

# 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 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 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: expanding collaboration between vocational education and training institutions, and 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 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.

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.

In addition, Law 5082/2024 also provides for the establishment of coordination structures within ministries or public legal entities that operate vocational education and training units at levels 3 and 5 of the Hellenic Qualifications Framework (HQF) and are located in the same geographical area. In such cases, a dedicated coordination service may be set up to ensure the more effective operation of these units. In addition, the law foresees the establishment of Offices for Professional Development and Career Guidance, aimed at supporting learners' career development and strengthening links between training provision and labour market needs.

More specifically, Law 5082/2024 stipulates that the mandate, establishment criteria and other operational arrangements of the coordination service are to be specified by a joint decision of the competent line minister and the Ministers of Education, Religious Affairs and Sports, and National Economy and Finance. This decision is issued following a proposal by the competent body of the organisation in which the relevant VET units operate, thereby ensuring a clear governance framework for the establishment and functioning of the coordination service.

### **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 5082/2023 was officially passed.

Article 7 of the law, concerning the structure of Schools of Higher Vocational Training (SAEK), enters into force in the 2024/25 school year. Chapters D and E of the law, which provide for the transfer of innovations from Model Vocational Upper Secondary Schools (PEPAL) to Vocational Upper Secondary Schools (EPAL) and set out regulations for Laboratory Centres (EK), are going to be applied from the 2025/26 school year.

## **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](#)

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

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

## Related policy developments

2025 **Approved/Agreed**

**The 2025-2027 Strategic plan for vocational education and**

## training, lifelong learning and youth

The VET & LLL Strategy 2025–2027 was developed through a comprehensive process that combined legal reform, labour-market intelligence, stakeholder consultation, and system-level analysis.

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### Type of development

Strategy/Action  
plan

### Subsystem

IVET CVET

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### 2025 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

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### 2025 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.

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### Type of development

Practical  
measure/Initiative

### Subsystem

CVET

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### 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.

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### Type of development

Strategy/Action  
plan

### Subsystem

IVET CVET

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## 2025 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.

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### Type of development

Regulation/Legislation

### Subsystem

IVET

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## 2025 Implementation

### 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

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### “ ... ” Cite as

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Greece. In Cedefop, & ReferNet. (2026). *Timeline of VET policies in Europe* (2025 update) [Online tool].

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