how assessments of students' performance are used and how teachers' performance is monitored. Table 2.1 shows that in Greece the great majority of schools seem to use them only to inform parents about their child's progress and to make decisions about student retention or promotion, and hardly ever to measure teacher or school performance. Concerning teachers' performance, the use of teacher peer review and school leader observations is also much less prevalent than the OECD average.

**Table 2.1 Percentage of students in schools whose principal reported that assessments of students in the national modal grade for 15-year-olds are used for the following purposes**

	To inform parents about their child's progress	To make decisions about students' retention or promotion	To group students for instructional purposes	To compare the school to district or national performance	To monitor the school's progress from year to year	To make judgements about teachers' effectiveness	To identify aspects of instruction or the curriculum that could be improved	To compare the school with other schools
Greece	100	98	8	17	56	14	49	22
OECD average	98	77	51	63	81	50	80	53

Source: OECD (2013a), *PISA 2012 Results: What Makes Schools Successful?: Resources, Policies and Practices (Volume IV)*, PISA, OECD Publishing, Paris, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264201156-en> (based on Figure IV.4.11).

*It should be recognised that it is difficult to hold school leaders accountable for learning outcomes when they have no say in selecting their staff.*

School leaders are central in establishing the kind of school culture that might drive better student performance. But if they are not involved in recruiting teachers and evaluating teaching, this diminishes their leadership authority and therefore also in the extent to which they can be held accountable.

In OECD countries there is a continuing trend towards giving schools, either through their professional staff or school boards, discretion in hiring teachers and (to a lesser extent) firing them. This also implies providing the resources for schools to act. But a high degree of self-management may not be a solution for school systems where capacity and leadership are still to be developed. Providing administrative arrangements that support schools is now a key issue across OECD countries (OECD, 2010). In Greece, options for greater autonomy, financial delegation and local management could initially be explored through research and pilot projects involving a small number of municipalities, schools and groups of schools. Ensuring that schools maintain certain common standards in relation to equity and quality would also be important. Teacher allocation can also be reviewed to support deprived schools, in parallel to incentives and support for teachers, as explored later in this report.

While changes to administrative structures may not act directly to transform student achievement and retention, good structures can positively impact on how schools achieve their organisational mission, how teachers teach, and what students learn, but is not the only mechanism for meaningful education reform.

## Immediate policy options

***Policy option 2.1: granting local educational actors, including schools, local education leaders and teachers more control over how they realise learning outcomes, combined with investment in capacity and greater accountability***

*Devolution of decision-making is a central part of the reform agenda*

As a first step, some relaxation of central control over staffing, curricula and budgeting would be valuable. This policy option is therefore closely linked to options for relaxing financial controls set out in Chapter 3, and the development of educational leadership set out in Chapter 4. Autonomy needs to be closely linked with accountability, and some further policy options, set out below, need to address this. Such steps need to be gradual, aligned to the context and be pursued in tandem with measures to build the capacity of local actors, school and other educational leaders, teachers and others to make good use of new freedoms and flexibilities, recognising that such capacity is limited at the moment, and may have been further damaged by the economic crisis.

*More flexibility could help schools in Greece to face their multiple challenges*

These include long-standing challenges of teaching and new ones such as budget cuts associated with the crisis, and the reception of new migrant and refugee students. An interconnected set of policies could help to address this issue, granting more autonomy to schools to respond to student needs, developing the skills of school leaders and other regional and local actors and establishing an evaluation and assessment framework for schools. More autonomy could also allow schools to have a more active role in their communities – and form meaningful ties with social agencies, local committees, and NGOs creating in that way a supportive social network. Collaboration can complement school autonomy to promote greater empowerment of schools, and horizontal networks can also support more innovation by schools (Pont, Nusche and Moorman, 2008). The role of government in such networks is often that of a facilitator.

***Policy option 2.2: developing a school quality and outcomes framework through consultation with stakeholders***

*Evaluation and assessment require a common understanding of the desirable outcomes of the education system*

Effective evaluation and assessment of students, teachers and schools depend on a shared understanding on what will count as good outcomes. For this to function, trust needs to be built, and a consensus realised, through discussion with all the stakeholders, on a framework to assess school outcomes and school quality. Other preconditions include better data, strengthened evaluation capacity, and sufficient resources for implementation.

An important step in this direction is a national reflection, involving all the stakeholders, regarding the nature and purpose of evaluation components such as school evaluation, school leader appraisal, teacher appraisal and student assessment within the overall education reform strategy (OECD, 2013b; IEP, 2016). This reflection should also allow for an empowerment of teachers as professionals to help debate and set educational goals (for an example of a training programme with this type of objective in mind, see Box 2.1).

**Box 2.1 Learning collaboratively from peers: the HertsCam M.Ed in Leading Teaching and Learning**

The HertsCam M.Ed, a two-year master's degree programme for serving teachers and other practitioners in education, is distinctive in that it is entirely taught by practitioners currently serving as teachers in secondary and primary schools in Hertfordshire, England. These "scholar practitioners" are all graduates of the programme and some are engaged in part-time doctoral study. All have been involved in research and development, both locally and internationally, and have published academic papers. As teachers in the programme, they can draw on both their everyday professional experience and their academic knowledge.

The programme is based on the concept of "teacher-led development work" which aims to mobilise teachers and other education practitioners as agents of change regardless of their status or position. In HertsCam, development work is defined as strategic, focused, planned and deliberate attempts to improve an aspect of professional practice through incremental steps. This largely involves analysis, data collection, reflection and deliberation in collaborative contexts. A range of experiences, tools and academic resources are used to enable participants to analyse their institutional contexts, identify their professional concerns, and consult with colleagues and stakeholders to create an agenda for change. Participants then design development projects through which they take action to address their concerns.

The programme rests on seven pedagogic foundations: activities that cultivate moral purpose; participants lead development projects; communities in which critical friendship can flourish; reflection on experience through dialogue; the art of critical narrative writing through which scholarship illuminates problem solving; the use of conceptual tools that deepen understanding of how to develop practice; and professional knowledge built through local and international networking. The programme is implemented mostly in school classrooms at the end of the school day with a two-day residential conference held in a hotel each term.

Source: Frost, D. et al. (2016), "A profession-led master's programme: A breakthrough in support for school and teacher development", a paper presented in the symposium: The empowerment of teachers as agents of change, ICSEI, Glasgow, 6-9 January 2016.

***Policy option 2.3: reintroducing school self-evaluation as part of the framework***

*There is consensus that school self-evaluation should be reintroduced*

Although the process of school self-evaluation was frozen in 2015, there is a consensus in Greece that it should be re-introduced, as a good practice in itself, but also because it can help lead to a change of attitudes towards evaluation and assessment (IEP, 2016). The availability of better data on student learning outcomes, alongside consensus on national standards for different educational levels, as well as a school quality and outcomes framework for all schools, should help to facilitate reintroduction. School self-evaluation should be seen as one way to empower teachers and educational leaders, not as an end in itself, but rather as a key step in the path to establishing a culture of continuous improvement in schools. An example of such an initiative, launched and sustained entirely independently of government is illustrated in Box 2.2.



**Box 2.2 ‘Foundation leerKRACHT’ - a bottom-up school improvement programme promoting peer review and collaborative work planning**

Foundation leerKRACHT (the Dutch word for teacher) started in 2012 aims to: 1) implement a bottom-up capacity building programme for schools, which aims to reach more than 5 000 Dutch primary and secondary schools by 2020 (out of a total 8 700); and 2) reshape national education policy aimed at creating a strong body of teachers and stimulate schools to create a continuous improvement culture.

The foundation believes in the quality of the teacher and aims to return the ownership of education back to the teachers. It aims to achieve this by helping schools to create a continuous improvement culture in which teachers work together to improve their teaching, with the school leaders serving as role models by engaging in the improvement process. Teachers and school administrators who participate in the programme work closely together to improve education in schools at their discretion.

Three improvement processes are central to the programme: 1) classroom observation and feedback conversation; 2) joint lesson planning; and 3) board sessions. This ‘board session’ is copied from the LEAN movement in the manufacturing industry, where small teams hold daily stand-up meetings to jointly improve quality. The approach is underpinned by forum meetings with ‘foundation leerKRACHT schools’ in the region and by visits to company which have a continuous improvement culture.

This private initiative, started in September 2012, now involves 1 in 10 secondary schools in the Netherlands, 1 in 3 vocational schools and hundreds of primary schools.

Source: Foundation LeerKRACHT (2016), website, [www.stichting-leerkracht.nl/](http://www.stichting-leerkracht.nl/) (accessed 13 April 2016).

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## CHAPTER 3: BUDGETING FOR DEVOLUTION AND KEY PRIORITIES

*In Greece, school and post-secondary funding decisions are highly centralised, so any substantial delegation of budgets to local actors would have to address how teaching staff are allocated to different schools. Reorganisation of school funding would also have to look at how to direct funds to the neediest schools. In the longer run, consideration might be given to a school funding formula. In terms of sectoral priorities, early childhood education and care is important.*

**The challenge: Little local discretion over the use of resources, and funding does not reflect needs***Funding decisions are highly centralised*

Decisions on education finance are currently highly centralised. The Ministry of Education, Research and Religious Affairs (MofERRA), alongside some other ministries, closely controls most resource inputs into the education system. Figure 3.1 provides an overview of the transfer of public resources awarded in cash or in kind to schools providing primary and general secondary education in Greece (European Commission/EACEA/ Eurydice, 2014).

- The central authorities involved in the transfer of cash resources (indicated in the diagram by continuous arrows) to schools are the MofERRA, the Ministry of Interior and the Ministry of Infrastructure and Transport, and at a second level the state-run agencies, which also receive funding from the ministries.
- The regional Directorates of Education are allocated block grants (indicated in the diagram by thick horizontal lines) by MofERRA for specific categories of education resources. Municipalities receive block grants and allocate funds for non-teaching staff and facilities.
- Funding is based on historic costs and transferred as part of block grants to municipalities and schools respectively. Municipalities then estimate schools' needs and provide them with the resources they judge appropriate.
- The state-run agencies, DIOFANTOS and K.Y.S.A. provide schools with other goods and services. Buildings' infrastructure SA delivers the country's building infrastructure, including schools.
- Schools have little discretion over resources except small budgets to cover utility bills and other operational costs and for small scale repairs and maintenance.

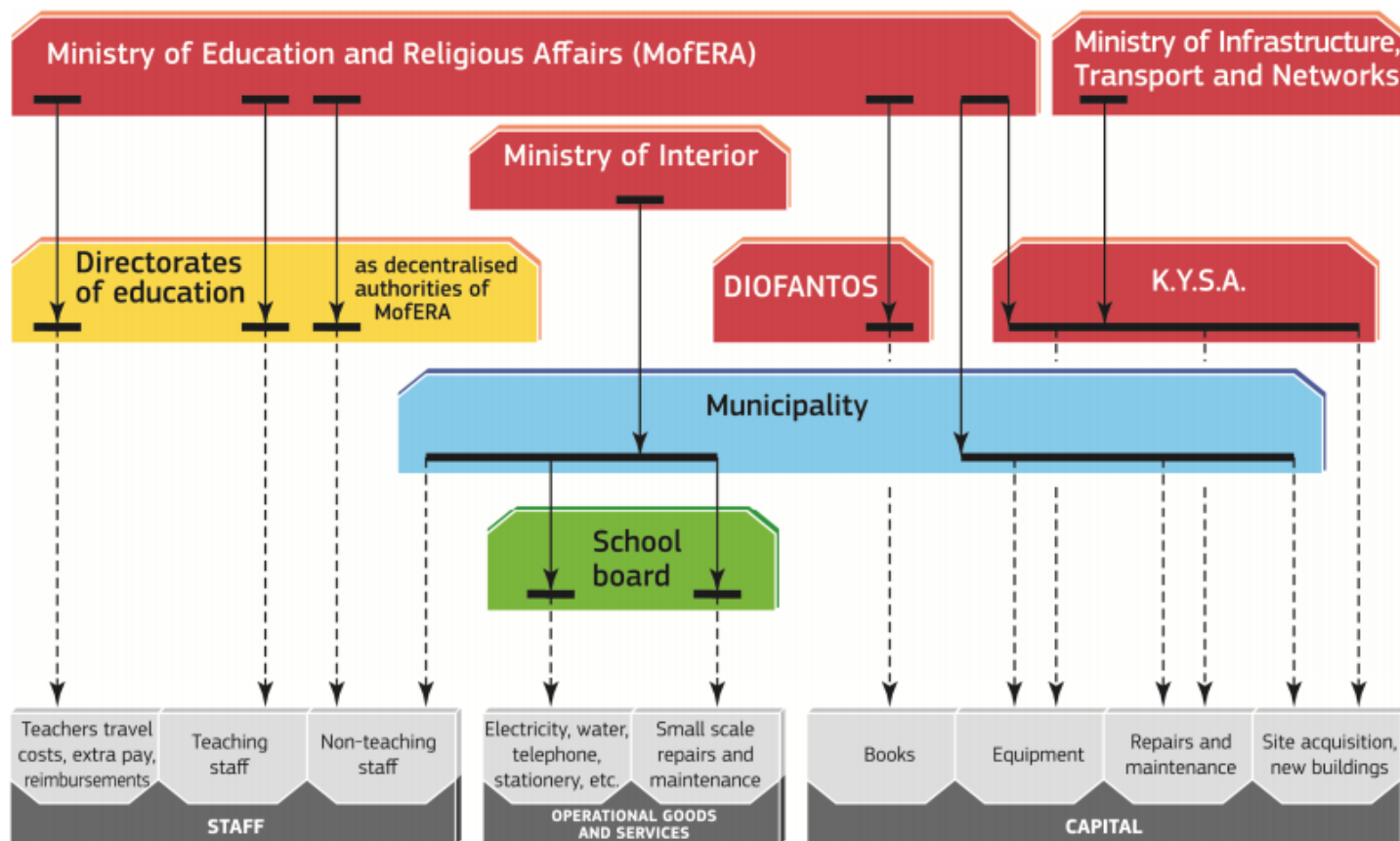
*Staff costs are 85% of the budget for primary and secondary schools*

Salaries paid directly by central government to teaching staff do not feature directly in any kind of school budget. The remaining 15% covers the operational goods and services of the school units and is decided by a committee of representatives of all school stakeholders (including school leaders, parents and students of secondary education) in the municipality, on the basis of each school council's requests and taking into account individual school circumstances (Government Gazette No. 318 of 2011).

*Zones of Educational Priority (ZEP) channel funds to disadvantaged areas*

These zones, which are still being implemented through a pilot, aim to improve access to education in disadvantaged socio-economic areas by providing additional funding and human resources to participating schools (Law on Development of Lifelong Learning, 2010). These schools are characterised by low educational attendance, a high percentage of early school leaving and low take-up of higher education. But other than these zones, social disadvantage is not reflected in school funding.

Figure 3.1 Governance and funding in the Greek education system



Notes:

The diagram does not cover the limited number of church schools that exist in Greece.

K.Y.S.A. (for building infrastructure) is responsible for land and building acquisitions, maintenance and repairs, and equipment. The funds it receives from the Ministry of Infrastructure, Transport and Networks are only used for repairs, maintenance, and land and building acquisitions. The funds for equipment come only from the Ministry of Education.

Source: European Commission/EACEA/Eurydice (2014), "Financing Schools in Europe: Mechanisms, Methods and Criteria in Public Funding", *Eurydice Report*, Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg. .

*There are two types of early childhood facilities*

In Greece, children 6 months to 5 years old can attend infant centres (*vrefonipiakos stathmos*). Between the ages of 2.5 and 5, parents can opt for a place in a child centre (*paidikos stathmos*), either run by the municipalities or privately funded; in both cases they are subject to regulation. From age 4, children can attend a pre-primary school (*nipiagogeio*), compulsory from age 5. There are plans to make it compulsory as of the age of 4. This type of provision falls under the responsibility of the MofERRA.

*Participation in early childhood education and care is low*

The participation rate of children under the age of 3 in centre-based ECEC (early childhood education and care) in 2011 was about 20%. Participation of 4-6 year-olds in (ECEC) is also low. In 2012, 76% of children in that age group took part in ECEC, compared to an EU average of 93% (see Table 3.1) (European Commission/EACEA/Eurydice, 2015).

**Table 3.1 Participation rates in early childhood education in Greece**

% Reference year 2012	3-year-olds	4-year-olds	5-year-olds	6-year-olds	7-year-olds
ISCED 0	-	55	96	2	-
ISCED 1	-	-	-	97	100

Source: European Commission/EACEA/Eurydice (2015), Early Childhood Education and Care Systems in Europe. National Information Sheets - 2014/15. Eurydice Facts and Figures. Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg.

*Early childhood education and care receives insufficient support in many countries*

In PISA 2012, students who had attended pre-primary education for more than one year outperformed the rest, in many countries by more than one school year, even taking into account the students' socio-economic background (OECD, 2013). While extensive research shows that high quality ECEC has been repeatedly shown to be a good investment, particularly for disadvantaged children, countries across the OECD spend nearly 2.5 times more for tertiary education per student and participation rates are low, particularly for disadvantaged children (OECD, 2011).

## **Policy considerations**

*This report links decentralisation, budgeting, evaluation and assessment and school autonomy*

Highly centralised budgeting arrangements are associated with limited discretion for education actors, and the focus of the system is on control of inputs rather than continuous improvement in relation to measured outcomes. Chapter 1 sets out a long-term vision for reform of this arrangement, in which granting local flexibility on budgeting would be part of a wider picture, linked to decentralised decision-making (as described in Chapter 2), the development and professionalisation of school leadership (set out in Chapter 4), and effective ways of measuring outcomes (as described in Chapter 5).

*Decentralised budgeting would affect the way teachers are paid and allocated to schools*

Teachers in Greece are currently selected and allocated to schools through a national selection process. Any significant change in centralised budgeting would mean addressing the 85% of school budgets represented by staffing, and moving towards a system in which local educational leaders have growing influence over the choice of teaching staff, subject to a budgetary envelope. The objective of such reform would partly be to empower local educational leaders and to reflect local educational needs while it would also be necessary to ensure that they do not fall below certain standards, but also to move away from a system in which teachers start their careers in remote areas and are gradually "promoted" to the more urban areas that they prefer.<sup>1</sup> One broad aim of reform would be to make sure that disadvantaged schools (which may of course be both rural and urban) can draw on the strongest teachers. Any reforms of this nature would affect the whole teaching career, and would therefore need to be pursued in that context, recognising that many teachers are currently experiencing particular pressures because of the economic crisis and budgetary cuts, that many statutory teachers are on secondment to an administrative body, and that many qualified teachers are currently employed as adjunct teachers on temporary contracts, or as tutors in the private sector.

**Immediate policy options*****Policy option 3.1: moving towards a system of decentralised budgets balanced by accountability for outcomes****Decentralised budgets can assist both efficiency and local responsiveness*

There are two main arguments for granting discretion to local actors in the use of resources to achieve positive learning outcomes. One is simple efficiency: when well prepared, local actors should have the local knowledge and skill to identify the best way of achieving a desired outcome in the local context. This requires building the capacity of local actors. The other is local responsiveness, in that local actors are best placed to know how the education system can best serve local needs, including labour market, community and cultural requirements. More autonomy can also allow schools to better adjust to the community in which they are, and serve its needs. Engaged parents encourage more positive attitudes towards school, improve homework habits, reduce absenteeism, disengagement and dropout; and enhance academic achievement. Schools can also be at the centre of wider learning communities in partnership with parents and other partners. Communities can offer a wide range of valuable resources for disadvantaged students and schools, such as volunteer tutors, adult mentors and enrichment programmes for students. In return, schools can become resource centres for community development. They can work closely with community health, recreation, youth, police and other local institutions to address external student and family obstacles to students' learning. In some education systems, schools offer on-site professionals who provide complementary services directly to students and their parents. Evidence shows that such extensions of school services attract families that would otherwise be unwilling to be involved (see Box 3.1) (OECD, 2012). It is important to balance decentralisation with accountability, and the challenge is to strike a constructive balance between national consistency and local responsiveness.

*Practically, this means gradually increasing local control over the use of resources, starting with a pilot region*

Gradualism is important because local educational actors need to develop their experience in the management of budgets, and have the opportunity to obtain training, rather than being swamped with high-stakes decisions for which they feel unprepared. Such gradual change also needs to be handled carefully in the context of other pressures on the teaching profession arising out of the economic crisis.

**Box 3.1 How to ensure that schools are at the centre of the families and their communities: policy guidelines and country examples**

Schools can reach out to parents, especially those who may require extra support to engage in their child's learning. To be effective, efforts have to be aligned with school goals and activities and be perceived as positive by all parties. Key approaches include:

- *Ensure schools have the capacity to support parental involvement with specific communication strategies:* Good communication between parents and schools allows better co-ordination between the learning activities carried on between school and home. Homework can be a channel of communication that aligns parents with school goals.
- *Use diverse communication channels:* Formal arrangements to link parents and schools may not work for disadvantaged groups. Communication with diverse parents can be strengthened and diversified (beyond to the traditional report card and newsletters).
- *Ensure balanced communication:* Particularly for children of parents who are less familiar with the working of schools, their behaviour and achievements need to be relayed to parents in a balanced way. If the only information reaching home is bad news, there will be little chance of winning support from parents for the efforts being made at school. A diversified teaching force can also facilitate the communication between schools and parents and present information in more relevant ways.
- *Target efforts to reach out to certain parents:* Schools can proactively and systematically identify families who are not yet involved in their children's schooling and extend personalised invitations to become involved - whether the child is performing well or not in school. This sends the message to parents that the school values the child and his or her progress.
- *Provide clear guidelines on what is expected from parents:* Schools should seek to encourage interaction between teachers and parents through explicit guidelines on how parents can contribute, in particular with homework. The guidelines can include: finding an appropriate place to study; devoting sufficient time to homework; helping their children with assignments but not completing them; and conveying messages about the value of homework and particularly its relationship to children's educational goals and those of the school.

In **Ireland**, the Home/School/Community Liaison Scheme (HSCL) is a preventive strategy targeted at students at risk of not reaching their potential. The service focuses directly on the salient adults in children's educational lives and seeks indirect benefits for the children themselves. The HSCL programme aims to establish partnership and collaboration between parents and teachers in the interests of children's learning and work with staff to develop this spirit of collaboration. The co-ordinator organises locally based activities to encourage greater contact between parents, teachers and local voluntary and statutory groups to tackle issues in the community that impinge on learning. Approximately EUR 25 million has been allocated to HSCL for 2011, and 155 000 students attending 545 schools (200 post-primary, 345 primary) have access to the service, with some 50 000 of these pupils' families being specifically targeted for the services of home school community liaison co-ordinators.

In **France**, after being piloted in one school district (Académie de Creteil), the "parent's toolbox" ("la mallette des parents") was introduced in 1 300 lower secondary schools in September 2011. Parents receive a DVD at the beginning of the school year with information on their children's schooling and are invited to participate in three meetings at the school during the school year, on topics such as school organisation, helping with homework and sleeping patterns. The scheme aims to increase links between school and parents, and to ensure more continuity in the child's learning. In its early stages it has achieved very positive outcomes for students, especially in terms of absenteeism.

Source: OECD (2012), *Equity and Quality in Education: Supporting Disadvantaged Students and Schools*, OECD Publishing, Paris, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264130852-en>.

**Policy option 3.2: giving more resources to the neediest schools**

*Decentralisation needs to be linked to measures to support equity*

Decentralised budgets require criteria to divide up the national budgetary pot into different local sub-pots. In the context of a gradualist approach, one option would be to initially delegate a portion of a school budget according to equity criteria (keeping other elements of the budget in national hands), since there are few other systems in Greece to achieve this end. There are strong equity arguments for directing more resources to schools with needier student populations, allowing them to devote



additional teaching time, specialised learning materials and sometimes smaller classes to those students who struggle to keep up. The criteria might also reflect other cost drivers - such as the additional costs of running a small school in a remote area. The formula would need to be built around available data, and integrate the MySchool Information system.

*Regular school funding can be supplemented by targeted support for specific needs.*

Targeted programmes can be an effective way of achieving results. This could be done alongside the expansion of ZEPs and/or the new all-day schools. In the United Kingdom for example, starting from April 2011, schools receive an additional GBP 430 (EUR 500) a year for every student they enrol that is entitled to a free school meal (a measure of disadvantage linked to parental income), with schools spending this money in whatever way they judge best. Progressive voucher schemes or targeted funding allow extra resources for the children and schools that need them the most. The amount can be determined according to the educational needs of the children (See Box 3.2).

*Schools would need to be accountable for their use of additional funds for disadvantaged students*

In some countries, concerns have been expressed that additional funds granted through weighted formulae or other special arrangements to combat disadvantage are not actually spent on addressing the needs of the disadvantaged students. Schools should be held accountable for the use of such funds by measures which would include publication of annual accounts/reports.

### **Box 3.2. Funding to combat school disadvantage in the Netherlands and Chile**

In the **Netherlands**, formula funding with additional weights for disadvantaged students was adopted for all primary schools in 1985. Although the level of funding for each school is determined by the needs of individual students, there is no requirement that schools use these extra resources directly on these students. Schools can for example choose to reduce the number of students per class. The "weight" of each student is determined by the parents' educational level. Empirical research conducted by Ladd and Fiske (2009) studying the Dutch funding system show that these mechanisms have succeeded in distributing differentiated resources to schools according to their different needs: primary schools with a high proportion of weighted students have on average about 58% more teachers per student, and also more support staff.

In **Chile**, a funding programme supports disadvantaged students and their schools, the *Subvención Escolar Preferencial* (SEP), was introduced in 2008. The larger share of educational expenditure is distributed per student, topping up a flat-rate voucher. In addition, there is an allocation for schools that enrol a significant number of disadvantaged students. Acceptance of these supplementary funds is voluntary but leads to mandatory technical support and accountability to ensure value for money. Schools choosing to receive the supplement are required to elaborate a plan for educational improvement, setting objectives for improvement in educational outcomes and defining measures to support students with learning difficulties. In addition, participating schools are unable to cream skim their students' intake by ability or socio-economic background, and cannot charge top-up fees for vulnerable students. SEP schools are classified into three categories: autonomous, emerging or recovering schools, based on the results of a national standardised test (SIMCE) and, to a lesser extent, other performance criteria. Autonomous schools are allowed to design their own educational improvement plan and are accountable for results. Emerging and recovering schools are supported by the Education Ministry in drafting their progression plans, and recommendations may be prescriptive in some cases. Improvement plans should contain strategies and actions on curricula, leadership, climate and funding for the following four years. Schools have access to technical assistance for school improvement, including through certified private providers, and an education quality assessment system. Information is provided to parents on the progress of their children and their school. The additional funding that schools can receive is significant. An autonomous school where less than 15% of the students are poor receives approximately a 50% increase in the school subsidy for each vulnerable child. If the concentration of poor students is at least 60%, schools can receive approximately an extra 10% of the base voucher for every student, including those who are not classified as vulnerable.

Sources: Brandt, N. (2010), "Chile: Climbing on Giants' Shoulders: Better Schools for all Chilean Children", *OECD Economics Department Working Papers*, No. 784; Ladd H., E. Fiske and N. Ruijs (2009), "Parental Choice in the Netherlands: Growing Concerns about Segregation", prepared for *School Choice and School Improvement: Research in State, District and Community Contexts*, Vanderbilt University, October 2009.

### **Policy options for subsequent steps**

#### ***Policy option 3.3: prioritising the earliest phases of education, including early childhood education and care***

*In recent years, several OECD countries have increased funding to ECEC*

The countries concerned include Australia, Austria, Poland and Spain. Good quality and effective funding are particularly important for young disadvantaged children, but the early childhood sector tends to be underfunded, and provision is often private and sometimes unregulated. In the United States, only 45% of 3-5 year-olds from low-income families are enrolled in pre-school programmes, compared to almost 75% from high-income families. Lack of funding implies that many of the private, community or voluntary organisations are unable to support childcare staff with in-service training and time to improve their pedagogical practice, so they are poorly paid and trained. As the disadvantaged stand to benefit most, some countries have opted for a targeted approach by promoting access for disadvantaged groups. There are risks that need to be addressed: targeted programmes can sometimes segregate and even stigmatise, and may fail to provide ECEC for key target groups, including middle-income families that are unable to afford the private costs (OECD, 2006).

#### ***Policy option 3.4: developing a school funding formula***

*Formula funding should reflect instructional costs and varying student needs*

Many countries have developed procedures in which the budget for any school is determined according to a formula. This can be technically complex and is always politically sensitive, and in Greece, it is probably something of a future prospect. This is a different approach from the ZEP programme, explained earlier in this chapter, which aims at giving more resources to schools in poor neighbourhoods – mainly as additional teaching hours and bonuses for teachers. School funding is still closely tied to the wages of teachers working there, making it rigid and leading to lower financing in priority education, where teachers tend to be younger and less experienced.

Also the priority education label seems to carry stigma and this seems to reinforce segregation, while turning teachers away. There are alternatives to the priority label to provide schools that need it with extra funding. One option would be to tie school funding to students' characteristics, such as they family's income and language, a scheme that works well in many other OECD countries (OECD, 2012). This would ensure that schools have capacity in line with their students' potential difficulties, which they could use for higher teacher salaries and pedagogical programmes. It could also make it more attractive for schools to receive poor students and would avoid diversion of extra funds for poor students.

While differences in instructional costs clearly need to be taken into consideration in funding allocations, there are debates about the amount of additional funding that schools in which disadvantaged students are concentrated should receive so as to effectively respond to their learning needs (OECD, 2012). According to principals' reports in PISA, while disadvantaged schools in OECD countries on average have lower student-teacher ratios, they also have less experienced and qualified teachers (OECD, 2013). Formula funding relies on a number of variables, each of which has a cash amount attached to it (Levacic, 2008). In such formulas there are four main groups of variables used across OECD countries: (1) basic: student number and grade level-based; (2) needs-based; (3) curriculum or educational programme-based; (4) school characteristics-based (Fazekas, 2012).

## NOTE

1. In 2015 the Ministry of Education introduced special incentives for teachers who choose to serve in particularly remote areas.

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## CHAPTER 4: DEVELOPING EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP

*In Greece, the development of local leadership capacity is needed to support more school autonomy and provide the foundation for giving more responsibilities to school leaders. Strong leaders need well-defined roles and have to be accountable. Local education leaders could play a big role in transforming schools into learning organisations, open to engagement with the community, using data to assess performance and learning from others. Effective leadership is linked to educational improvement.*

**Challenge: Limited preparation for a job of increasing importance**

*The current selection criteria are experience, academic selection and peer support*

In Greece, new school leaders need at least 10 years of educational service (at least 8 as a teacher, and 3 at the relevant type of school and level). Their selection criteria according to the most recent law (L.4327 of May 2015) include: a) academic qualifications; b) years in service beyond the minimum and administrative experience; and c) contribution to educational work, personality and general constitution (assessed through a secret ballot of teachers in the school unit for which the candidate applies). This law increased the importance of the votes obtained by peers in the elective process by teachers, and each element contributes around one-third of the weighting. A minimum of 20% of the teacher votes is required, designed to increase the ‘collegiality’ between school leaders and teaching staff, but it could also make it harder for school leaders to take unpopular but necessary decisions and impede the mobility of school leaders to different schools where they are not known personally.

*New school leaders have little preparation or training*

Strengthening school leadership is a crucial objective, not only in Greece, but internationally (OECD, 2011; Pont, Nusche and Moorman, 2008). In other countries the recognition that school leaders need specific preparation has slowly emerged (Bush and Jackson, 2002). In Greece, training is not yet required for school leaders, although some training takes place through seminars in leadership and school management, implemented by the National Centre for Public Administration and Local Government (EKKDA) and universities. From 2016 a new training programme of 166 teaching hours called "Administration of school units" is being offered by EKKDA, co-funded by the European Social Fund. Under Law L.3848 of 2010 a certificate of administrative capacity awarded by EKDDA is in principle a selection criterion for school leaders but this has not yet been implemented. Training for school leaders should be more systematic and mandatory.

*School leaders in Greece currently have limited responsibilities*

While a school head in Greece is in principle the administrative and pedagogical leader according to the law (Government Gazette 1340 of 2002); in practice, school leaders have little responsibility for the allocation of resources (human and financial), or formulating curricula. Instead, many resource decisions are taken centrally (decisions about maintenance and repair of buildings is delegated to the municipalities), and school advisors, at the regional level, have the prime responsibility for the guidance and support of school teachers and work with school leaders in the implementation of the programmes of study, and the co-ordination, planning and evaluation of the educational work.

*But this could change with decentralisation, and greater school autonomy*

Countries where schools have traditionally been given little autonomy (as in Greece) tend to give less attention to school leadership (Huber, 2004). This report has proposed to give schools in Greece more autonomy to manage resources within a framework of accountability, which can result in more responsibilities and demands for school leaders. Across OECD countries school leadership is now increasingly defined in terms of financial and human resource management and more centrally leadership for learning (Pont, Nusche and Moorman, 2008). At the same time, in the context of the economic crisis, schools in Greece have rapidly growing and intensifying needs in the context of poverty and youth unemployment.

*School leaders could play a key role in transforming schools into learning organisations*

The requirements on school leaders need to be linked to a shared vision of effective schooling. Research evidence shows that effective teachers work collaboratively with their colleagues to improve their teaching (Hattie, 2008), and school leaders have a vital role in establishing such a collaborative approach (Pont, Nusche and Moorman, 2008). School leaders therefore need to allocate sufficient time and other resources for collaborative working to thrive (Silins, Mulford and Zarins, 2002). Research evidence shows the potential of collaborative working and learning among teachers to improve instruction (Hattie, 2015; Hargreaves and Fullan, 2012). School leaders play a pivotal role in encouraging teachers to pursue collaborative learning within and across schools. This is especially important in a context in which teachers may not receive a lot of professional development and in which teachers are ageing (with half of primary teachers over 50 and less than 1% are under 30 years old ; and 39% of the secondary teachers aged between 40 and 49), and recent recruitment at low levels.

School leadership training programmes should also offer specialised and specific knowledge and skills to understand schools' specific circumstances, and how to respond to them. These programmes need to ensure that school leaders are prepared to focus on issues that are more characteristic of disadvantaged schools such as: student behaviour, motivation and engagement; teaching and learning for disadvantaged and/or low performing students; improvement of the physical environment of the school; and cultures of care and achievement. In the same way, they also need to be prepared to successfully engage parents and the wider community as active allies for school improvement (OECD, 2012).

**Policy considerations***Training is important for school leaders*

Training for school leaders does appear to improve their skills and therefore practices (as reviewed in Pont, Nusche and Moorman, 2008) so in principle it should lead to an improvement in teaching and in learning. But initial training for school leaders is no more than the beginning of a learning process and new school leaders need targeted support. As school leaders develop in their profession, they need to constantly upgrade their knowledge. Initial training, induction and professional development should be tightly connected.

*Leadership is linked to a decentralised approach to educational improvement*

Attention to local educational leadership is closely linked to a decentralised approach to educational improvement. Under this approach local actors, including individual teachers play a leading role in driving school improvement, exploring new approaches, learning from experience, and working collaboratively. The capacity of school leaders to use data and guide teachers in the use of data has become a central tenet in school improvement, especially to raise test scores, and change school culture (Wayman et al., 2009). To achieve this approach, local actors need more freedom than currently exists in Greece, but they also need organised and concrete ways of building the desired culture of continuous improvement, consistent with the capacities of those involved in administering the system. One such bottom-up approach in the Netherlands has already been illustrated in Box 2.2.

*Strong leaders need well-defined roles and are accountable*

Often, better definitions of the role of school leaders are a very important first step on the path to professionalisation. An OECD study (Pont, Nusche and Moorman, 2008) highlights four main tasks of school leadership that can make a difference in improving school performance: evaluating and

developing teacher quality, setting goals and offering assessment, managing human and financial resources, and collaborating with other schools. Positive change in any school, particularly those with serious weaknesses is almost impossible without effective leadership to foster and promote the evolution of strengthened teaching methods (Baker and Cooper, 2005). To underpin such developments, education leaders need to be held accountable against these key criteria.

### **Immediate policy options**

#### ***Policy Option 4.1: developing educational leadership skills among existing leaders through collaborative learning***

*Educational leaders can learn from each other*

In the context of school improvement and some further decentralisation of responsibilities to local actors, as outlined in earlier chapters, the rapid development of local educational leadership capacity is a central goal. It should be recognised that throughout Greece, there are many individual good schools and strong educational leaders, who are in a position to pass on their skills to others. New freedoms will yield further experience, which needs to be shared so that collective learning takes place on how to use these new freedoms. All of this calls for a collaborative and network-based approach to the learning of leadership skills, in which the role of the centre will primarily be to facilitate such collaborative learning, rather than to drive learning top-down. One model for how to make this work in practice is found in Ontario, Canada (see Box 4.1).

#### **Box 4.1 The Ontario Teacher Leadership and Learning Programme**

The Ontario Teacher Leadership and Learning Programme is an eight-year initiative, launched in 2007, to support teachers' self-directed professional development and leadership skills, and to help them share these skills with colleagues through conferences and storefronts, a virtual platform, and in collaborative activities within each school involved. The programme, developed in partnership between the Ontario Teachers' Federation and the Ontario Ministry of Education, rests on teachers designing and evaluating their own innovations and sharing what they have learned. It is particularly targeted at teachers who have been in the profession for more than four years. Each funded project lasts 18 months, and hundreds of teachers have participated in the programme.

An evaluation found that over 70% of the respondents reported that they have acquired new knowledge, improved their own practice, and developed leadership skills in facilitation and project management. Over half believed that they had increased their self-efficacy, and evaluators concluded that this percentage would be even higher if projects lasted longer and were more deliberately integrated into other schools or wider development programmes and initiatives.

*Source:* Campbell, C., A. Lieberman and A. Yashkina, (2014), "The Teacher Learning and Leadership Program: Research report 2013-14", Ontario Teachers' Federation, Toronto, ON.

#### ***"Distributed" leadership can share the burden and democratise decision-making***

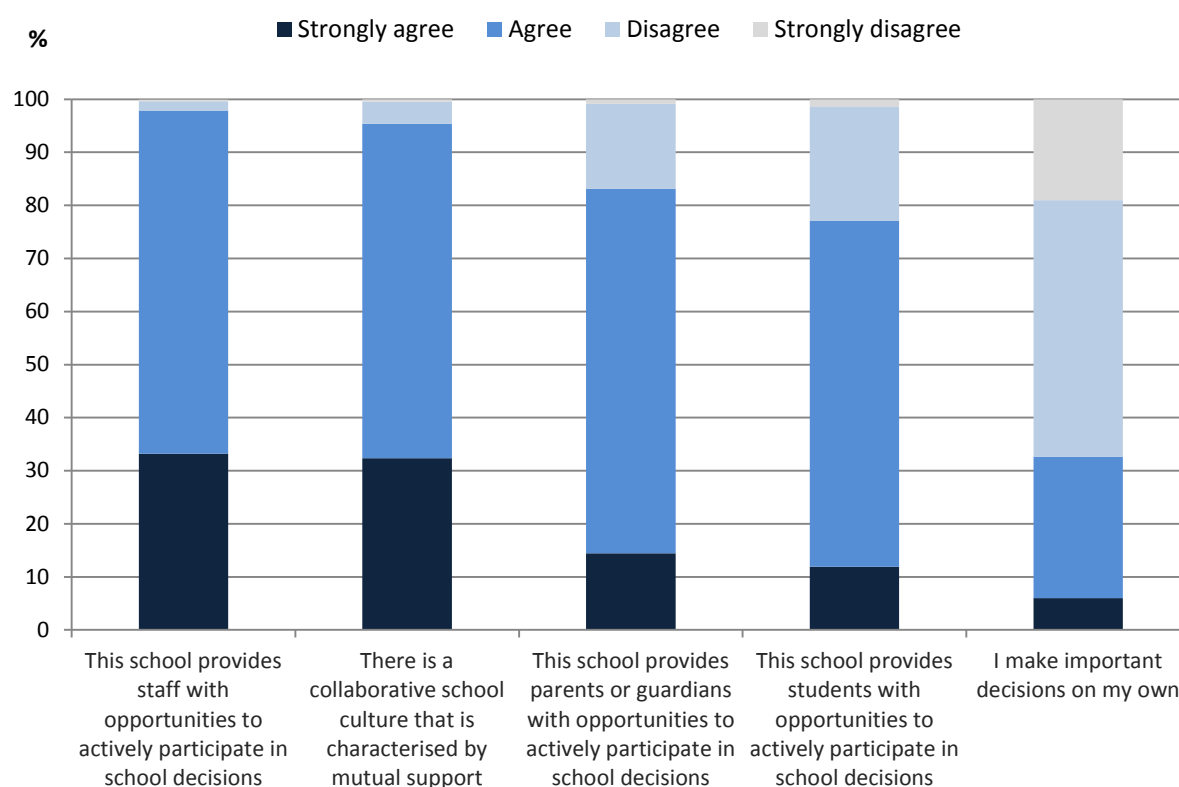
Sharing the leadership burden with other senior teachers can empower these teachers, democratise decision-making and free up the time of school leaders to focus on the priorities most likely to improve student learning (see Figure 4.1). Distributed leadership can be achieved formally through team structures or more informally by developing ad hoc groups based on expertise and current needs. But applying this approach in Greece could present some challenges, as in Greece as there are few middle leaders in the school unit, e.g. heads of subjects or departments, and because of



the competing/complementary role of advisors. There is also a lack of administrative staff to perform purely administrative tasks.

**Figure 4.1 School decisions and collaborative school culture**

Percentage of lower secondary principals in TALIS participating countries who "strongly disagree", "disagree", "agree" or "strongly agree" with the following statements about their school



*Note:* Greece has not participated in the TALIS Survey for the time being.

*Items are ranked in descending order of the percentage of principals who "agree" or "strongly agree" with the statement about their school.*

*Source:* OECD (2014), *TALIS 2013 Results: An International Perspective on Teaching and Learning*, OECD Publishing, Paris, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264196261-en>.

*In the context of rapid change, school leaders need diverse and often very practical skills*

In Greece, a combination of factors, including the economic crisis and its aftermath, an influx of migrants and refugees and further school reforms mean that existing, as well as newly appointed school leaders are going to need to deal with fast-changing and to some extent unpredictable circumstances. Training should have a focus on how to solve practical problems, and should stimulate reflection. It should also transmit to the aspirant school leaders a repertoire of empirically validated practices (Bush and Jackson, 2002). A clear view of the roles and responsibilities of education leaders can then provide the basis on which they may be held accountable.

## Policy options for subsequent steps

### *Policy option 4.2: making school leadership an attractive career option, and selecting candidates carefully*

*If leadership is a tough job for a low salary, able candidates will not apply*

To attract good candidates, less weight can be placed on seniority to attract younger candidates with different backgrounds. Separate salary scales for school leaders can attract better candidates while school leaders can be allowed to move between schools as well as between leadership and teaching and other in similar career paths, including jobs in educational administration, leadership of groups or federations of schools and consultant leadership roles (Pont, Nusche and Moorman, 2008).

*The selection of leaders at the outset is critical*

Initial training programmes for school leaders have a triple role: as entry barrier, screening device and a way of developing suitable candidates for leadership. Some countries - for example France - preselect candidates who will become school leaders but then require them to pass a training course before they start as leaders. This can be a way of reducing costs and ensuring that only those with leadership potential take the training. The Netherlands has a different approach (see Box 4.2).

#### **Box 4.2 Leadership "taster" courses in the Netherlands**

To attract potential candidates to leadership without the high cost of training programmes, training institutes offer orientation courses to allow teachers interested in leadership functions to discover whether they have the required capabilities. One example of such a course is Orientation towards Management, brief training given by the Association of School Leaders for the Sectoral Board for the Education Labour Market (a fund of employers and employee organisations in the educational sector). School boards, upper school managers and leaders of schools are asked to select candidates from their own schools. These candidates first take part in an information session, where they fill in a survey form that provides some insight into their leadership talents and affinity with leadership. They then participate in a two-day training course which covers various leadership topics. After this, candidates draw up a Personal Development Plan based on a competence analysis. Orientation towards Management then moves on to further training for candidates who are interested and suitable.

Source: Bal, J. and J. de Jong (2007), "Improving School Leadership - OECD Review, Background Report for the Netherlands", prepared for the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, Netherlands, [www.oecd.org/edu/schoolleadership](http://www.oecd.org/edu/schoolleadership).

### *Policy option 4.3: designing effective training programmes for school leaders*

*Training support for new school leaders is vital*

For Austria and New Zealand (Box 4.3), a training programme pursued during the initial years as a school leader is the main way to provide leadership training for their principals and England, Scotland and Northern Ireland use this as a complementary feature of initial training. These induction programmes are almost all optional and may include in-depth training on legislative, financial and other topics. They may also provide mentoring for the first years in office and help new principals develop networks of support. Training programmes for new school leaders may be one- or two-day courses as in Australia and Hungary. In Denmark, the courses may run for about a month, but in other countries, they run from one to three years and provide a variety of support arrangements for taking up leadership positions and initial steps in school leadership. In Finland, for example, induction programmes support the new leader through colleagues and professional co-operation networks.

### Box 4.3 Induction training programmes for school leaders

*In Austria*, induction programmes provide foundation skills for school leaders. Principals are initially appointed on a provisional basis. To be extended, they must complete a course in management training within the four years after taking up the position and initially the training was limited to preparation for legal and administrative tasks, but as school autonomy grew, more appropriate qualifications were adopted. The two-year programme has different phases of study, including basic training modules and self-study. An evaluation study confirmed the structure of the programme, but participants felt that the course should respond better to real needs and be contextualised; should offer an appropriate balance between self-study, project work, peer work and individual and team coaching; and should link basic training with professional development.

*In New Zealand*, an 18-month First Time Principals (FTP) induction programme for newly appointed principals from all types of schools began in 2002. It has three main components: nine days of residential sessions held in the school holidays; on-going mentoring on site (including unlimited phone and email contact); and a confidential website. An evaluation was commissioned for those who participated in 2003. It found a great diversity among the participants: some brought little knowledge and relevant leadership experience to their new roles, while others had spent several years preparing for the position, both professionally and academically. Principals also came from widely different school types - from very small rural schools to large urban secondary schools. Principals appeared to have grasped the importance of leadership for learning, although a number were constrained by particular school contexts and the match between their current abilities and leadership requirements. The evaluation found the FTP programme to be an initiative with potential to impact significantly over time on principals' knowledge and approaches to learning-focused school leadership

*Sources:* Schratz, M. and K. Petzold (2007), "Improving School Leadership, Country Background Report for Austria", report prepared by the Department of Teacher Education and School Research, University of Innsbruck for the Austrian Federal Ministry of Education, the Arts and Culture, Austria; Cameron, M. et al. (2004), *Evaluation of First Time Principals Induction Programme 2003*, New Zealand Council for Educational Research, Wellington.

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## CHAPTER 5: DEVELOPING AN ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION CAPACITY

*In Greece, there are few national assessments of student learning and no external evaluation of schools, nor appraisal of teachers. School outcome data need to be handled carefully, and teachers and education leaders need to have ownership of the evaluation culture so that is not seen as something unfamiliar and punitive. Some public bodies potentially have evaluation and monitoring responsibilities, but at present this function is relatively undeveloped. Assessments of student learning need further development.*

### **The challenge: Limited capacity for monitoring and evaluation**

*In Greece, there are few national assessments of student learning*

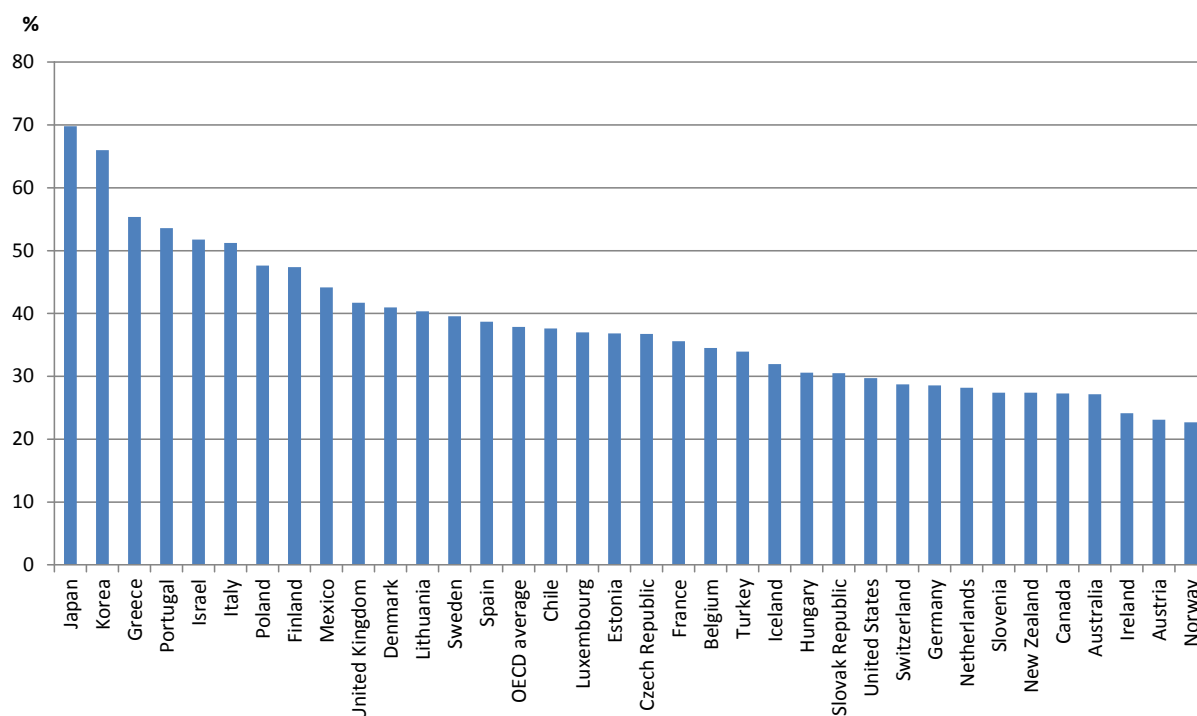
National assessments (measuring student learning but unlike examinations, without impact on progression or certification) are administered during primary and/or secondary schooling in all OECD countries except Portugal and Greece (OECD, 2013a). In Greece, sample-based assessments are available through international assessments such as the OECD Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) and now the Survey of Adult Skills, a product of the OECD Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC).<sup>1</sup> With regards to national assessments, while the test grades of students have recently been recorded on an online "MySchool" system, they reflect local school tests, and so are not comparable between schools.

In 2013, efforts towards a more national approach were undertaken, with the development of national banks with question items of graded difficulty were developed, and the intention was to use them for half of the questions in the end-of-year assessments of selected school subjects in upper secondary education. In 2015 the use of these item banks was abandoned, given concerns about equity and dropout. Some argue that national student assessments will cause competition and inequalities among schools by creating a crude hierarchy of "good" and "bad" schools, with debatable benefits for the quality of the education provided (IEP, 2016). The converse argument is that collecting information about student assessment, alongside adequate contextual information on the social background of the student population, would clarify which schools are doing well relative to their student population, while having the same standard for all schools and supporting those that are lagging behind.

*The university entrance examinations favour private tutoring market*

The university entrance examinations at the end of upper secondary education are national, but are not standardised and thus do not permit comparisons from year to year. But these raw examination grades are the most widely-used informal indicators of the quality of the school system in Greece. This can create problems, particularly given the large private tertiary market devoted to preparation for the exams. This sector is huge in Greece, with estimates varying between 1% and 2% of GDP, which means that household expenditure is equivalent to more than 50% of government expenditures on primary and secondary education (KANEP/GSEE, 2015; European Commission, 2011). It has been suggested that on average, Greek households spent more than EUR 10 000 for every child attending shadow education in secondary education in preparation for university entrance exam (Psacharopoulos and Papakonstantinou, 2005). It is difficult to find reliable data on the number of students participating. A 2014 study of 534 households showed that 99% of students in their final year attended either a *frontisterio* (54%), private lessons (21%), or both (24%). Only 1% of respondents' children had not resorted to shadow education in preparation for the university entrance exam (SEFA, 2015; Liodakis and Liodakis, 2016). PISA 2012 asked students if they attended supplementary education in afterschool lessons (see Figure 5.1).



**Figure 5.1. Percentage of students attending afterschool lessons in mathematics, 2012**

Source: Author's calculation based on OECD PISA database 2012, OECD (2013b), *PISA 2012 Results: What Makes Schools Successful?: Resources, Policies and Practices (Volume IV)*, PISA, OECD Publishing, Paris, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264201156-en>, Figure IV.3.11.

### *Shadow education is a contested issue*

Proponents of private tutoring and other forms of shadow education claim that it can help low achievers to keep up with their peers and further stretch the learning of high achievers. Its critics claim that it adds to existing inequalities, by allowing the affluent to give their children opportunities not available to others, and/or that it may be a financial burden on poorer households. Supplementary tutoring can exert undesirable pressure on young people by making the schooling day very long. Shadow education may also have a negative effect on mainstream schooling. When teachers receive extra income from private tutoring, they may be less concerned about inadequate learning during ordinary classes (European Commission, 2011). The extensive role of private tutoring in preparing students for the university entrance exams also raises questions about the quality of preparation which ordinary schooling offers. Together with the issue of the availability of the necessary resources these would be critical issues for any education system, but in the context of the crisis, it is even more so for Greece. The OECD proposes to examine this issue more fully in the next phase of the work.

### *There is no external evaluation of schools*

A process of self-evaluation was briefly introduced in the 2013/14 school year, following a two-year pilot project, alongside a new teacher appraisal system that sought to link appraisal with promotion and posts of responsibility, but due to the resistance from teachers' unions, both teacher appraisal, and school self-evaluation were "frozen" (see Box 5.1). The school self-evaluation process developed 15 indicators of school inputs, educational processes and outcomes before it was suspended.

### Box 5.1 Some history: school and teacher evaluation in Greece

#### Previous history

Until the 1980s, teacher evaluation was the job of school inspectors, and particularly during the 1967-74 military regime, inspection became associated with political control. In the early 1980s, and against this historical background, inspection was abolished, and the system of school advisors was introduced. According to the then law (L.1304 of 1982) school advisors were meant to undertake the evaluation of the educational system, but this was never implemented. A later law (Law 1566 of 1985), which also included references to educational evaluation, was not implemented during the 1980s. School advisors concentrated on providing pedagogical guidance and support to teachers. Several attempts in the 1990s to introduce educational evaluation in schools were met with fierce opposition by teachers' unions, teachers and even some students and parents; leading either to their formal invalidation or to their non-implementation in practice. In the 2000s, the emphasis changed to more participative forms of educational evaluation focusing on the evaluation of educational work and self-evaluation of school units, rather than on individual teachers (Verdis, 2002). But the context remained one in which it was very hard to develop a culture of evaluation of them and assessment, as it was often seen as punitive and controlling means, jeopardising rather than reinforcing school and teacher autonomy (IEP, 2016).

#### New measures for self-evaluation of schools

Starting from the 2013/14 school year and following a two-year pilot project, annual school self-evaluation became compulsory for all types of pre-primary, primary and secondary schools. The legislation (Circulars 30973/Γ1/05-03-2013, 190089/Γ1/10-12-2013, Ministerial Decision 30972/Γ1/05-03-2014) states that at the beginning of each school year, every school is required to set its own educational goals and plan how to reach them. School self-evaluation includes a review of teaching and learning based on a specific framework of indicators, prepared by the Institute of Educational Policy (IEP); action planning for the improvement of special areas of interest; implementation of improvement plans; and monitoring and evaluating the use of evidence and progress towards the intended outcomes. At the end of each school year, schools report through a centrally provided reporting template which is uploaded onto the school's webpage and submitted to the relevant regional Directorate. The school advisor supports the whole procedure by offering advice and training on specific evaluation or educational matters if necessary. It is worth noting is that the self-evaluation, by giving schools the ability to plan, organise and evaluate their own work, seeks to offer them more autonomy.

#### Teacher appraisal

In parallel to school self-evaluation, a presidential decree (152/2013) introduced a new teacher appraisal system to be implemented from 2014/15, linked to teachers' promotion and their tenure in posts of responsibility. According to this proposal, education staff would be subject to appraisal by their respective line managers on administrative matters, and their relevant education advisors on educational matters; so a teacher's appraisal would be carried out by the school head and relevant school advisor respectively, and that of a school head by the Director of Education and the relevant education advisor. The criteria, procedures and the form of the appraisal report were defined centrally.

This teacher appraisal system was met with opposition by many teachers and by teachers' unions (in the context of education expenditure reductions due to the crisis). The teachers' unions then reacted against the newly established process of school self-evaluation, previously perceived in positive terms. All these educational evaluation processes, including school self-evaluation, were 'frozen' in 2015.

*Source:* Verdis, A. (2002), "School Effectiveness and Educational Evaluation in Greece", unpublished PhD thesis at the University of London, Institute of Education, United Kingdom; IEP (2016), "Experts' Reports", report prepared by the IEP and academic experts for the OECD review team, March 2016.

*Data on system performance are lacking and evaluations are not carried out systematically*

Basic administrative data on numbers of students and teachers are sometimes considered unreliable. There is limited coherence between the different levels and consistency between the data gathered by the Ministry of Education, Research and Religious Affairs (MofERRA) and the Hellenic Statistical Authority (ELSTAT). No recent education policy initiatives have been evaluated.

*Some public bodies potentially have evaluation and monitoring responsibilities*

The mandates of the public bodies below, operating at the system level and supervised by MofERRA, include the evaluation and monitoring of the Greek education system (Chapter 7 looks at the quality assurance mechanisms for higher education).

- The National Education Council (ESYP) (primary and secondary education subdivision) was established in 2000 (Law 2817/2000), with an advisory role on matters of education policy. Representatives of ministries, political parties represented in parliament, professional and trade union organisations, and education practitioners take part in the plenary sessions of ESYP, which are supposed to address education planning, and proposals on matters referred to it by the Minister of Education.
- The Institute of Educational Policy (IEP) was established in 2011 (Law 3966/2011) to conduct scientific research on issues related to primary and secondary education and the transition from secondary to tertiary education, and to support the planning and implementation of educational policy on these issues.
- Law 4142/2013 established the "Authority for Quality Assurance in Primary and Secondary Education" (ADIPPDE) to monitor, study and assess the implementation of education policy in primary and secondary education; evaluate the work of schools and supervise the appraisal of primary and secondary education teachers. ADIPPDE, which is yet not fully staffed, due to lack of resources, will be responsible for establishing an integrated school quality assurance system in Greece. To this end it is expected to develop, evaluation processes, including criteria and indicators, and to make information publicly available.
- The Hellenic Quality Assurance Authority (ADIP) was created with the Law 3374/2005, with responsibilities related to quality assurance and accountability of universities and tertiary education institutions (TEIs).

## **Policy considerations**

*Data can fuel accountability*

Earlier chapters of this report propose greater freedom and autonomy for schools in Greece. These freedoms need to be balanced by evaluation and accountability, which in turn will depend on the evidence available, particularly of learning outcomes according to national standards. More and better data can also help advance equity and social considerations.

*School outcome data need to be handled carefully*

Assessments of student performance are often widely debated and used for school improvement purposes. Some see them primarily as tools to reveal best practices and to encourage school improvement. "Raw" school performance measures reflect not only the varying efforts of teachers and

schools, but also the social background of pupils. Such measures need to be interpreted carefully, otherwise for example, schools can receive a higher performance measure through academic selection or through selecting students from privileged socio-economic backgrounds, rather than through better teaching (OECD, 2008; Kim and Lalancette, 2013). Standardised tests should be designed by independent bodies to evaluate wide learning outcomes and horizontal skills. So accountability measures should draw on a broad range of assessment information to make judgements about performance.

*Teachers and education leaders need to have ownership of the evaluation culture*

Evaluation and assessment processes will not work if they are seen as something as imposed and punitive, and of course the history in Greece (described in Box 5.1 above) means that is a risk. This means involving teachers and education leaders in developing and owning the culture of evaluation (see Box 5.2).

### Box 5.2 Involving teachers in creating a culture of evaluation

Involving teachers in school policies and practices is an essential component of modern education governance. This is especially important in practices and policies around evaluation and assessment, both in building a culture of evaluation in the system and in incorporating a broader perspective in decisions about what does and does not work. Yet devising the policies is just the first step; implementation and ownership by teachers are critical to their success.

**Poland**, for example, introduced a new school-supervision process in 2009 in which practitioners were more directly involved in the evaluation process. This supervision system reinforced collaboration and self-assessment among educators, and changed the role of school inspectors and chief inspectors. This built on Poland's strong "*kuratoria*" tradition of school inspections. Key elements of success included providing comprehensive information to the teachers as well as to school leaders and inspectors. This involved clearly defining goals, steps to achieve the goals and development plans. Interestingly, it was the schools that had some familiarity with restructuring - for example, some schools had previously implemented an inter-school quality-assurance system that involved the entire school community - that were initially most receptive to the reform. In these schools, a significant part of the teaching staff eagerly participated in training provided by the new school-supervision system.

Similarly, **Norway**'s implementation of the Assessment for Learning (AfL) programme aimed to motivate authorities, schools and training establishments to develop a culture of assessment with a strong focus on learning. Not surprisingly, the municipalities that most successfully implemented the programme demonstrated clear communication between governance levels and a high degree of trust among stakeholders. On the local level, the establishment of learning networks among schools aided the exchange of knowledge and provided peer support during the implementation. Integrating teachers in the change process (e.g. by organising pre-planned visits to classrooms), and a willingness to adapt the implementation strategy to local contexts greatly facilitated the implementation and acceptance of the programme in schools.

These examples show some of the common elements required for successful policy implementation: communication, collaboration, and a willingness to take part in the change process. Establishing a set of shared priorities is also important, especially for smaller municipalities or schools which have to deal with the crisis and budgetary cuts. However, building a culture of evaluation has its own specific challenges. One of the biggest initial barriers is a lack of trust: trust in what is being communicated, and also trust that evaluation could be used for improvement rather than punitively. The most successful systems work on all of the elements together, to steer the system, build trust, and use the strength and expertise of their schools and teachers to make reform happen.

*Sources:* Mazurkiewicz, G., B. Walczak and M. Jewdokimow (2014), "Implementation of a new school supervision system in Poland: A Governing Complex Education Systems Case Study", *OECD Education Working Papers*, No. 111, OECD Publishing, Paris, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/5jxrlxrgc6b-en>; Hopfenbeck, T. et al. (2013), "Balancing trust and accountability? The assessment for learning programme in Norway: A Governing Complex Education Systems case study", *OECD Education Working Papers*, No. 97, OECD Publishing, Paris, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/5k3txnpqlsnn-en>.

## Immediate policy options

### *Policy option 5.1: building the capacity and the institutions to use data*

*For good data to be put to effective use, the capacity of education stakeholders is critical.*

Central agencies, often autonomous, can help guide improvement and increase the coherence and independence of evaluation and assessment. Chile, for example, has introduced a Quality of Education Agency not only to evaluate system performance at different levels (students, teachers and schools) and to help schools that have lower results (OECD, 2015). Education leaders at local level also need to develop their skills in using data. One possible outcome could be the establishment of a national institute for evaluation and assessment, as an independent body in the education field, perhaps by merging ADIPPDE, ADIP and possibly also EOPPEP (National Organisation for the Certification of Qualifications and Vocational Guidance). OECD experience in this field could support this effort (see Box 5.3).

#### **Box 5.3 Establishing a central agency for policy evaluation**

Evaluation is the systematic determination of significance and progress of a policy, programme or projects in causing change. It is distinct from monitoring which is the process of collecting evidence for evaluation. Evaluation is a critical component of policy making, at all levels. Evaluations allow informed design and modifications of policies and programmes, to increase effectiveness and efficiency.

Central agencies can provide capacity for the education system to improve and hold the various stakeholders accountable. Many central agencies have been introduced to co-ordinate complex systems of evaluation and assessment. With many set up as independent agencies to ensure autonomy in evaluation, their tasks include organising the design and operation of evaluation activities, providing technical expertise and support, and monitoring education, for example.

**France** introduced the National Council for the Evaluation of the School System (2013) as an independent body with the aim of providing evaluations and evaluation summaries in an international perspective, providing expertise on methodology and evaluations, and promoting an evaluation culture for education professionals and the general public.

In **Mexico**, the National Institute for Educational Assessment and Evaluation was granted autonomy in 2013 to develop a strategic and unified vision of assessment and evaluation. As an autonomous body, it will define the process for teacher evaluation and student evaluation, and will collaborate with the Secretariat of Public Education and decentralised bodies to strengthen evaluation.

*Source:* OECD (2015), *Education Policy Outlook 2015: Making Reforms Happen*, OECD Publishing, Paris, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264225442-en>.

### *More could be done with existing data*

In most countries, more analysis and research would be possible with existing data, both undertaking key analyses within government, and sponsoring and encouraging academic research. Another possibility is to require the existing research and evaluation agencies (listed above) and the IEP to include thematic national evaluations among their responsibilities. These could cover key topics, such as the professional development of teachers, shadow education, bullying and harassment in schools, and the development of all-day schools, reviewing practices across a sample of schools in the country and offering national level reports to inform the development and implementation of policy and practice.

### Policy options for subsequent steps

#### ***Policy option 5.2: collecting data on students and schools to foster improvement, and implementing sample student assessments using national standards defined by independent bodies***

##### *Effective monitoring of school systems requires good basic data*

Good data will include the numbers of different students of different types in different programmes and schools. It will also include data on learning outcomes, including the one collected through MySchool. Data of interest for system analysis include: student socio-economic background (often measured by parents' education level and occupation); language and migration status; and special educational needs. Such information can be available via labour force surveys - similarly to those done by the European Union Labour Force Survey and Eurostat, as well as the regular population census and may be collected via the administration of questionnaires to students during national assessments. In the Czech Republic, France, Iceland, Ireland and Sweden, information on socio-economic composition of schools is available, but this is not used at the individual student level (OECD, 2013a). Estonia has a very well developed system as well.

##### *Assessments of student learning provide key evidence*

Some countries choose to administer only relatively low-cost sample assessments of student learning, so as to provide information at the education system level, and at various levels of disaggregation possibly down to the level of the school. Such a sample might allow, for example, Greece to establish how results compare across different parts of the country, and between rural and urban areas, and between large and small schools. But such sample approaches cannot be used to identify schools with performance issues. Many countries choose to administer full-cohort assessments, allowing the comparison of how schools perform within the education system, as well as how schools in different zones perform in comparison to others. Typically this introduces the additional purpose of holding schools accountable and may include the publication of school results, although this is not always the case. It also provides comparable data at the level of the different sub-national systems (municipal versus district level for example, public versus private, etc.) and can feed into sub-system monitoring and evaluation. But full-cohort assessments can lead to unfair school ranking and create incentives for cheating and test manipulation. These potential disadvantages are linked to how the test results are used and the extent to which they are perceived as high stakes (OECD, 2013a). Australia's National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) introduced yearly student assessments at four different levels. This programme aims to engage the different stakeholders in student learning, mostly to hold teachers and principals accountable and inform parents (OECD, 2015) (See Box 5.4 for another example from the Netherlands of a comprehensive approach).

**Box 5.4 The use of data for school and student improvement in the Netherlands**

An important source for research and monitoring is the Personal Identification Number (PGN), which has been issued to every child in the country over the age of 3 and a half years. Commonly referred to as the education number, it is the same as the tax and social insurance number. Schools pass on the PGN together with certain other data on pupils to other schools, as the child progresses through education. These data are increasingly used for purposes such as monitoring pupils' school careers, school attendance or dropout rates. The PGN is very useful in the action plan against dropout, because it offers complete and reliable figures on rates nationally, regionally and at municipal and district levels. All schools in secondary education are expected to register absenteeism, disengagement and dropout, and a monthly report is available to municipalities and schools to allow them to give priority to those at risk. Also, these data are linked to socio-economic data (including demographics, native Dutch citizens, ethnic minorities, unemployment, people entitled to benefits, etc.) by region, city and district, which provides a wealth of information for implementing and adjusting policy. This monitoring of results enables the authorities to assess what works and what does not, and therefore to disseminate good practices.

Source: OECD (2012), *Equity and Quality in Education: Supporting Disadvantaged Students and Schools*, OECD Publishing, Paris, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264130852-en>.

**NOTE**

1. Greece participated in PIRLS in 2001 and in TIMMS in 1995.

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## CHAPTER 6: THE DEVELOPMENT OF ALL-DAY SCHOOLS

*The all-day schools face real equity challenges as enhanced instruction is not available to the entire student population. New government proposals are addressing this issue. Additional instruction hours need to be used effectively, and this means developing the skills needed for teachers to realise stronger learning outcomes. As a principle, augmented schooling ought to be available to all or targeted at the disadvantaged.*

### The challenge: A promising initiative facing many implementation problems

*In Greece the intention is that all primary schools should eventually become new "all-day" schools*

The 2011 OECD education review of Greece looked at numerous initiatives to improve primary education, including the all-day schools, which have been developed since 1989 with the use of EU structural funds. In the early stages the aim was to help parents, especially mothers, to enter the labour market. But later educational goals have assumed equal importance (Pirgiotakis, 2004). There are two main types (Thoidis and Chaniotakis, 2015):

- The "Classic" all-day school (since 2002): in which students after 2 p.m. may stay at school to prepare homework and undertake creative activities and rest (about 60 % of schools, see Table 6.1).
- The "New" all-day school was progressively rolled out from 2010-11, as part of the "New School" reform package (about 30% of schools, see Table 6.1). Children may arrive as early as 7 a.m. and leave as late as 4 p.m., during which time they can benefit from extra study support (individual and group). Attendance is compulsory until 3:30 p.m. The curriculum has been enriched with foreign language classes, art, drama, physical education, etc. (IEP, 2016). The duration of the school year has also been slightly extended (MofERRA, 2011).
- The remaining 10% of primary schools, which are schools that have less than six classes, are not all-day schools. The school day starts at 8:15 a.m. and ends at 3:30 pm.

**Table 6.1 Types of Greek primary schools in school year 2015/16**

	All Primary Schools		Of which: schools with more than 3 Grades	
	Number of schools	%	Number of schools	%
Classic All-Day	2 761	61%	2 218	60%
"New" All-Day with Revised Cohesive Programme	1 337	29%	1 332	36%
Not All-Day (of any type)	469	10%	141	4%
TOTAL Number of Primary schools	4 567	100%	3 691	100%

Source: IEP (2016), "Experts' Reports", Report prepared by the IEP and academic experts for the OECD review team, March 2016.

In the first half of 2016 the government advanced new proposals that "Classic" and "New" all-day schools be amalgamated into a "Unified" type of all-day primary school that would include the vast majority of all primary schools, and which would be in operation from the next school year (2016/17). It is proposed that in this type of school, children would not arrive earlier than 8 a.m. but may leave as late as 4 p.m. Attendance would be compulsory until 1:15 p.m. in a compulsory curriculum enriched with classes in English language teaching, information and communication technology (ICT), art, drama, physical education, etc. The new enriched curriculum implies less time for more conventional subjects, and therefore a shift in the teaching load from primary teachers to specialist secondary teachers (helping to employ the overhang of secondary teachers).

*Some positive evidence is balanced by many challenges*

Teachers, students and parents reported that the enriched curriculum, with new subjects, in the New all-day schools, was very helpful, especially for those students of low-income families (see for example INE-GSEE, 2003 and Kontorli, 2010). This was less the case for more affluent families as they would typically have access to these additional subjects (ICT, foreign language) through private tutoring. But a number of problems are also reported, with the implementation of extra activities (Gkoratsa, 2013); these include weak integration of afternoon provision (especially in the "Classic" all-day schools) Grollios 2001; Thoidis and Chaniotakis 2012, 2015); inadequate infrastructure to support the new activities, teacher recruitment difficulties, inadequate homework support, (Gkoratsa, 2013), dropout during the school year reported in the "Classic" model and students not staying at the school in the afternoon (IEP, 2016).

*The all-day schools rely on European funding and adjunct teachers, and face training challenges*

Reliance on European Structural Funds and the fact that there are many adjunct teachers leads to an unstable teacher workforce (some schools only manage to recruit specialist teachers for the afternoon sessions three months after the beginning of the school year). In 2015/16, 16% of the total teaching workforce in primary education<sup>1</sup> was adjuncts, 50% more than in 2011/12. In the New all-day schools teachers have more curricular freedom, but little training in how to use it (IEP, 2016). Specialised subjects also need to be delivered by teachers trained as secondary school teachers (not always having the adequate pedagogical training to teach primary school-age children). The review team has heard different views on what would be the future of all-day schools, in the light of planned reforms.

**Policy considerations***Extended instruction time on its own has a limited impact on student achievement*

Given extended instruction time, students should have more time for teaching and learning, (Farbman and Kaplan, 2005). For parents, an additional argument is that they would be able to work longer hours if their children spend more of the afternoon in primary school. But a recent OECD review points out that a raw increase in instruction time does not automatically imply more engaged learning time, may cause fatigue and boredom among students and has a small effect on student achievement at best (see Gromada and Shewbridge, 2016). In PISA 2012<sup>2</sup> there is no clear relationship between time in regular mathematics lessons and mathematics performance (OECD, 2013). But the issues with the New all-day schools are somewhat different, in that instruction time is increased through an enriched curriculum.

*Measuring instruction time and its costs raises technical difficulties*

Silva (2007) estimates that on average a 10% increase in instruction time increases costs by 6% to 7%; prolonging the school day is usually cheaper than prolonging the school year. But OECD countries report information about instruction time in a variety of ways, drawing variously on central specifications, survey data and estimates, and few studies look at costs. Similar issues arise around school size effects (Ares Abalde, 2014).

*The all-day school raises equity challenges*

Gromada and Shewbridge (2016) identify greater demand from less socio-economically advantaged parents for the after-school academic and other activities that could drive enhanced

academic performance and motivation (Lauer et al., 2006). So students from low income groups may particularly benefit from additional activities in the afternoon (such as art, music and sports) as well as homework support, because they may not have the opportunity of pursuing these activities at home, or privately and through shadow education, unlike children from more affluent backgrounds. The OECD review team heard mixed messages about the extent to which schools become New all-day schools through self-nomination, as opposed to being designated as such by the ministry. But in either case there is a risk that schools that are better organised and equipped may be most likely to have the potential to become New all-day schools, potentially widening the gap between New all-day schools and their students and other less favoured schools. This means that equity challenges are especially problematic in the case of the New all-day schools (despite its commendable intentions of giving more and better instruction to students), as it seems that it is the best schools, with the most affluent parents, that may benefit from giving to students an enriched curriculum - in some cases for which parents would have paid for anyway - while the rest of the students are lagging behind. Students in Greece cannot choose which school they attend (students attend the schools the closest to where they live).

### **Immediate policy options**

***Policy option 6.1: ensuring either a) that the augmented schooling and additional resources of all-day schools are available to all, or b) that they are targeted at the most disadvantaged***

*As a principle, augmented schooling ought to be available to all or targeted at the disadvantaged*

As a general principle, if additional resources are to be allocated to schooling they should either be allocated to improvements from which all students will benefit and therefore be made universal, or, alternatively, specifically target the most needy and disadvantaged schools. Current practice with all-day schools and the recent reform seems to be moving in the right direction – even though instruction time will not be necessarily increased, but the curriculum rather enriched. But there may be some real challenges of implementation in moving away from a model in which the most advantageous model – the New all-day school – is available only to a limited group of students and parents that may already be better off.

*To tackle equity challenges, school disadvantage might be made a precondition of transforming a school into a New all-day school*

Disadvantaged students, as well as migrant and special needs students, could benefit from more learning time because their learning opportunities at home are more limited. These students would also benefit the most from the enriched curriculum available in the New all-day schools. So one option would be to make school disadvantage a condition for a change of status to New all-day school. This could be done in parallel to the roll-out of ZEPs.

***Policy option 6.2: developing both initial teacher education and subsequent professional development, to make good use of instruction time in schools. Strengthening the practical component of initial teacher education, and align continuing training to the needs of the schools***

*Additional instruction hours need to be used effectively*

This means paying adequate attention to classroom management techniques in initial teacher education and professional development activities. More effective time management, promoted by professional development, has been shown to improve class management, the quality of instruction and allows greater depth and breadth in all curriculum areas. Wherever possible, teachers should reduce transition times and non-instructional activities and also choose learning tasks that allow

students to experience success, ensuring that the maximum proportion of instruction time is translated into engaged time. Allowing schools the flexibility to realise this is important (Gromada and Shewbridge, 2016).

*Teacher education is either concurrent or consecutive*

In Greece, teachers at pre-primary and primary levels of education are trained under the concurrent model, i.e. academic subjects are studied alongside educational and professional studies throughout the four years of a bachelor's programme. Secondary education teachers may be trained under both models, consecutive and concurrent. Under the consecutive model, the specialised courses in pedagogy and in teaching are accessible after having completed another degree in a discipline taught in school (teachers are educated first in a specific discipline and then they receive pedagogical training). Law 4186/2013 provided that a certification in pedagogy and instructional ability would be compulsory for university graduates who would pursue an educational career from 2017.

**Box 6.1 Initial, continuing and "cascade" teacher education**

***Strengthening the practical component of initial teacher education***

The inclusion of practical field experience in teacher education has some considerable advantages. In order to be as effective as possible, it has to be well prepared and designed in close collaboration with schools, in order to make the best of the integration of academic content with the fieldwork. It is proven to lower the rate of beginner teachers leaving the profession very quickly. They are willing to take more risks by trying new pedagogical strategies and make better use of technology, work longer hours than most novice teachers, and seem to have better problem solving skills when faced with complex teaching environments.

***Continuing training could be strengthened and focus on school needs***

Continuing training is a tool to improve teacher quality learning outcomes. It is also a way of making the teaching profession more attractive and teachers motivated. These activities can be heterogeneous: dissemination conferences, workshops, school-based activities, and personal teacher development. The most commonly used approach through countries is the one-time workshop, but research shows that this form of continuing training is ineffective and inefficient. Research shows that programmes that are school-based are more effective, since they are linked to particular school needs (the teachers are the ones who decide the content of the continuing training programme) and allow synergy among the teachers of the school and with the non-teaching staff. Emphasis should be put on demonstration, through activities like supervised evaluation, lesson study, mentoring and feedback.

***Cascade training***

A select group of teachers are trained and are then expected to transmit the ideas at the school level. This form of continuing training is usually put into place when the educational authorities' main concern is to reach as many participants as possible in a short time, and on a small budget. Usually, adaptation by new users leaves much to be desired. This model is very common in Germany: teacher educators are trained at the central level, and then introduce themselves what they have learned in their regions. This approach has been complemented by the development of school-based initiatives (combining teachers, parents and students), to improve school management. The German continuing training system is very interesting; it is both flexible and co-ordinated. This presents advantages over centralised but also decentralised systems, where the supply of continuing training is market-based.

Source: Musset, P. (2010), "Initial Teacher Education and Continuing Training Policies in a Comparative Perspective: Current Practices in OECD Countries and a Literature Review on Potential Effects", *OECD Education Working Papers*, No. 48, OECD, Paris, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/5kmbphh7s47h-en>.

*The practical element of teacher education is variable*

The extent to which teacher education includes a practical component, such as a placement in a school, is highly variable across the different individual teacher education programmes. In Greece, teachers have no obligation to engage in continuing training. It is in most cases organised by the advisor, at the regional level, and most programmes are not formally accredited. Some broader considerations on teacher education and professional development are set out in Box 6.1. Teachers' continuing training is in most cases organised by the school advisor, at regional level, so as to be more practical and responsive to local circumstances and needs.

*Peer review approaches can be important*

In some countries, teacher professional development is supported by processes of peer review, and appraisal. This approach gives ownership of the appraisal system to the teaching profession, rather than it being something that is seen as alien, external and potentially punitive (see Box 6.2).

**Box 6.2 Linking teacher appraisal to professional development**

In **Korea's** Teacher Appraisal for Professional Development programme, once appraisal procedures are completed, evaluation sheets are collected and drafted into a final report for each teacher. Results of the peer-review process are written up by "appraisal-management committees" at each school. Upon receiving their appraisal results report, teachers prepare their own plans for professional development (including plans to attend training) and submit these to the appraisal-management committee. The committee brings together the professional development plans and the appraisal results of all appraised teachers, and drafts a "synthetic report on Teacher Appraisal for Professional Development" to submit to the principal and vice-principal. The synthetic report must include: an implementation plan and progress of appraisal; overall appraisal results (excluding results for individual teachers); general features of appraisal (appraisal provided by parents, students and peer teachers; strengths and weaknesses of the school's teachers as revealed by the appraisal); teachers' requests for training, including autonomous in-service training; the fields of training requested by the teachers; the school's next-year plans to provide consulting and training programmes for teachers' professional development; a budget estimation; and proposals and requests to the local education authority (requests for the establishment of new training programmes, requests for budget support for in-service training by the education office, etc.).

Based on the appraisal results, local education authorities provide excellent teachers with a "study and research year" (similar to sabbatical years given to university faculty) as a way of granting opportunities for teachers to build their professional capacity. Underperforming teachers are obliged to participate in short- to long-term training programmes, depending on their appraisal results. Regardless of appraisal outcomes, local education offices support teachers with customised training programmes so as to foster an atmosphere of self-study and self-improvement among teachers. Individual appraisal reports are shared only with the concerned teacher and principal. Only the average results of all teachers appraised in a school are disseminated among parents and students.

The **city of Memphis** in Tennessee (United States) has developed a system that explicitly links professional learning to teacher appraisal. In Memphis city schools, appraisal is based on teaching standards, and professional development is linked to teachers' competence measured against those standards. Thus, a teacher who shows poor performance on a specific indicator of a teaching standard can find professional growth opportunities related to that indicator. Memphis city schools publish a professional development guide each year that lists the professional growth offerings by standard and indicator. In addition, most of the professional development courses are taught by Memphis city school teachers, ensuring that the course offerings will be relevant to the contexts in which these teachers work.

Source: Schleicher, A. (2016), *Teaching Excellence through Professional Learning and Policy Reform: Lessons from around the World*, International Summit on the Teaching Profession, OECD Publishing, Paris, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264252059-en>.



## Policy options for subsequent steps

### ***Policy option 6.3: when allocating teachers to schools, and determining how to distribute the time of instruction between teachers, take into account their experience levels***

*Experienced teachers do not always work in the schools where they would be the most needed*

Competent teachers are particularly crucial in the schools that serve disadvantaged populations, but such schools are rarely the preference of teachers. PISA 2012 results confirm that disadvantaged schools tend to have smaller proportions of high quality teachers – defined as those with advanced university qualifications – than advantaged ones in Austria, Belgium, Chile, the Czech Republic, Iceland, Luxembourg, the Netherlands and Slovenia (OECD, 2013). This higher concentration of less qualified teachers damages student performance (Darling-Hammond, 2010). One way of ensuring that experienced teachers work in the schools where they are most needed, as discussed in Chapter 3, was through a budgetary mechanism which would allow schools in disadvantaged areas to pay their teachers a little more and therefore attract better teachers. Alternative means would be to directly change the allocation procedures of central government and/or to apply for disadvantaged schools the same "bonus scheme" as for teachers in remote or scarcely populated areas, mentioned before.

*New teachers might teach less and experienced teachers teach more.*

This could allow new teachers to further develop their classroom management skills. When asked about their priority areas for professional development, 25% of new teachers reported classroom management skills, compared to 12% of experienced teachers; 32% of new teachers reported student discipline and behaviour problems, compared to 20% of experienced teachers, in the OECD 2008 TALIS Survey (Jensen et al., 2012). In Greece, like other OECD countries, teachers with more experience teach fewer hours on average. Some increases in secondary school teacher workload have been agreed since 2011. Secondary school teachers were previously working as starting teachers 21 hours per week, decreasing to 16 after a certain number of years; this has become 23 hours initially, decreasing eventually to 18 (primary school teachers work 24 hours a week decreasing to 21 after a certain number of years of seniority).

### ***Policy option 6.4: attracting, supporting and retaining high quality teachers in the schools that need it most***

*Better teacher allocation, mentoring for novice teachers, financial incentives and support in hard-to-teach schools*

Messages from the research evidence include:

- Aligning teacher education with school needs, to ensure that teachers receive the skills and knowledge they need for working in these schools (recommended in the 2011 review). The design of teacher education must be context-specific (Musset, 2010).
- Providing mentoring for novice teachers: well-structured programmes may improve teacher effectiveness and increase retention in disadvantaged schools.
- Providing supportive working conditions to retain effective teachers in hard-to-teach schools. Teachers are more likely to stay in those schools where they can work effectively and see the results of their effort.
- Designing adequate financial and career incentives to attract and retain high quality teachers in schools that face the biggest difficulties.

## NOTES

1. The greatest relative increase in the last four years has been in special needs adjunct teachers, followed by adjunct teachers in physical education, drama and general primary education. Adjunct teachers of general primary education, the majority of whom work in the afternoon programme of the all-day school, amount to about a third of all the adjunct teachers employed in primary education in the year 2015/16.
2. In Norway, Spain, Belgium, Greece, Mexico, the Netherlands and the Czech Republic, while there are reported increases in mathematics time, the relationship between time and mathematics performance has weakened in 2012. In Belgium, Greece, Mexico and the Netherlands, the reported increase is greater among socio-economically disadvantaged schools, although the difference is not statistically significant in the Netherlands. In some of the countries with the highest reported increases in mathematics learning time (Canada, Norway, Portugal and the United States), there is also a high degree of variability of regular mathematics lesson time among schools.

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## **CHAPTER 7: POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION – ISSUES OF GOVERNANCE, AUTONOMY AND RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN DIFFERENT POST-SECONDARY SECTORS**

*The mechanisms that would normally link provision of post-secondary opportunities with labour market requirements are very weak in Greece. The central allocation of student places reflects neither student preferences nor labour market requirements. The post-secondary sector is also highly fragmented and TEIs have failed to acquire a distinct mission with sufficient labour market focus.*

**Challenge: Towards a more responsive post-secondary sector**

*The post-secondary sector is not responsive to labour market needs*

Many young people in Greece transition between school and the labour market via some form of post-secondary education. Post-secondary education, and especially university education is highly valued and is considered an important part of someone's overall education relatively independently of employment. In the context of an exceptionally difficult youth labour market in the context of the crisis and high rates of graduate unemployment, the management of this phase of education is critical to labour market outcomes. It is therefore worrying that the mechanisms that would normally link provision of post-secondary opportunities with labour market requirements are very weak in Greece.

*This chapter looks at issues of governance and the relationships between post-secondary sectors*

The governance of post-secondary education in Greece is not as highly centralised as schools, but it is still the most centralised in the EU (European University Association, 2015). If there were to be more autonomy for post-secondary institutions, it would need to be balanced by accountability mechanisms in terms of quality assurance, completion rates, and labour market responsiveness. These issues are detailed in this report. There are also many thorny issues surrounding the relationships between different post-secondary sectors, with particular challenges arising regarding the post-secondary vocational sector and Technological Educational Institutions (TEIs).

*A number of challenges have been identified*

The 2011 OECD education review of Greece highlighted relatively low completion rates for those entering tertiary education, lack of steering capacity to ensure institutions were accountable, out-dated centralised finance and regulatory controls, and weak internal governance and management structures. Major cuts have since fallen on the sector. In 2010, there was a 30% across-the-board cut in funding, and no new posts were approved (OECD, 2011). Since 2010 there have been additional budget cuts, with a drop of around 11% in 2014, following a 24% cut in 2013 (European University Association, 2015).

***Linking autonomy to accountability – indicators of quality***

*The central allocation of student places reflects neither student preferences nor labour market requirements*

The number of places available in each university department is decided by the Ministry of Education, Research and Religious Affairs (MofERRA) after the consultations with the university senates. Prospective students are asked to specify the disciplines which and institutions where they wish to study ranked in order of preference, and are then allocated one of their choices based on exam results and places available by city. In 2011 only 6% of candidates to TEIs obtained their first, second or third choice in the city of their choice, and only 18% of candidates to universities in the city of their choice were in the same situation (KANEP/GSEE, 2014). Young people are therefore typically offered a university or TEI course in which they are only mildly interested. Students dissatisfied with their programme cannot transfer to another subject. Most students take longer than four years to graduate (see Table 7.1) and Greek students record one of the longest study times for students in OECD countries.

**Table 7.1 More than half of the students enrolled in higher education study for more than 6 years (2014)**

Institution category	Total number of students	Registered in the regular period of 4+2 years (for universities) and 3.5 years + practical experience (for TEIs)		Over the regular period	
Universities	403 933	190 835	47.2%	213 098	52.8%
TEIs + military and religious academies	223 109	105 924	47.5%	117 185	52.5%

Source: IEP (2016), data send to the OECD review team, March 2016.

#### *Issues remain regarding quality assurance mechanisms*

The quality assurance bodies in higher education are relatively new (it was initiated in 2005 and consolidated with Laws 4009/2011 and 4076/2012) and their implementation is still underway – some are only partly operational for the timebeing.<sup>1</sup> An external evaluation of universities was carried out by the Hellenic Quality Assurance Authority (ADIP), new governance regulations for higher education institution were drawn up, and university councils were put in place, and revised in 2015. During 2013/14, 85% of higher education institutions were externally assessed and the objective is that by the end of 2016 all departments are to be externally assessed. But quality assurance requirements on universities are primarily expressed in terms of inputs, rather than outputs such as completion and employment rates (research outputs are taken into account). The funding system provides limited incentives to institutions to improve their performance, and for example to improve completion rates, or to demonstrate any ability to place students in jobs – an absolutely critical requirement in the current difficult labour market.

#### *Tertiary graduates, like other young people in Greece, face great difficulties in getting jobs*

Just under half (47%) of recent tertiary graduates<sup>2</sup> were employed, in comparison with an EU average of 81% in 2014 (European Union, 2015). In addition, youth more generally have also been hit harder by unfavourable economic conditions. This is evident from the large gap between youth and prime-age employment rates: 13 % of 15-24 year-olds are employed compared to 40% average in OECD countries, whereas it is 62% of 25-54 year-olds are employed compared to 76% on average in OECD countries. This implies that in Greece there is a specific youth employment problem in addition to a more general one (OECD, 2016).

#### *Relationships between the different post-secondary sectors*

##### *The system is fragmented, despite recent efforts for consolidation*

There are many small post-secondary institutions: 21 universities with 264 departments in 39 municipalities and 16 TEIs with 212 departments in 46 municipalities (OECD, 2011). Local political pressures, rather than student demand, have often driven expansion.<sup>3</sup> Since 2011 and as mentioned in the introduction, as part of the *Athina* project there has been some consolidation in the sector, and a reduction of about 20% of the number of departments of TEIs, and a smaller reduction of the number of students (two "newer" universities were closed down and four TEIs were merged into two).

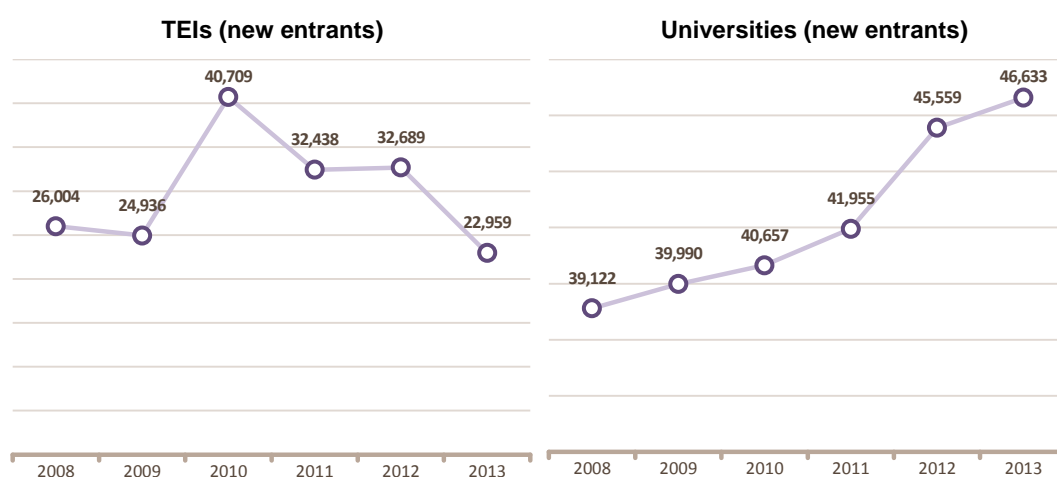
*TEIs have failed to acquire a distinct mission with sufficient labour market focus*

Historically, TEIs have had a stronger vocational content and a greater focus on training and practice than universities. The post-secondary sector is also composed of Vocational Training Institutions (IEK), which provide two-year programmes, as well as higher schools, which provide post-secondary vocational programmes.<sup>4</sup> But following the inclusion of TEIs into the higher education system, many have come to offer more general, university-like courses. The tensions between different types of institutions origin reflect ambiguity in their respective roles.

*TEI graduates seem to have particularly weak employment prospects*

These poor outcomes are partly because of the relatively low quality of many TEI departments compared to universities, but also because it is the weakest students that enter TEIs. Finally, very few Greek students work during their studies, in comparison with their OECD counterparts,<sup>5</sup> despite evidence that combining work and study has the potential to improve labour market outcomes (OECD, 2010). TEIs seem to be losing their attractiveness as shown by a decline in student numbers (see Figure 7.1).

**Figure 7.1 There is a decrease in the number of students entering TEIs**



Source: KANEP/GSEE (2014), "Annual Report on education – PART B: the national reference context of tertiary education", [www.kanep-gsee.gr](http://www.kanep-gsee.gr).

*There are also issues regarding the research activities in higher education*

In 2016 the Ministry of Education, Research and Religious Affairs (MofERRA) launched a consultation process, aiming at structural reforms on all levels of education. One aspect of this nationwide discussion concerns the so-called Unified Research-Education Area, i.e. the strengthening of research collaboration between universities, TEIs and research centres and the creation of several knowledge and innovation hubs. This is also expected to improve the training of young researchers, lowering costs, while strengthening the links between similarly oriented academic or research units (IEP, 2016).



## Policy considerations

*Higher education systems typically reflect both student preferences and labour market needs*

In demand-driven post-secondary systems, prospective students choose their course of study and public authorities adapt course availability in response. Elsewhere, particularly in more vocational post-secondary institutions, the availability of different types of training is often intended to reflect labour market demand. In practice post-secondary systems usually reflect both student preference and labour market demand. Thus, for example, labour markets and tertiary education are aligned in Australia through a basic reliance upon student demand (i.e. through students forecasting labour market demand, and selecting study courses on that basis). Student demand, in turn, is shaped by a national policy framework that establishes tuition prices for different study courses and that targets some additional places for fields in which there are labour market shortages, and provides labour market information to prospective and enrolled students. Additionally, public authorities exercise regulatory direction within the system (e.g. tertiary institutions cannot close programmes judged to be critical to national needs without government approval) (OECD, 2008).

*The problems faced by the post-secondary sector in Greece are shared widely*

Many countries have sought to establish a post-secondary vocational sector to serve an obvious gap – for those who need some kind of post-secondary education, but not necessarily a three or four years bachelor's programme, and in a vocational setting, ideally with a work-based element. But establishing such a sector can be challenging, as it is often squeezed out by competition from powerful university sectors (OECD, 2014). Greece faces a classical problem, of a set of institutions in the TEIs facing "academic drift", in which those institutions seek to emulate universities, and in doing so often do no more than create an undifferentiated set of second class universities, rather than establishing their own separate mission.

## Policy options

***Policy option 7.1: giving institutions the incentives and the capacity to respond to student preferences and labour market needs, using funding incentives to encourage completion and labour market responsiveness***

*Giving weight to the programme preferences of individual students is important*

Students are normally good judges of their own skills and the characteristics that may make them better suited to one job than another – so following their preferences leads to higher productivity. Institutions in Greece could be given the freedom to adjust their mix of provision to the demands of the students, which would also allow adjusting the local needs. In the current Greek context, following students' preferences more would lead to more labour market responsiveness (see for example OECD, 2008 for analysis of these issues in tertiary education in general, and OECD, 2014 for analysis of these issues in the post-secondary vocational sector).

*Institutional funding could be linked to student completions, particularly in scarce fields of study.*

This would provide the incentives for institutions to provide active support for students at risk of not completing, and encourage an institutional focus on final outcomes. Completion incentives should be balanced with extra funding for disadvantaged students (see Box 7.1).

**Box 7.1. Funding systems that encourage completion**

In **Denmark**, the "taximeter" system was introduced gradually throughout the education system in the early 1990s (OECD, 2010b) and today, 92% of government support to educational institutions is allocated as taximeter grants according to the number of students who successfully pass their exams. Taximeter rates per student are determined through the annual Appropriations Acts, independent of the expenses of individual institutions. A system of grants complements the taximeter, to meet other needs (e.g. to ensure provision across the country, or to support research). Taximeter funding gives institutions an incentive to adjust capacity to fit demand and to pursue efficiencies. These incentives have also triggered changes in behaviour and the quality of the education services has been improved. This system therefore strongly encourages successful and timely completion. The Danish Evaluation Institute found that the system resulted in more focus on student needs and a more open minded attitude towards students. Estonia and Finland have similar systems.

In **Washington State in the United States**, the Student Achievement Initiative (SAI) is a new performance funding system for all community and technical colleges. Institutions are rewarded with additional funds if they record a significant improvement in the number of students moving from remedial to credit courses, completing credits, and successfully completing a degree. Colleges are evaluated relative to prior performance, and institutions are encouraged to measure the impact of their efforts and adjust practices in response. Evaluation of the SAI shows that since its introduction, students have acquired stronger foundation skills.

Source: OECD (2014), *Skills Beyond School: Synthesis Report*, OECD Reviews of Vocational Education and Training, OECD Publishing, Paris, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264214682-en>.

***Policy option 7.2: strengthening post-secondary vocational programmes, and encouraging work-based learning***

*TEIs might return to their original mission of providing labour market skills.*

In some countries, up to one quarter of the adult workforce has a shorter (less than three years full-time) vocational post-secondary qualification (OECD, 2014). This reflects the fact that many professional, technical and managerial jobs require only one or two years of post-secondary career preparation and employment growth in this sector is rapid. Nearly two-thirds of employment growth in the 27 EU countries over 2010-20 is forecast to fall in the "technicians and associate professionals" category – the category (one of nine) most closely linked to post-secondary vocational education and training. CEDEFOP estimates suggest that by 2020 about 60% of jobs in Greece will require medium-level qualifications, often of a vocational nature (CEDEFOP, 2012). It is vital that this post-secondary sector plays a real role in helping young Greek people into the jobs that will exist.

*Work-based learning might be developed as part of post-secondary vocational programmes*

This could be achieved by extending the requirement of a period of compulsory practice in a real labour market environment, as presently used in some areas such as medicine (in hospitals) and education (in schools). This work practice should be validated by the university and the employer and participating students could be rewarded with credits towards the completion of their degree. There is also scope for broadening the role played by placement/career offices at tertiary institutions to provide support and information to students wanting to combine study and work (OECD, 2010).

***Policy option 7.3: balancing strengthening of institutional capacity with enhanced measures of accountability***

*There were two key relevant recommendations of the 2011 review*

They were:

- Strengthening of the governance and management capacity of institutions to permit substantially increased devolution of authority and responsibility from MofERRA.
- Undertaking fundamental reform of financial management and the mechanisms for resource allocation and oversight, and linking funding models to accountability.

***Quality assurance mechanisms play an important role in accountability***

The quality assurance mechanisms in Greece are relatively recent, granting a window of opportunity to ensure that they serve both improvement and accountability purposes. A balance between the two purposes is therefore crucial for the effectiveness of a quality assurance system and to maintain the support of academics. The expert paper prepared by the Greek authorities in support of this OECD study agrees that a steering body is needed to support monitoring and quality assurance, and argues that adequate funding and appropriate staffing is necessary. Another option would be to give such responsibilities and capacities to the ADIP. If such a new body were to be established, its links with similar structures in Greece, as described earlier, would need to be clarified (IEP, 2016).

## NOTES

1. These institutions include the National Education Council (tertiary education subdivision); the National Education Council (higher education branches) (Law 2817/2000); and the Hellenic Quality Assurance and Accreditation Agency (Law 4009/2011). Eight Greek universities have voluntarily participated in the Institutional Evaluation Programme (IEP) of the European University Association (EUA) in the period 1997-2005 (EUA-IEP, 2016).
2. The share of employed 20-34 year-olds having successfully completed ISCED 3-8 one to three years preceding the survey and who are no longer in education or training.
3. The large majority of the HEIs and the Departments were established during the period 1998-2001 on the basis of competitive proposals submitted by the higher education sector, on the basis of the regional and local needs. For mayors and other local officials the location of a university or TEI site is a source of local economic development (see KANEP/GSEE, 2014 and Kavasakalis, 2016).
4. Also at the post-secondary level, upper secondary VET graduates can do one-year apprenticeship programmes (CEDEFOP, 2014).
5. This is also due to the fact that there are no part-time undergraduate studies in Greece. They are all full-time.

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## CONCLUSION

### *A continuum of policies to respond to the Greek education policy challenges*

The policy options presented in this report aim at enhancing student outcomes in schools through the development of more autonomy, teacher professionalism, institutional support with accountability and tools to support the education system as whole, such a better data. It also aims at improving not only the learning outcomes of students, but also their labour market ones, to ease the transition into adult life and the labour market. But in the current context of Greece there may be issues regarding practical implementation of accountability: increased accountability needs to be combined with investment in capacity building of teachers, school leaders and regional/local educational actors. While some aspects of this exercise can be initiated by targeted changes in the legislative/institutional framework of education, others would require significant funding and time to yield the desired results. A first step in creating a culture of accountability could be to increase the pedagogical autonomy of teachers. Teachers that need extra help should be given additional support, in a non-punitive way.

### *Teacher quality is key*

There is extensive evidence that the quality of teachers and teaching is one of the strongest determinants of learning outcomes. Greece faces some of the challenges that are widespread in OECD countries such as initial teacher education, effective induction and continuous professional development, but also some very country-specific challenges. These include the effective and efficient use of teachers, in terms of allocation to schools, some issues associated with budgetary pressures including the large number of adjunct teachers, and the role of the very large shadow education sector in Greece, where many qualified teachers, not employed within public education, currently work.

### *Young Greeks have to be assisted in the transition between schools and adult life*

Young people in Greece leaving education face an extraordinarily difficult labour market, with exceptionally high rates of youth unemployment. While initial education and training cannot solve the underlying problems of a depressed economy, it can at least seek to maximise the job prospects of young people, and help to reduce long term disengagement from the labour market. At the same time, the skills of young people will provide a key foundation for the longer term recovery of the Greek economy. To deliver these outcomes, Greece needs a strong vocational education and training system, and effective university and post-secondary education, responsive to the requirements of the labour market.

### *A second phase of work is proposed to build on this initial report*

The OECD is proposing a second phase of work, to expand this initial study into a full policy review, following the standard methodology of OECD country reviews. A further study would therefore closely examine how these policy options might be implemented in the context of the institutions and practices of the Greek education system and Greek society, taking full account of the

exceptional circumstances and pressures arising from the economic crisis. This analysis would be pursued through extensive dialogue and discussion with key Greek stakeholders and would draw on additional evidence and data. This process would result in some of the policy options identified in the initial report, modified in the light of further discussion and analysis, being translated into practical recommendations, backed by full analysis and discussion of how to sequence reform and overcome practical implementation challenges. At the same time other policy options, which turn out to be less feasible or desirable, might be dropped. This exercise will also include an examination of other key challenges, such as the development of teacher professionalism and the effective use of teacher resources, the way upper secondary education works, and the transition from education to employment.





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## Education Policy in Greece

### A Preliminary Assessment

The future of Greece's well-being will depend on improving educational performance to raise employment and social outcomes. The challenges are significant, as public education expenditure in Greece has declined in recent years and learning outcomes are weak.

To help the Greek government address these challenges, this report proposes a set of policy options that are important to ensure that the preconditions for educational improvement exist in Greece. Among others, they include reviewing present conditions so that schools can have the capacity and the support to deliver high quality education by supporting devolution and professional autonomy; developing school leadership; providing and developing assessment and evaluation capacities; and ensuring that schools are available to all students and facilitating a smooth transition between schools and tertiary education or the labour market. This report will be followed by a more in-depth analysis and review of Greece's education system

Write to us  
Policy Advice and Implementation Division  
Directorate for Education and Skills - OECD  
2, rue André Pascal, 75775 Paris Cedex 16 - FRANCE  
[edu.contact@oecd.org](mailto:edu.contact@oecd.org)

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