

GREEK TEACHER EDUCATION SYSTEM

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In this report, we present the current education system in initial and in-service teacher training in Greece, as well as the general framework of the new policies that the Greek Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs is about to introduce concerning this issue.

1.THE STRUCTURE OF INITIAL TEACHER EDUCATION

1.1 In Greece, the procedure that one has to follow in order to become a teacher, is the following :

Once student finish high-school (around the age of eighteen), they may enter tertiary education which involves a) University/ Polytechnic, b) an Institution of Technological Education (TEI). At University level, some departments are exclusively related to teacher education (nursery and pedagogical departments - departments for nursery and primary school teachers), others are in strong relation to education (e.g departments of science - departments of philosophy, literature e.t.c) and others that have little or no relevance to education (e.g polytechnic , economic science departments e.t.c).

At the Institutions of Technological Education, the courses related to training offer specialization in certain fields ,such as accounting, electronics, nursing e.t.c

If we exclude pedagogical-nursery departments where the courses taught are related to pedagogical training, teaching skills, psychology, didactic - in the rest of the institutions, courses connected to pedagogical training , teaching skills and didactic exist but -in general- are not included in the mainstream of the curriculum.

The graduates from the Institutions of Technological Education who have studied for at least three and a half years, can be recruited at technical -vocational schools, on condition that they have completed successfully one year of studies at a special pedagogical technical school(SELETE) .

Education (at University / Polytechnic and TEI) is considered to be a phase of initial education for the future teacher and does not include any kind of training in a specialized institution for teacher education.

1.2 Until 1997, every candidate teacher, after graduating the relevant Institution, was enlisted in a priority list (according to the year of graduation) which guaranteed recruitment in public schools after a customary period (in some cases this period exceeded 15 years).

In 1997 -in the framework of the Educational Reform-, the role of the list was diminished towards its planned future abolition. in 2002.

Since 1998, a written competition has been established to determine the placement of teachers in every level of education. This competition takes place every two years for the recruitment of a pre-determined number of teachers (according to the current needs) in all areas of specialization. During the competition, teachers are examined on their pedagogical and teaching skills as well as in the particular subject that they wish to teach (physics, mathematics, literature...). It is worth noting that, the candidate teacher participates in this competition without having gone through a training stage after his or her University degree and preparation for the competition is left entirely on his or her discretion. However the content of the examination is determined by an organization responsible for teacher selection(ASEP).

2. THE STRUCTURE OF INDUCTIVE TEACHER EDUCATION

In the present state of things, after their placement, teachers normally start teaching and after two years -unless anything unforeseen occurs-, they gain the status of permanent (in -service) teacher.

During the first year of this period, the teacher follows the initial period of inductive training which involves three phases:

2.1. The first phase is completed under the responsibility of Regional Centers for Teacher Education (PEK) and includes the following thematic groups:

- Organizational and Administrative aspects of Education (learning how to manage school units, the structure of the educational system).
- Pedagogical issues (managing individual classes, learning difficulties, relations between teacher and student).
- The Methodology of teaching per subject (a study program per subject taught, Information about the text book, samples of educational intervention).
- Issues of evaluation
- Intracultural educational issues

The duration of this program is 40 hrs .

2.2 The second phase has a 40 hour duration and is takes place during the school year (from October to May). The subject of the second phase is the methodology of teaching at the classroom (show cases methods by experienced teachers) and the solution of problems in the practice of teaching.

This phase operates under the responsibility of Regional Centers for Teacher Education and is implemented by school advisers, headmasters of schools and experienced teachers.

2.3 The 3rd phase: The duration of this phase is 20 hrs and takes place at the end of June under the supervision of the same guidance body. The object of this phase is the study of successful and unsuccessful practices and interventions in the classroom(presentation of problems concerning the managing of education, the problems related /connected to the pedagogical character, issues of evaluation, intracultural problems)

3. THE STRUCTURE OF IN-SERVICE TEACHER EDUCATION

The education of in -service teachers is not systematic. The Regional Centers for Teacher education organize every year a number of programs in different thematic fields which are not obligatory . These programs are evaluated and the number of teachers who attend them is restricted .Selection is made by drawing lots because the demand is much greater than the supply. The duration of each course is 40 hours and the context covers a variety of specific fields ,like didactic ,psychology, physics using computers e.t.c.

4.THE NEW PERSPECTIVES

4.1 The orientation of the European Union towards the new technologies has a positive impact on the educational sector.

Greece is reacting to this demand by training teachers of every faculty in new technologies. This program will help teachers not only become familiar with the use of the computer in general, but also enable them to experience the process of using the computer for teaching and learning purposes following a reflective manner. (the teacher must become able to interact with the computer, produce software and to use it in multiple ways)

This project, which is the biggest and most important training program in the history of Greek Education, is going to start from the beginning of 2001 and will last for three years.

4.2 An innovation is the establishment of a new comprehensive teacher training organization. This organization will take under its supervision all the teacher training centers (PEK) currently operating throughout the country.

In addition, this organization will design the curricula for teacher training and will set the standards for certification for teaching and pedagogy.

4.3 Up to now, evaluation of the teacher and the school unit has not been activated formally although there is the Presidential Decree 2525.

Under the measures of the Second Community Support Framework, pilot projects on internal school evaluation have been implemented by the Pedagogical Institute.

The Greek Minister of Education and Religious Affairs proclaimed that there is going to be a turning point towards evaluation in 2001. The body of evaluation will consist of scientists with authority and this body will be evaluated as well.

The evaluation process will be based on the **OECD** indicators and the sixteen indicators of European Union.

These indicators will refer to all the agents of the educational system (including the school unit, the curricula, etc.)