

# NATIONAL REPORT

## RESULT 1

INITIATIVES IN PARTNER COUNTRIES  
IN THE FIELD OF UPSKILLING PATHWAYS



## National Report - United Kingdom



### 1. Description of the Upskilling Pathways initiative in the partner country.

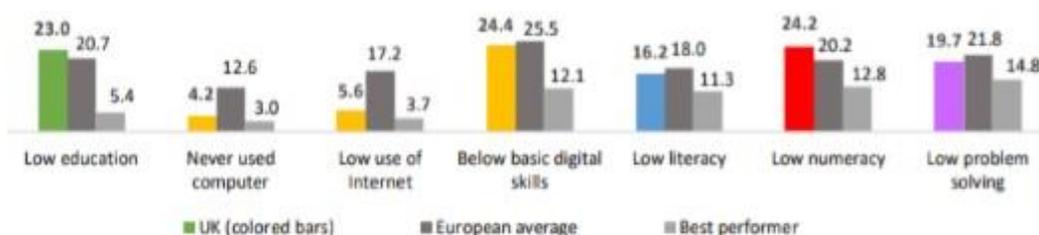
#### - Upskilling Pathways - New opportunities for adults.

Empowering low-skilled adults by promoting their upskilling and/or reskilling is associated with large social and economic incentives. According to the estimates, upskilling the EU-28 adult population, would lead to an average yearly gain of EUR 200 billion in the 10-year period between 2015 and 2025.

In the UK around 1 in 6 adults struggle with reading and writing, and around 1 in 4 adults find maths difficult. In addition, 850,000 people are not proficient in speaking English and one half of adults in England and Northern Ireland is unable to use computers effectively.

Adults with low cognitive skills and/or low education are a vulnerable segment of the population, characterised by lower earnings and employment rates, lower quality of health, wellbeing and life satisfaction, lower civic and social engagement, and higher probability of involvement in criminal activities. However, in the UK the incidence of low skills among adults is lower than those observed on average in the EU28+ countries in all the skills domains considered (apart education and numeracy) - (Fig.1). On the other end, the gap with the best performing countries (i.e., those countries having the lowest shares of low skilled adult populations) is relatively high for what concerns digital skills among those who regularly use Internet.

Figure 1 – Incidence of low skills among adults aged 25-64 by type of skills (%)



Note: European average: unweighted average of EU28+ countries for which data are available. Best performer countries (those with reliable data) with the lowest share of low-skilled adult population aged 25-64. Best performer: Low education (LT), Never used computer (NL), Low use of Internet (FI), Below basic digital skills (LU), Low literacy (FI), Low numeracy (CZ), Low problem solving in technology-rich environments (NO)

Regarding upskilling and reskilling, in the UK the share of adult population with potential for upskilling and reskilling is estimated to range between 38.5% and 46.8% of its total adult population, that is to say from 14 to 15.9 million adults, depending on the measure of digital competences considered.

Among the unemployed, the group most at risk of low skills are those aged 35-54: when compared to the country and EU 28+ averages they present a higher risk in all the skill dimensions considered (Tab.1). Moreover, also adults aged 25-34 show a high risk of low skills in numeracy when compared to the risk registered on average in the country and at EU 28+ level.

Table 1- Unemployed adults: absolute risk of being low skilled by age and type of skill, UK

Age	Education	Digital skills	Literacy	Numeracy
35-54	31,6	44,4	30,5	44,6
25-34	28,2	u	25,8	48,4
55-64	31,5	u	u	30,2
Total pop 25-64: Country average	23,0	30,0	16,2	24,2
Total pop 25-64: European average	23,2	43,0	20,8	24,3

Note: European weighted average: Education (EU28+); Digital skills (EU28, NO); Literacy and Numeracy (AT, BE, CY, CZ, DE, DK, EE, EL, ES, FI, FR, IE, IT, LT, NL, NO, PL, SE, SI, SK, UK). u: unreliable data.

In the UK low skills are particularly high among unemployed and inactive people. Unemployed adults aged 35-54 and inactive adults aged 35-54 and 55-64 report on average the highest share of low skills in all domains considered: education, digital skills (i.e. low use of Internet or below basic digital skills), literacy and numeracy.

Data shows that there is a higher risk of low skills among foreign born adults. The breakdown by employment status shows that only among foreign born people out of the labour force the risk of having a low educational attainment level is higher than the average level registered in the country (40% higher).

Relative risk within the country regarding women - in the UK, women account for approximately 50 % of the adult population with low education, low digital skills and low literacy, and for 57% of the population with low numeracy. Among adult women, the absolute risk of low skills is higher for digital skills (41%) as compared to the other skill dimension considered. However, when compared to the average risk (relative risk of low skills) registered by adults in the country, women show a higher risk of having low numeracy (13% higher).

Upskilling Pathways in the UK is composed of: Assessing skills, Tailored learning offer, Validation and recognition.

The strategy to improve skills in the United Kingdom is implemented, among others, by:

- The European Social Fund, which is playing a key role in the implementation of the Upskilling Pathways,
- Erasmus+ programme co-finances cooperation projects in the adult learning sector, aimed at improving and extending the supply of high-quality learning opportunities, and developing mechanisms to monitor the effectiveness of adult learning policies. These projects support the design of and access to Upskilling Pathways, place a specific emphasis on basic skills provision and increased participation in learning for adults,
- The European Regional Development Fund also supports investments in education infrastructure, including for vocational education and training and adult learning
- HM Government services, Independent training providers, Private business sector

#### - Promoting the benefits of upskilling and reskilling

The upskilling and reskilling strategy provides many benefits globally and locally, for the countries, regions and individuals. It can also be an important tool for preventing economic stagnation and economic recession as well as ensuring progress and innovation in countries.

Promoting the benefits of upskilling and reskilling is a highly important issue in the UK. As mentioned earlier, UK faces progressive enterprise and production automation. Many people do not have the necessary qualifications to challenge the future and are at risk of unemployment without upskilling or reskilling. Therefore, Government and business need to prioritise upskilling and reskilling to ensure that the benefits of automation are shared fairly across society. It is extremely important to promote upskilling and reskilling among employers, employees, public and private entities, and the whole society. It is also important to provide a holistic approach in implementing this strategy. To this end, public and private institutions have been involved. This happens, among others, by adapting the educational offer to the needs of the labor market but also through the operation of career counseling points.

## 1. Key Competences for Lifelong Learning

There UK concept of a citizens' curriculum is learning which is locally-led, developed with the active participation of learners, and interlinks the life skills of language, literacy and numeracy with health, financial, digital and civic capabilities. The Citizens' Curriculum is an innovative, holistic approach to ensure everyone has the English, maths, digital, civic, health and financial capabilities they need. This approach taps into what motivates adults to learn, through giving learners a voice in co-designing curriculum content and careful contextualization, ensuring that more people are learning skills which are relevant to their lives and their work. UK want cities and local areas to commission a Citizens' Curriculum approach as the Adult Education Budget is devolved and to work with providers and to design provision that embeds this approach.

Work on further development of a Citizens' Curriculum includes:

- Improving Language, Improving Lives: A Citizens' Curriculum for ESOL Learners in Prisons, in partnership with the Bell Foundation and De Montfort University
- Development of resources to support adult learning providers, practitioners and commissioners to adopt the Citizens' Curriculum

Citizens' Curriculum framework: Literacy Capability, Numeracy Capability, Civic Capability, Digital Capability, Health Capability, Financial Capability.

## 2. Shared responsibility and vision across relevant stakeholders - key ingredient - successful integrated career support to adults.

It's imperative that businesses, trade organisations and the government understand the importance of collaboration in responding to the rapid evolution of technology and automation. Each institution has its own role to play in shaping the workforce of the future, but none will be successful if they operate in isolation. Industry bodies, along with education establishments, also have to step up to the mark when it comes to skilling the next generation of workers. There needs to be a combined effort to provide industry-specific guidance on the skills that will be in most demand, so workers can decide on the options that are right for them. The education system needs to be fit for purpose. This will also involve reorganising systems of study and training, so they are more receptive to learning throughout life and funded accordingly. The government as a whole can play a direct role through upskilling its own workforce, and can also launch a national 'Upskilling UK' programme. Main stakeholders that play role in upskilling and reskilling strategy:

- The Ministry of Education, National Careers Service, Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA)
- The Erasmus+ UK National Agency (partnership between the British Council and Ecorys)
- Learning and Work Institute - an independent policy, research and development organisation dedicated to lifelong learning, full employment and inclusion
- Independent recruitment agencies, Regional Recruitment Services, Training providers
- Upskilling through on-the-job training /private entities, internal experts

## 3. Your proposition

With an ageing workforce and a potential squeeze on migration in future years, the need to better support in-work progression is emerging as a key challenge for the future. Technological change presents complex problems that will require decision makers - educators; national, regional, and local government administrators; and business leaders - to come together. What could be done?

- Increased developing individual skills and capabilities
- Empowering and motivate communities to participate in lifelong training
- Encouraging participation in society, culture and the arts. Through volunteering, learning how to take on responsibilities in neighbourhoods and in local voluntary and charity organisations, many individuals contribute to the richness of the quality of life for everyone. Building social capital, skills, knowledge and individual and community identity

- Investment in adult learning should be increased
- Better identification of low skilled groups and their needs, better outreach, guidance and support
- Policies targeting specific adult population groups to improve their basic skill levels (e.g. within Apprenticeships, study programmes)
- Additional programmes to target specific groups, where poor basic skills identified (e.g. migrants, women, prisoners)
- Establish links between the NHS and adult learning providers to maximise the impact of learning on health and well-being
- Increased awareness of Upskilling Pathways and benefits of adult learning and upskilling
- Better collaboration between institutions, schools and employers
- Formal, non-formal, and informal learning are part of the same whole. Policy should therefore allow for greater flexibility in how providers and employers design learning.

#### - 4. Online courses

There is a fairly wide range of online courses in the Great Britain. People can find the most affordable and flexible British degrees and diplomas online with flexible payment plans in different colleges and universities. There is also a vast offer of online courses provided by universities, public and private organisations, specializing in running courses. Some of them are paid, some are for free. People can learn online with a UK university, prepare to study and live in the UK or preparing for work. It makes it easier for people to get a master's degree while working. But people don't necessarily have to get a Bachelor, Master or PhD degree. People may want to improve their qualifications or gain a new profession. Short courses ensure the occupation of the mind and help people acquire various qualifications, as well as increase career opportunities.

It is worth mentioning courses on how to write effective cover letters and CVs, prepare for interviews, and devise a career plan, in addition to finding and applying for jobs that match your skills and experience. Those are very useful for unemployed or reskilling people.

Online courses are becoming more and more popular nowadays, especially after lockdown phase due to Covid-19 crisis.

Enso Group is planning to prepare a blended course in one of our future projects.

#### Useful Links:

Online courses provided by British Council: <https://study-uk.britishcouncil.org/find/study-options/free-online-courses>

Browser gathering the UK's courses providers, where it is possible to compare Courses from education providers across the UK: <https://www.coursesonline.co.uk/>

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[https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/files/3081\\_en.pdf](https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/files/3081_en.pdf)

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- European Pillar of Social Rights [https://ec.europa.eu/commission/sites/beta-political/files/socialsummit-european-pillar-social-rights-booklet\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/commission/sites/beta-political/files/socialsummit-european-pillar-social-rights-booklet_en.pdf)

## National Report – Poland



### 1. Description of the Upskilling Pathways initiative in the partner country.

Upskilling Pathways is part of the 'New Skills Agenda for Europe' and is seen as an important initiative to help achieve one of the key principles of the European Pillar of Social Rights: that everyone has the right to quality and inclusive education, training and life-long learning. The relationship between basic skills provision and vocational education is important.

#### Upskilling Pathways - New opportunities for adults

The Recommendation "Upskilling Pathways: new opportunities for adults" aims to help adults acquire a minimum level of literacy, numeracy and digital skills and/or acquire a broader set of skills by progressing towards a higher qualification (depending on national contexts) through 'an upskilling pathway'.

An 'upskilling pathway' is a progression through three steps, along with outreach, guidance and support measures:

- a skills assessment to identify existing skills and any needs for upskilling;
- a tailored learning offer of education and training meeting the needs identified by the skills assessment;
- validation and recognition of the newly acquired skills, which may be the first step towards a new qualification.

#### European 'Upskilling Pathways' strategy, looked at from an Poland perspective.

COUNTRY FACTSHEET (POLAND)

	% of lowskilled adults	Adult participation in education and training rate		Participation in employment rate		PIAAC results (out of 500)	
		Overall	Low-skilled adults	Overall	Low-skilled adults	Lit	Num
<b>Country</b>	8.7%	3.7%	0.9%	69.3%	40.7%	266.9	259.8
<b>EU average</b>	23%	10.8%	4.2%	71%	54.3%	268.8	266.5

Sources: Eurostat; OECD PIAAC

Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC)

Poland has a notably low share of low-skilled adults, which account for only 8.7% of the population. However, the employment rate of low-skilled adults in Poland is significantly below the EU average (40.7% against 54.3%). Similarly, participation in education and training amongst low-skilled adults is comparatively very low (0.9% compared to 4.2% across all EU Member States). Poland's literacy score in the OECD's survey of adult skills was only slightly below the average for the twenty EU Member States but their numeracy score was notably lower (259.8 compared to the EU average of 266.5).

## Promoting the benefits of upskilling and reskilling

The Upskilling Pathways is an initiative at European level which aims to help adults acquire a minimum level of literacy, numeracy and digital skills and/or acquire a broader set of skills by progressing towards an upper secondary qualification or equivalent (level 3 or 4 in the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) depending on national circumstances).

### KEY TRENDS OVER THE LAST 10 YEARS

Over the last 10 years Poland has made significant progress in the metrics.

There was:

- **A steady decline in the share of low-skilled adults.** The share of low-qualified adults in Poland has been on a steady downward trend over the last decade, declining from 15.2% in 2005 to 8.7% in 2016. This matches a broader downward trend across the EU Member States.
- **A marginal increase in participation in education and training.** Overall, the share of low-skilled adults participating in education and training is on an upward trend, rising marginally from 0.6% in 2005 to 0.9% in 2016. However, the rate fluctuated during this period and remains low in comparison to the EU average.
- **A gradual increase in employment among low-skilled adults.** The employment rate of low-skilled adults has been gradually increasing over the same period, rising from 37.3% in 2005 to 40.7% in 2016. This trend is in the context of a marginal fall for the EU-28 average. It should also be noted that low qualified adults in Poland must compete in the labour market against a group of workers with better qualifications which is larger than in the EU on average.

European Association for the Education of Adults (EAEA) has very much welcomed Upskilling Pathways as it is an ambitious basic skills strategy that would enable many of the adults in Europe with low basic skills to have their skills assessed, receive tailored learning provision and have their learning outcomes validated. One year after the adoption of the Upskilling Pathways, the European Pillar of Social Rights presented as its first principle 'Education, Training and Lifelong Learning': Everyone has the right to quality and inclusive education, training and life-long learning in order to maintain and acquire skills that enable them to participate fully in society and manage successfully transitions in the labour market

## 2.Key Competences for Lifelong Learning

Vocational Lifelong learning

Polish VET system makes possible for each individual to benefit from training as part of a basic school, or University education or as part of continuing vocation training for young people or adults already active in the labor market. The initial VET is manager by ministries, mainly the Ministry of national education.

The approach is to promote key competences by:

- Providing high-quality education, training and lifelong learning for all
- Supporting educational staff in implementing competence-based teaching and learning approaches
- Encouraging a variety of learning approaches and contexts for continued learning
- Exploring approaches to assess and validate key competences.

The Personal, Social and Learning to Learn competence can be broadly defined as the ability to reflect upon oneself, effectively manage time and information, work with others in a constructive way, remain resilient and manage one's own learning and career.

Competences for 2030 are viewed as relational (acting for a purpose, respecting others), integrated (for long-term vision, with multiple solutions to big problems) and holistic (helping develop as a whole person) (OECD, 2019a). In particular, three transformative competences empower learners as change agents for individual and societal well-being: creating new value, reconciling tensions and dilemmas, and taking responsibility (OECD, 2019b). Learning to learn and higher-order thinking, socio-emotional skills and creativity are viewed as key for system thinking: learning to think and act in an integrated way, considering interconnections between contradictory ideas (OECD, 2019a).

The OECD 2030 Learning Compass views competences as developed through learning cycles of anticipation (of consequences and perspectives), action and reflection (meaning making and deeper understanding of experience) (OECD, 2019c). They are drivers for agency and co-agency, at the core of education and lifelong learning (OECD, 2019d).

European Agenda for Adult Learning - part of ET2020

- Making lifelong learning and mobility a reality
- Improving the quality and efficiency of education and training
- Promoting equity, social cohesion, and active citizenship through adult learning
- Enhancing creativity and innovation of adults and their learning environments
- Improving the knowledge base on adult learning and monitor the sector.

### **3. Shared responsibility and vision across relevant stakeholders - key ingredient - successful integrated career support to adults.**

The Council Recommendation provides a common European reference framework on key competences for policymakers, education and training providers, social partners and learners themselves. It also presents successful ways to promote competence development through innovative learning approaches, assessment methods and support for educational staff.

The LifEComp framework, on the Personal, Social and Learning to Learn Key Competence.

This is one of the Key Competences for Lifelong Learning whose profile was changed and broadened (2018).

Tailored learning

The Folk schools network in Poland, which provides adult learning provision in mostly rural areas. The courses delivered cover four main areas: personal development; arts and craftsmanship; health and ecology; and ICT. (ECVET magazine n°36 / November 2019)

- The “qualifications in the workplace” programme enables unemployed people who are lacking qualifications and skills to complete training programmes at training facilities and to gain practical experience in training firms.

- The “national qualification programme for those in employment” supports low-qualified and/or older people in employment who want to complete further training and qualifications.

- Support structures and measures

Guidance and counselling services are offered free of charge at centres across Poland.

- Job market policy – programmes with advice and financial support The Public Employment Service provides advice, career guidance, vocational education and adult education.

Developing key competences for all is at the heart of the European Education Area where everyone should have access to high quality education, training and lifelong learning.

The Recommendation urges Member States to ensure that everybody develops key competences throughout life by using variety of learning approaches and environments, supporting their teachers and trainers and assessing and validating key competences.

ESF funds most provision for low-skilled adults. This is mainly delivered through the Human Capital OP and new Knowledge, Education, Development OP (2014-2020). They have contributed to boosting different forms of non-formal and informal learning, as well as continuing educational courses for various groups of participants developed as part of projects carried out under those programmes.

Among various projects that address adults in Poland, the following projects, however mainly at regional level, can serve as examples:

- An ESF project 'Lighthouse Keepers of Digital Poland' (Latarnicy Polski Cyfrowej) that provides digital education for the 50+ generation with low levels of digital literacy skills;
- “Vocational education of low-skilled adults” project (2016-2018), which provides training on carpenter, tailor, locksmith and assistant to disabled person for persons aged 25-64 with low qualifications (with a maximum ISCED 3 level of education);

- "Certified Language and Computer Training as a chance for change among residents!" project (2017-2018). The project aimed at improving the qualifications and competencies of lowskilled adults (over 25, with max. secondary education) in the field of foreign languages and ICT.

The European Commission works with EU Member States to support and reinforce the development of key competences and basic skills for all, from an early age and throughout life. Key competences include knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed by all for personal fulfilment and development, employability, social inclusion and active citizenship.

Adult education can be an effective way of including people in society – especially, when it reaches disadvantaged adults who are not highly qualified and closes skill gaps, thereby promoting equal opportunities.

### **The fourth edition of European Vocational Skills Week - 14-18 October 2019 in Helsinki, Finland**



European Vocational Skills Week with a special focus on fostering continuous learning and promoting future-oriented learning, which are the education and training priorities.  
European Vocational Skills Week – 9-13 November 2020

The fifth edition of the European Vocational Skills Week, as announced by the Commissioner Ms.Marianne Thyssen, will take place from 9-13 November 2020 in Berlin (Germany).

The focus of the 2020 will be on "Excellence of VET and education in the digital times".

The European Vocational Skills Week is an annual event during which local, regional or national organisations showcase the very best of Vocational Education and Training (VET) – a sector capable of empowering all people with the skills they need for a fulfilling personal and professional life.

The initiative was created in 2016 by the European Commission, after the call from the Directors General of Vocational Training in the "Riga conclusions" on VET to present the visible achievements of European cooperation in VET (the so-called Copenhagen process). The European Parliament has also asked the Commission to strengthen its work on raising awareness of the potential and benefits of quality VET, as well as on learner mobility.

## National Report - Italy



The specific Italian situation regarding the adult population skills, outlines a rather critical situation: the National Report on Adult Skills showed that Italy ranks in fourth last position in the international "ranking" as far as concerns literacy and in fifth last position in numeracy: adults (16-65 years old) considered low skilled in literacy are the 27.7%, while in numeracy they are 33.7%. The picture that emerges from PIAAC (Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies) data, does not allow to identify a homogeneous group of adults with low levels of competence and, therefore, to provide simple and easily-implemented indications to the policy makers. The low skilled are present in a pervasive way, albeit in different percentages, in the various population subgroups: they have a higher incidence among the over 55 but they are widely present also among young people. In Italy there are about 11 million low skilled in literacy: 52.6% of cases are male and 47.4% female.

The people most at risk are: unemployed, retired people and those who carry out unpaid domestic and care activities, employed people who work at low added value, people from disadvantaged socio-cultural backgrounds, migrants, young people who leave early educational pathways, NEETs.

This denotes the need for intervention with respect to the Upskilling Pathways guidelines.

Their implementation, in Italy, is the task of all institutions and socio-economic actors who, in various capacities and with different levels of responsibility, have their own role in raising the level of adult skills. The very transversal nature of the Upskilling pathways Recommendation requires multi-actor and multi-level governance that includes an intricate and articulated plurality of interlocutors.

The Objective of the Recommendation on "Paths to improve the level of skills: new opportunities for adults" (Upskilling pathways) of 19/12/2016, to guarantee to low skilled adults access to improvement of their level of skills and possibility to acquire: a minimum level of alphabetical, mathematical and digital skills and / or key skills for the achievement of an EQF 3 or 4 qualification. It also invites the Member States to identify the recipients for the provision of skills improvement courses according to national circumstances and available resources.

Three intervention phases are identified:

1. assessment of skills
2. tailored and flexible training offer
3. validation and recognition:

Complementary to the 3 different phases of intervention, there are transversal actions, such as: coordination of the main stakeholders, orientation, awareness and support measures (including training of trainers), monitoring and evaluation.

In its general implementation, Italy, although it has not yet developed a specific policy or governance sites specifically dedicated to "Upskilling Pathways", fulfills the 3 different stages of implementation of the Recommendation ("Three steps strategy") thanks to an existing regulatory framework with respect to which further integrative elements are being introduced for full implementation.

This regulatory framework accompanies and supports the definition of intervention strategies, guides the design of organizational and instrumental devices, defines roles and responsibilities by establishing operating margins, rules and methods of interaction between the various institutional and socio-economic stakeholders.

In particular, the main themes of the Recommendation are widely reflected in the legislative and planning action on the assessment of skills, flexibility and customization of the training offer, and certification and validation of learning.

Actions taken in Italy:

Dissemination and information about the contents of the Recommendation and the possible implementation at national level:

-Inapp (National Institute for the Analysis of Public Policies) has invested in the dissemination of the contents of the Recommendation, inserting its description and raising awareness among all stakeholders during numerous conferences and seminars on the need to increase and capitalize investments on shares related to the three-step strategy.

- An Italian delegation made up of representatives of the main stakeholders (MLPS, MIUR, Regions, Anpal, Inapp, social partners, VET providers), participated in a peer learning activity with 6 other Member States, organized by the European Commission (Bucharest, November 2017 and Rome, April 2018).

- Anpal (National Agency for Active Labor Policies) informed the stakeholders present in the Active Labor Policies Committee (14/2/2018) and in the Education Group (Thematic Objective 10) of the Human Resources Subcommittee of the 2014-2020 Partnership Agreement of the Funds Structural (15/3/2018).

Activities related to the preparation of the National Plan:

the Ministry of Labor has entrusted the task of preparing a draft Plan to the National Coordinator of the European Agenda for Adult Learning, Claudio Vitali of Inapp, Coordinator jointly appointed by the Ministries of Labor and Education. A proposal for an index of the Plan was therefore sent to the Prime Minister's Office, where the Lifelong Learning Table is established. The Ministry of Labor, again through the Coordinator of the Adult Learning Agenda, has also prepared a draft of the National Plan for the parts of competence (MLPS-Anpal), having acquired an informal agreement in principle by the Regions and the MIUR (Ministry of Education, University and Research) for the drafting of the section of their competence. Attention to the issues of the Recommendation are therefore taken into consideration in the context of the work of the Lifelong Learning Table.

Stakeholder map:

The lifelong learning perspective implies a real paradigm shift, which is based on four pillars and principles: the first is centering on the subject in learning, the second concerns the assumption of the perspective of continuous learning (lifelong learning), the third concerns the expansion of the locations and learning modalities from formal to non-formal and informal (lifewide learning), the fourth refers to the transparency and comparability of learning at European level, in order to facilitate mobility (for work and for learning), valorising human capital and investment in education and training also in a European key. The recognition of the right to lifelong learning implies, in practice, its collectability by each person and, therefore, the need to prefigure integrated "taking charge" paths in which the citizen can access services that guide him, they accompany him in the explanation of the training needs, present him with the offers of the territory in terms of learning paths, job placement or start to self-employment, evaluate the skills acquired in any learning context and make them expendable: all this can happen more effectively within a shared and territorially integrated system of education, training and work services which allows the identification, validation and recognition of the cultural and professional heritage accumulated in one's personal, training and professional history. This reversal of perspective has significant implications in terms of the involvement of subjects and services.

The territorial networks for lifelong learning are recognized as the organizational method through which the integrated system of lifelong learning is established, with particular attention to language and digital skills, recognition of credits and certification, use of lifelong guidance services.

These territorial networks include:

- Local Authorities, in particular with information and reception services that offer support for measures to broaden access to lifelong learning;

- Employment centers and / or centers for work services accredited by the Regions, which contribute to developing reception and orientation services;
- Owners holders of the identification, validation and certification of skills
- the set of public and private education, training and work services active in the area;
- the CPIA (Provincial Centers for Adult Education), as the Territorial Service Network of the education system
- universities that contribute to the creation of networks through the inclusion of lifelong learning in their institutional strategies;
- national, European and international partnerships to support people mobility and social and economic development;
- businesses, through employers' and trade union representatives;
- the Chambers of Commerce, Industry, Crafts and Agriculture in the provision of services intended to promote the growth of the business system and of the territory which include training, learning and enhancement of the professional experience acquired by people;
- the Observatory on internal migration within the national territory and the territorial structures of public research authorities;
- Realities that pursue educational and training purposes, including voluntary work, national civil service and private social, playing a specific and non-replaceable role, which integrates the role of formal, public and private offer.

#### Conclusion

Currently, Italy does not appear to have - as it happens in other large EU states - a National Plan aimed at overcoming functional illiteracy, (instead, with respect to the objectives of raising the educational levels of the population, an important signal in the trend to increase investment in education). Structured planning certainly requires an intensification of efforts in finding the best possible forms of dialogue between the different actors.

Efficient governance can oversee not only the implementation of policies (and its progressive adaptation to new scenarios), but also the operationalization of the different actors.

#### Possible interventions:

- increase the visibility of those experiences that have shown significant intervention skills, even if developed on limited territories and on very specific fragile targets.
- resorting massively to awareness campaigns, using role models and witnesses and carefully studying their languages to offer a more understandable and "reassuring" narrative of the services offered;
- map the resources available on the territories, paying particular attention to places of aggregation so far excluded from the (few) existing territorial service networks and supporting their attractive role with financial resources and making available tasks forces of specialized operators (ASL, post offices, public transport terminals, food markets, etc.).

In parallel, and with expectations of more medium-long term results, system actions aimed at:

- enhance the skills of operators of the Employment Services, social services, school managers and CPIA teachers, volunteers, citizens' associations, managers of libraries and museums;
- launch massive awareness campaigns through conventional media (TV, radio, newspapers and periodicals, road signs) and social networks;
- establish educational and training prizes and awards.

Strengthening the image and credibility of the "adult education" lever, promoting not only the typical purposes, (acquisition of qualifications, titles, certifications, and personal growth and development), but also those linked to employability objectives, implies the drastic reduction of educational and training responses that are not adequate for the needs of learners.

#### Sources:

<https://epale.ec.europa.eu/it/blog/new-community-practice-upskilling-pathways>

<https://www.lavoro.gov.it/temi-e-priorita/orientamento-e-formazione/focus->

<on/Formazione/Documents/Italian-Report-on-upskilling-Pathways-New-Version-04102018.pdf>

<https://www.imat2006.it/blog/news/cnel-lifelong-learning-risposta-alla-fragilita-del-capitale-umano/>

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## National Report - Portugal

### Partner – Escola Profissional de Tomar

#### DESCRIPTION / CONTEXTUALIZATION

This report refers to stage one on information gathering / sharing about Portugal in the scope of the above mentioned project.

Our initial plan, that previewed 5 meetings / seminars with trainers and other target groups had to be redone, due to the COVID-19's worldwide confirmed pandemic, by the World Health Organization, which in the Portuguese case brought about the declaration, by the Portuguese Government, following the official proposal from the President of the Republic, of National State of Emergency, the second most serious one. This declaration had immediate effects on the countries' life, namely in a mandatory social confinement that led to the suspension of all non-essential, life supporting activities.

In December 2019, we were still able to carry out a first local event, already documented. This first activity was designed to present the project, and also was an opportunity to gather points of view, suggestions and information on what concerns Upskilling Pathways for the adult and less skilled population. This target group was composed by trainers, experts, tutors and teachers.

Other planned activities, as above stated, could not be put into practice as originally planned, but were redesigned to meet our objectives – information gathering and simultaneously, dissemination. Being so, contacts were readied in order to establish a symbiotic ecosystem of information sharing within the Portuguese Vocational Training area.

Furthermore, all the preparation and arrangements for the second TPM to be held in Tomar, home city of Escola Profissional de Tomar (EPT), were carried out, but because of the pandemic, it was not implemented in the way it was originally planned, with the physical coming of all project partners and subsequent activities; thus, an online meeting was scheduled, and it was held on May, 6th, using the “Zoom” videoconferencing tool.

#### INITIATIVES IN THE AREA OF ADULT QUALIFICATION PATHWAYS IN PORTUGAL

The first steps in supporting Education and Training were taken in the 1930s to deal with unemployment resulting from the economic crisis that was taking place. In the form in which it exists today, its origin dates back to 1962 and since then it had several denominations until, in 1979, it took the name **Institute of Employment and Professional Training (IEFP)**, which is a public service of national employment, with the mission promote job creation and quality and fight unemployment, through the implementation of active employment policies, namely vocational training. The IEFP comprises, at national level, 29 Employment and Vocational Training Centres; 23 Employment Centres; a Professional Training and Rehabilitation Centre, and also has the support of a network of Professional Training Centres with Participated Management.

Through various initiatives, efforts have been made to find pathways to improve qualifications. Thus, the **Qualifica Program** was created, a program aimed at the qualification of adults, with the objective of improving the levels of education and training of adults, contributing to the improvement of the qualification levels of the population and the improvement of the employability of individuals.

This program is put into practice at the **Qualifica Centres**, which are specialized in adult qualification, dedicated to information, counselling and referrals for education and vocational training offers for adults aged 18 years and over, who are looking for a qualification.

The Qualifica Passport is the issued (digital) instrument of guidance and individual registration of qualifications and competences, which allows not only to register the qualifications obtained by the adult throughout his life, but also to simulate possible qualification paths and to organize the training route, qualification carried out or to be carried out, depending on the qualifications that the individual may obtain and the educational and professional progression that he / she may achieve, identifying the missing competences, in order to enable the construction of training trajectories more adequate to the needs of each individual, between the different possible trajectories. This system incorporates the principles of the European Credit System for Vocational Education and Training (ECVET), favouring mobility in the European space.

Other measures implemented were operated in

**Learning/Vocational courses** that allow obtaining school and professional certification, privileging the insertion in the job market, enhanced by a strong component of training carried out in the context of the company, and the pursuit of higher education studies. The **Escola Profissional de Tomar** is an institution that provides this type of training.

In this context, the **Escola Profissional de Tomar**, in addition to promoting Initial Training and Ongoing Training, is also currently part of the IEFP Database for External Trainers.

**Skills Training Programs** (FCB) aim at the acquisition, by adults, of basic skills in reading, writing, calculating and using information and communication technologies - ICTs.

**Adult Education and Training Courses** (EFA) are an education and training offering for adults who want to raise their qualifications. An EFA School course allows you to complete the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> cycles of basic education or secondary education; an EFA Dual Certification course allows you to acquire a school qualification and professional certification. A Professional EFA applies to adults already holding the 3<sup>rd</sup> cycle of basic education or secondary education who wish to obtain a double certification.

**Modular Training** (FM), integrated in the scope of ongoing, continuous training of assets, is aimed at adults without the completion of basic or secondary education or without the appropriate professional qualification who wish to acquire school and / or professional skills with a view to (re)insertion or progression in the labour market.

The **Escola Profissional de Tomar** also provides Ongoing Training in this area.

**Competence Recognition, Validation and Certification Processes** (RVCC) are developed at Qualifica Centers, and consist of the recognition of school and professional competences acquired by adults, throughout their lives, with a view to their certification. The Schooling RVCC aims to improve school certification levels for adults who do not have a basic or secondary level of education. This process allows recognizing, validating and certifying the knowledge and skills resulting from the experience acquired in non-formal and informal contexts throughout your life. The certification obtained through this system is the same as that awarded in other ways and allows the continuation of studies.

Adults who are not qualified in their professional area can also enter a Professional RVCC process. This system makes it possible to recognize, validate and certify professional knowledge and skills resulting from experience acquired in different contexts throughout life. The certification obtained through this system allows not only personal, social and professional valorisation, but also the continuation for subsequent training courses.

**Courses of Portuguese for speakers of other languages (PFOL)** aim to meet the requirement of knowledge of the Portuguese language for the acquisition of Portuguese nationality, for granting a permanent residence permit, and for long-term residence status. There are two levels of PFOL, levels A1, A2 (basic level) and B1, B2 (independent level), in accordance to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages. To acquire Portuguese nationality, the adult must demonstrate knowledge of the A2 level in Portuguese language, by taking a Portuguese Language test.

**Technological Specialization Courses (CET)** are non-higher post-secondary training courses that prepare for a scientific or technological specialization in a given training area.



Due to the present social and health situation, all of these initiatives - face-to-face, involving personal interaction, are suspended; even so, the entire Portuguese educational system has reinvented itself, and the Directorate-General for Education (DGE), in collaboration with the National Agency for Qualification and Vocational Education (ANQEP), has invested in the new at-distance communication technologies and e-learning, through actions and measures such as #EstudoEmCasa (<https://estudoemcasa.dge.mec.pt/>), Distance Learning (E@D), creation of a School Support website (<http://apoioescolas.dge.mec.pt>), supported by internet classes, the return of lessons on television, daily quizzes, remotely tutored tasks, video lessons, email, sms, chat groups, communities on Youtube, Webinars. It is a whole torrent of resources, means, tools and applications that allow us to adapt to this new unforeseen situation.

Within the scope of the European Network for Focus on Upskilling Pathways Project, the **Escola Profissional de Tomar** established contacts with professionals from the Tomar Employment Centre, IEFP and Qualifica Centres in order to make the Project known - objectives and expected results - and simultaneously gather knowledge, suggestions and information on techniques and methods of action. Based on what was referred to in the above introduction, such scheduled contacts were not in person; however, the possibility of reactivating them is being carefully thought-out, once the current State of Emergency is overcome, and we may finally return to a “new normality”, proceeding with a full implementation of the Project.

## National Report – Greece



### 1. Upskilling pathways in Greece

In Greece, the assessment of basic skills is addressed as part of EU-funded EaSI project to support Upskilling Pathways and through the work of the National Coordinator for adult learning<sup>1</sup>. There are 3 steps in this process:

#### Step 1 – Skills assessment

Since 2016, EOPPEP - the National Organisation for the Certification of Qualifications and Vocational Guidance, in cooperation with the European Commission, has been connecting the national register to the [European classification of skills, competences, qualifications and occupations \(ESCO\)](#)<sup>2</sup>. The Greek Qualifications Register (proson.gr) comprises of about 680 qualifications classified in the Hellenic qualifications framework (HQF), which is referenced to the EQF. Their description is based on a unified description standard suggested by the European Commission. The register is a web application, progressively developed and enriched since then, which is available to the public for accessing information and to authorised users for updating information about qualifications. This enables adults to identify their existing skills and any needs for upskilling.

#### Step 2 – Tailored learning offer

EOPPEP along with services provided by other social partners give guidance to adults for educational programs for upskilling or reskilling. Guidance counselors certified by EOPPEP, who belong either to the public or the private sector, are continuously trained at a yearly basis. Through the **e-portfolio** platform, they create individual action plans for adults and guide them via the Greek National Database of educational opportunities “Ploigos” to identify opportunities suitable for their needs

Furthermore, the Manpower Employment Organisation (OAED) which is the Greek Public Employment Service (PES) provides services to unemployed individuals regarding their promotion to the labour market. In this context, unemployed individuals can visit OAED to develop their individual action plan, assisted by employment counsellors. The latter record the individual’s profile (studies, previous work experience etc.) and taking into consideration the individual’s career aspirations, then design the individual action plan towards employment which may include further training to cope with market’s needs.

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<sup>1</sup> European Commission (2019), Council Recommendation on Upskilling Pathways: New Opportunities for Adults Taking stock of implementation measures, Commission staff working document

<sup>2</sup>Cedefop-Refernet, Greece: new qualifications register

Support services are also provided in the framework of several ESF funded labour market integration programs managed by the Ministry of Labour and Social Security and Welfare. The support services are addressed to special target groups as young people, unemployed, employers, employees, social vulnerable groups and delivered as part of further training programs (training vouchers).

### **Step 3- Validation and recognition**

EOPPEP developed the regulatory framework for the certification of qualifications, i.e. the learning outcomes of non-formal education and informal learning, in response to labour market needs and priorities and in liaison with the accreditation of inputs, i.e. providers, trainers, occupational profiles and curricula standards<sup>3</sup>. Regarding Initial Vocational Training, EOPPEP is responsible for the certification exam of students having completed training at Initial Vocational Training Institutions (SEK Level 3 and IEK-Level 5). Regarding Continuing Vocational Training, EOPPEP is responsible for the certification exam of students having completed training at Lifelong Learning Centres (KDBM).

### **Promoting the benefits of upskilling and reskilling**

Since 2015, Greece has taken measures to develop and implement apprenticeship, strengthen quality assurance, and set up a skills forecasting system to guide the development of VET provision. Steps have been taken to improve access for all to VET and qualifications, particularly through permeability measures.

Progress has also been made in further developing the Hellenic qualifications framework and the validation system. Initiatives have been undertaken to support the initial and continuing training of VET school teachers and in-company trainers and mentors. The actions carried out show that the main lines of the Riga conclusions and the country's policy priorities for 2016-20 are being addressed. A major issue through is connected to the attractiveness of vocational education.

According to Paidousi (2016)<sup>4</sup>, attractiveness of vocational education is interpreted through the perceptions of society regarding the negative school performance of students who are attending vocational schools and the low educational level of their families. Furthermore, attractiveness is altered from the limited opportunities for social mobility and the gender of the students. Results of this study carried out by EIEAD (National Institute of Labor and Human Resources) show that vocational training, as it is applied in Greece, reproduces social and gendered inequalities. The student population that chooses it, or follows it because of need, they are mainly boys, with low school performance, low success rates at Universities and their parents have a low education level. These characteristics are reproduced over time, perpetuating the perception (and attitude) of vocational education as a second class educational choice and dramatically limiting prospects for graduates' work and social mobility, especially young women.

One of the new Government's strategic choices is to upscale vocational education and training (VET) from the status of a forced solution for few, to a conscious choice and employment tool for many<sup>5</sup>. This choice is directly linked to the country's economic recovery. VET structures need to be reorganised and empowered to respond to the crucial role they can play towards achieving economic growth and combating youth unemployment through upskilling and reskilling.

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<sup>3</sup> Anna Manoudi (2016) Update to the European inventory on validation of non-formal and informal learning, Cedefop

<sup>4</sup> Paidousi, CH. (2016). Attractiveness of vocational education: social and economic Gendered Dimensions. National Institute of Labour and Human resources (In Greek).

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/news-and-press/news/greece-new-strategic-objectives-vet-and-lifelong-learning>

The main areas of the Government's VET policy are: a) joint strategic planning of VET to avoid overlapping and to address the needs of the Greek economy and labour market; b) autonomy of vocational upper secondary education schools (EPAL) and post-secondary training institutes (IEK) by taking into consideration the active role of the local community representatives; c) direct connection between vocational education, training and lifelong learning and the labour market enabling social partners to participate in planning; d) certification of non-formal and informal learning; e) reliable career guidance to learners through early career orientation at lower secondary education (gymnasium) as well as entrepreneurship programmes in collaboration with local businesses.

It is also worth noting that Cedefop's Skills forecast: trends and challenges to 2030 refers to job needs in Europe that are expected to require a reshaping: low qualifications will fall from 34% in 2011 to 21% in 2030; medium qualifications will slightly rise from 44.3 in 2011 to 46% in 2030; high qualifications will rise from 21% in 2011 to 32.9% in 2030. The trends recorded in Greece follow the general European trends and trace a stronger demand for mid-level skilled jobs. This is another reason for the Government's focus on VET. Further, the expected changes in the economy create unavoidably a need for new skills that are acquired through VET.

## **2. Key competences on lifelong learning**

In the context of the EU Council Recommendation, Greece follows the Recommendation on Key Competences for Lifelong Learning, identifies eight key competences needed for personal fulfilment, a healthy and sustainable lifestyle, employability, active citizenship and social inclusion: Literacy, Multilingualism, Numerical, scientific and engineering skills, Digital and technology-based competences, Interpersonal skills, and the ability to adopt new competences, Active citizenship, Entrepreneurship and Cultural awareness and expression<sup>6</sup>.

However, there is not any publication by Cedefop on Key Competences in VET for Greece, thus relevant data are absent in order to measure the effectiveness of national policy on Key competences.

## **3. Coordination of Relevant stakeholders and Career support systems in Greece**

The governance of the national lifelong guidance system, along with available respective services in the fields of education training and employment, falls under the authority of the Ministry of Education, Research and Religious Affairs, as well as of the Ministry of Labour, Social Security and social solidarity.<sup>7</sup> The two ministries supervise all activities from all relevant institutions or organisations taking action in career guidance, while the main basis for collaboration between the two ministries lies within the responsibilities and activities EOPPEP that was formed in November 2011. EOPPEP focuses on enhancing the quality, efficiency and reliability of lifelong learning and guidance systems in Greece, supporting the respective public authorities within the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Labour to design and implement the national policy of the country in this respect.

Continuing vocational training and general adult education is provided by Lifelong Learning Centres (LLCs). The Ministry of Education, through EOPPEP, is responsible for safeguarding quality of non-formal education, evaluating these centres and monitoring their operation. The municipalities can set up LLCs or mobilise the network of lifelong learning bodies in their region, offering programmes linked to the local

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<sup>6</sup> European Commission (2017), Developing key competences for all throughout life, Factsheet

<sup>7</sup> Cedefop (2020). Inventory of lifelong guidance systems and practices - Greece. CareersNet national records.

<https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/publications-and-resources/country-reports/inventory-lifelong-guidance-systems-and-practices-greece>

labour environment and beyond. Most municipalities have set up LLCs, which provide a variety of general adult education and continuing training programmes. Continuing VET programmes are also provided by most universities, including the Hellenic Open University, in a wide range of subjects (including ICT, tourism studies, accounting, economics and administration, energy and environment, food safety, production management, and programmes for foreign students and repatriated Greeks).

Businesses and other social partners play also an active role in continuing vocational training. The role of the state is confined to financing and, in some cases, assuring the quality of the services provided, through the accreditation of providers and teachers/trainers. A fair number of enterprises provide systematic organised training programmes for their employees (both in-house training and external), through seminars and accelerated programmes which are funded through the fund for employment and vocational training (LAEK), handled by OAED. In addition, the social partners implement vocational training programmes for their members and for other groups of citizens. Most of these programmes are covered by co-financing from the European Social Fund but the qualifications acquired from this type of training are not recognised by any national authority.

Namely, other relevant stakeholders are: a) the National Council of Education and Human Resource Development (ESEKAAD), which constitutes an advisory body to the Minister of Education, Research and Religious Affairs, b) The National Institute of Labour and Human Resources (EIEAD), supervised by the Ministry of Labour, which coordinates the Labour Market Diagnosis System (<https://lmd.eiead.gr/>), c) The Hellenic Society of Counselling and Guidance (He.S.Co.G./EL.E.SY.P.) is a scientific society established in 1985 with the aim to contribute to the development of career guidance in Greece, d) The association of Greek Career Counsellors and Guidance Practitioners (SESEP) has been established in 2000 as a professional and scientific association with the aims to promote career guidance development and to support the collaboration between different career guidance stakeholders, e) the national Lifelong Guidance Forum IRIDA, established by EOPPEP, aiming to serve as the key online platform for both meaningful communication and constructive dialogue on issues related to guidance, amongst guidance providers, guidance practitioners, social partners and other stakeholders, public or private at local, regional and national level.

### Career support systems

In Greece, the responsibility for administering career guidance services in the fields of education and employment lies with the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Labour, through the activities of EOPPEP. In this respect, EOPPEP acts as the national coordination body, implementing systemic guidance interventions, which ensures the quality provision and the professionalization of career guidance. In addition, innovating guidance services for the end users of all ages are also developed within the activities of EOPPEP at national level. These services are: a) The EOPPEP Interactive Guidance Portal for adolescents and youngsters [www.eoppep.gr/teens](http://www.eoppep.gr/teens) : The Portal was developed by EOPPEP at the end of 2012 is widely used by secondary and upper secondary students, young people and guidance practitioners, b) The EOPPEP Lifelong Career Development Portal (<http://e-stadiodromia.eoppep.gr/>) supported within the activities of EOPPEP as the Euroguidance Centre of Greece and providing innovating services for career development and mobility information targeted to adults of all ages. In the portal, one can find digitized career tests, E-Counselling Services, E- Lifelong Career Portfolio Development Tool which is available also in English language, Career & Mobility information Resources, Career Management Skills Section, c) The Greek National Database of educational opportunities “Ploigos”, developed in 2009 which provides information to students, job seekers, parents, guidance counsellors etc. regarding learning opportunities of all types in Greece. The database contains more than 13.000 educational opportunities which are regularly updated by EOPPEP with the support of educational providers. Ploigos is connected to the European Portal for Learning Opportunities and Qualifications, promoting educational mobility throughout Europe.

#### 4. Assessing the upskilling pathways in Greece

As the European experience has shown, coordinated interventions in VET and lifelong learning can lead to increase of productivity and economic growth, and at the same time, to reduction of the unemployment rate, especially among young people. Assessing the national policy for upskilling and reskilling, there are elements that can be improved:

a) For the present, qualifications that are acquired through continuing vocational training are not correlated to levels of the national qualifications framework. Necessary prerequisites for this to happen are the implementation of a national QA system, evaluation of results and feedback. The same applies on individual action plans developed through EOPPEP and OAED which should be integrated on the same basis, so to achieve synergy among actions carried out by relevant stakeholders.

b) In Greece measures seem to target all adults who lack basic skills with no special focus to several target groups (e.g. unemployed, employed individuals with low skills etc.), having thus an overarching approach covering all potential subgroups. A priority should be to categorize target groups, map existing provision but also review assessment tools for recent upskilling measures, as well as existing adult learning methodologies, offer tailored pedagogical approaches and strengthen the arrangements for validation of prior learning.

c) Finally, based on information currently available to Cedefop<sup>8</sup> issues which could benefit from further consideration are: (a) initiatives in support of entrepreneurship education; (b) guidance; (c) further implementing ECVET; (d) providing groups in need – particularly the unemployed – with training opportunities; (e) further supporting the development of key competences in CVET.



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<sup>8</sup> Cedefop (2018). Developments in vocational education and training policy in 2015-17: Greece. Cedefop monitoring and analysis of VET policies. <http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/publications-and-resources/country-reports/vetpolicy-developments-greece-2017>