

Legal Framework for Strengthening the National System of Vocational Education and Training (Law 5082/2024)

POLICY DEVELOPMENT**REGULATION/LEGISLATION**

GREECE

Timeline

2023 Legislative process**2024** Approved/Agreed**ID number 47162**

Background

Greece has one of the lowest student participation rates in vocational education and training (VET) within the European Union (EU), with only 33.8% of students enrolled in VET programmes, compared to the EU average of 48.7%. This significant gap reflects broader challenges within the country's education and workforce development system, limiting opportunities for young people to acquire labour market-relevant skills.

A key factor contributing to this disparity is the high unemployment rate among VET graduates. Specifically, 33.3% of young people aged 25 to 29 who complete vocational training remain unemployed, primarily due to the limited availability of apprenticeships. The lack of practical, hands-on experience, which is essential for a smooth transition into the job market, further restricts young people's employment prospects. Expanding work-based learning and apprenticeship opportunities is crucial to addressing this challenge.

Another pressing issue is Greece's standing in digital skills and workforce training. The country ranks 24th among EU nations in terms of the digital skills of its workforce and 32nd among OECD countries in workforce participation in training programmes. These figures highlight the urgent need for reforms that enhance digital literacy and upskilling opportunities, ensuring individuals are equipped for an increasingly digitalised labour market.

Objectives

In response to these challenges, Law No 5082/2024 was developed as a comprehensive strategy to modernise Greece's vocational training system, encourage higher participation in apprenticeships, and strengthen digital skills development. These measures aim to improve employability, enhance workforce adaptability, and boost economic competitiveness in a rapidly evolving labour market.

Main objectives of the new legal framework:

- (a) Enhancing the governance structure of Vocational Education and Training (VET): The law aims to improve VET governance by fostering synergies across different levels of the National Qualifications Framework (NQF). This will enable vocational education and training to better align with labour market demands at both the national and local

levels, while also taking into account the specific socio-economic conditions of local communities.

- (b) Renaming and restructuring Vocational Training Institutes (I.E.K.): The law proposes renaming Vocational Training Institutes (I.E.K.) as Schools of Higher Vocational Training (S.A.E.K.) and restructuring them to strengthen their role in linking trainees and graduates to the labour market at local, regional, and sectoral levels. Special emphasis is placed on improving access to high-quality, inclusive vocational training services for people with disabilities.
- (c) Comprehensive reform of Vocational Schools (EPAL): The law introduces reforms to vocational upper secondary schools (EPAL) by adopting best practices, particularly those piloted in model vocational upper secondary schools (PEPAL), to enhance the overall quality and effectiveness of vocational education.
- (d) Strengthening regional governance: The law seeks to reinforce regional governance of VET, ensuring a closer alignment between vocational education offerings and the specific needs of local societies and economies. This regional approach aims to enhance the link between education and labour market demands, supporting local economic development.

Description

Law No 5082/2024, published in Government Gazette A 9/19.1.2024 and titled 'Strengthening the National System of Vocational Education and Training and Other Urgent Provisions', aims to further enhance the National system of vocational education and training (VET) established under Article 1 of Law No 4763/2020 (A 254). This objective will be achieved by:

- (a) expanding collaboration between vocational education and training institutions, and
- (b) strengthening synergies between different levels of the national qualifications framework (NQF).

The ultimate goal is to enhance graduates' knowledge, competencies, and skills, facilitating their smooth integration into local societies and economies, and, by extension, into the national economy.

Law No 5082/2024 introduces key reforms to strengthen VET governance, improve labour market alignment, and modernise vocational education structures. It proposes the establishment of vocational education and training centres (KEEK) to bridge the gap between VET and the labour market, ensuring that training offerings align with local workforce needs through evidence-based assessments of labour market demands.

Additionally, the law renames and restructures institutes of vocational training (IEK) as schools of higher vocational training (SAEK). This renaming reflects an effort to enhance quality and expand the scope of vocational training, positioning SAEK as a key link between trainees, graduates, and the labour market at local, regional, and sectoral levels. Special emphasis is placed on ensuring inclusive access to high-quality vocational training, particularly for individuals with disabilities.

Furthermore, the law prioritises strengthening regional governance within the National Vocational Education and Training System. It also promotes the transfer of best practices from Model Vocational Upper Secondary Schools (PEPALs) to Vocational Upper Secondary Schools (EPALs), supporting the modernisation and improved effectiveness of vocational education at a regional level.

In each region of the country, a Regional Council for the Connection with Production and the Labour Market (SSPAE) is established. Among its responsibilities is the identification of local needs in the respective region concerning vocational education, training, and lifelong learning.

Finally, the law also includes a focus on the training of vocational subject teachers in EPAL in their respective teaching fields, with the support of Higher Education Institutions and local businesses. The law also assigns specific duties to EPAL teachers that are linked to the broader educational mission, based on EPAL curricula. These duties include career

guidance, the implementation of innovative educational programmes and initiatives, student internships, and the integration of new technologies and IT into teaching. Additionally, teachers are responsible for promoting green and digital skills in education.

2023 Legislative process

On 22 December 2023, the Ministry of Education, Religious Affairs, and Sports submitted a draft law titled, 'Strengthening the National System of Vocational Education and Training', for public consultation. The full draft can be accessed via the official government portal (OpenGov).

2024 Approved/Agreed

On 17 January 2024, the Committee on Educational Affairs of the Hellenic Parliament issued a report recommending the approval of the draft law by majority vote and advised Parliament to pass it as submitted.

On 18 January 2024, the draft law was debated in the Plenary of Parliament, and Law No 5082/2023 was officially passed.

Bodies responsible

- Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs
- Ministry of Education, Religious Affairs and Sports

Target group

Learners

Learners in upper secondary, including apprentices
Young people (15-29 years old)
Learners at risk of early leaving or/and early leavers
Adult learners

Education professionals

Teachers
Trainers
Guidance practitioners

Entities providing VET

Companies
Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs)
VET providers (all kinds)

Other stakeholders

Social partners (employer organisations and trade unions)
National, regional and local authorities

Thematic categories

Governance of VET and lifelong learning

Engaging VET stakeholders and strengthening partnerships in VET

Modernising VET offer and delivery

Modernising VET standards, curricula, programmes and training courses
Reinforcing work-based learning, including apprenticeships

Transparency and portability of VET skills and qualifications

Comprehensive national qualification frameworks

Developing and applying qualifications smaller/shorter than full

Teachers, trainers and school leaders competences

Systematic approaches to and opportunities for initial and continuous professional development of school leaders, teachers and trainers

Supporting teachers and trainers for green transition and sustainability

Supporting lifelong learning culture and increasing participation

Permeability between IVET and CVET and general and vocational pathways, academic and professional higher education

Lifelong guidance

Subsystem

IVET

Further reading

[Strengthening the National System of Vocational Education and Training](#)

[Public Online Consultation - Draft Law 5082/2024 in Open.gov.](#)

[Legal Framework for Strengthening the National System of Vocational Education and Training \(Law 5082/2024\)](#)

Related policy developments

2024 Implementation

New training guides and educational materials for SAEK schools based on certified occupational profiles

The project is a comprehensive initiative to update and develop educational materials for SAEK (Former IEK) programmes. It is expected to include three distinct actions:

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Type of development

Practical
measure/Initiative

Subsystem

IVET

2024 Implementation

The Micro-CVET project: Continuing vocational training link to

microcredentials

The National Organisation for the Certification of Qualifications and Vocational Guidance (EOPPEP) represents Greece in various EU initiatives and networks.



Type of development

Practical
measure/Initiative

Subsystem

CVET

2024 Implementation

The 2022-24 Strategic plan for vocational education and training, lifelong learning and youth

The six strategic objectives of the plan are further analysed into sub-objectives that serve the effective implementation of the strategy.



Type of development

Strategy/Action
plan

Subsystem

IVET CVET

2024 Implementation

Reforming VET governance

According to Law 4763/2020, the General Secretariat for VET, LLL and Youth is responsible for designing, implementing, coordinating and monitoring policies in the relevant fields. It is also the supervisory body for the implementation and monitoring of VET and LLL programmes.



Type of development

Regulation/Legislation

Subsystem

IVET

2024 Approved/Agreed

Reform of the national system of VET and lifelong learning

In December 2020, Law 4763/2020 introduces a legal framework regulating VET and LLL

and describing the organisation of each school type, the qualifications and the role of their staff (manager, teachers, career/vocational counsellors).

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Type of development

Regulation/Legislation

Subsystem

IVET CVET

“ ... ” **Cite as**

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<https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/tools/timeline-vet-policies-europe/search/47162>