



Structures of Education and Training Systems in Europe

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STRUCTURES OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING SYSTEMS IN EUROPE

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INTRODUCTION: GENERAL POLICY CONTEXT

Cyprus is the third largest island in the Mediterranean Sea with a total area of 9 251 km². Despite its small area, the island has a long-century history dating to the Neolithic Age, 7000 B.C. The geographical location of the island has become a determinant factor in its history and civilisation. Situated in the eastern corner of the Mediterranean Sea, an area where Empires struggled for supremacy, Cyprus has, from the dawn of its history, become the stepping stone of many conquerors.

Cyprus was declared an Independent Republic on 16 August 1960 on the basis of the Zurich and London agreements following a four-year (1955-1959) liberation struggle against British colonial rule. According to the founding agreement three countries – Greece, Turkey and Britain – were the guarantors of the new State. In July 1974 Turkey, exceeding its authority, invaded Cyprus and occupied 37 % of the island's territory. As a result 200 000 Cypriots were displaced and 1619 people were listed as missing persons. Since then Turkey, in violation of numerous UN Security Council resolutions and despite the efforts of the Cypriot Government, keeps the island divided by force.

On 1 May 2004 Cyprus joined the European Union as a member state completing a long journey which began with its application for full membership in 1990. On 1 January 2008 Cyprus adopted the Euro as the monetary of the state, replacing the Cyprus pound.

Political system

The Republic of Cyprus has a presidential system of government with a clear division of authority between the executive, the legislative and the judiciary bodies. Executive authority is exercised by the President of the Republic through an eleven-member Council of Ministers appointed by him. The Council of Ministers is responsible for the governance of the Republic, coordinates and supervises the public services, supervises and allocates the fortune of the Republic and processes the budget and bills before they are presented to the House of Representatives.

Legislative authority is exercised by the House of Representatives. Deputies are elected for a five-year term by universal suffrage by citizens over the age of eighteen. Legislative functions comprise the enactment, amendment and abolition of legal rules. Laws or decisions of the House of Representatives come into force on their publication in the Official Gazzette of the Republic.

Judiciary power is vested in the Supreme Court and the Inferior Courts established by law.

Power is also vested in Independent Officials of the Republic, who do not fall within any Ministry. Such independent services are the Attorney General's office, the Auditor General, the Central Bank of Cyprus and others.

Territorial and administrative organisation

Cyprus is divided into six administrative districts – Nicosia, Limassol, Larnaca, Paphos, Famagusta and Kyrenia. Each district has a District Officer who is the local representative of the government. The District Officer coordinates the activities of all the Ministries in his/her district and reports to the Ministry of Interior. There are two types of local authorities, the Municipalities and the Communities (rural areas).

Population

According to the latest data of the Statistical Service of Cyprus (CYSTAT), the population of Cyprus was estimated at 877.600 (433.200 males and 444.400 females) at the end of 2007. The estimated composition of the population was as follows: Greek Cypriots 74.7 %, Turkish Cypriots 10.1 %, Armenians 0.3 %, Maronites 0.5 %, Latins 0.1 %, foreign residents 14.3 %. The population figures do not include illegal settlers from Turkey, the number of which is estimated at about 160 000.

The population of the government controlled area was estimated at 789 300 at the end of 2007, of which 589 600 were male and 399 700 were female. According to Eurostat data, (Labour Force Survey 2007), 85.8 % of the population in the 20-64 age group have completed upper secondary education (ISCED 3) ⁽¹⁾.

Linguistic situation

Official languages of the Republic of Cyprus are Greek and Turkish. Other minorities are free to speak and write their own languages. Teaching language in the public pre-primary, primary and secondary level of education is Greek. The official languages in public universities are Greek and Turkish. The language of instruction in public non-university level institutions is either Greek or English. Private institutions at all levels of education offer programmes both in Greek and English. Educational institutions of various religious groups are free to use their own languages of instruction.

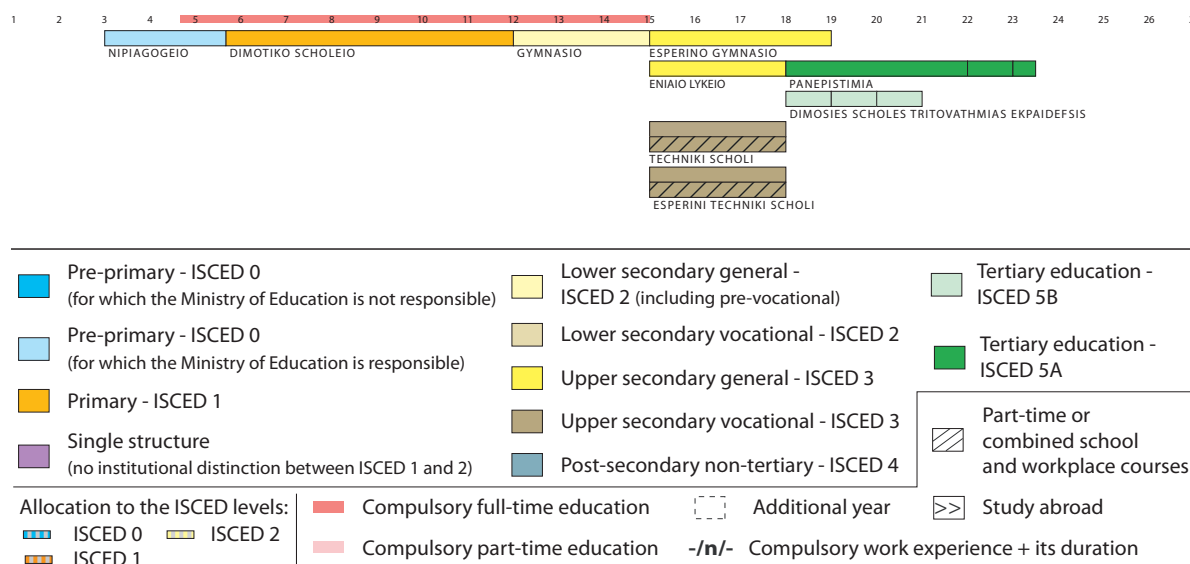
Fundamental principles governing the entire education system

The fundamental principles that govern the entire education system in Cyprus, as outlined in Article 20 of the 1960 Constitution of the Republic of Cyprus, stipulate the right of every person to receive and give education, and the right of parents to secure for their children such education as is in conformity with their religious convictions. Based on the above stated fundamental principles, official documents of the Ministry of Education and Culture stipulate equal opportunities, democratic structures and mutual links between education and real life (social, cultural, economic).

⁽¹⁾ Students in tertiary education abroad are not yet covered by the survey.

1. INITIAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING: ORGANISATION, FUNDING AND QUALITY ASSURANCE

1.1 Organisation of the initial education and training system



Formal initial education and training is provided through public and private institutions of pre-primary, primary, secondary and tertiary education and it is compulsory for ages from four years and eight months to fifteen years or until the pupil completes the third year of secondary education, whichever comes first. Public education is free from the age of four years and eight months until the end of secondary education, about the age of eighteen.

Pre-primary education is offered in kindergartens to children of the age range from three years to five years and eight months (pre-school day-care for children aged six weeks to four years and eight months is offered in day-nurseries, which operate under the jurisdiction of the Department of Welfare Services of the Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance). Since 2004/05 enrolment to pre-primary education has been made compulsory for children from the age of four years and eight months to five years and eight months.

Primary education comprises a six-year compulsory course of general education beginning at the age of five years and eight months.

Secondary education is open to all primary school leavers without entrance examinations and it is offered in two different types: secondary general education and secondary technical/vocational education. Secondary general education consists of two cycles of studies of three years duration each cycle, the first one being the Gymnasium and the second one the Lyceum. Gymnasium offers general education with emphasis on humanities, while Lyceum offers a programme of studies which encompasses common core subjects, optional stream subjects and subjects of special interest and/or enrichment.

Secondary technical and vocational education comprises the second cycle of secondary education only and it is open to pupils who have successfully graduated from the Gymnasium. Each Technical School has two departments – the technical department which lays emphasis on science and technical knowledge and skills, and the vocational department which provides training for craftsmen. Apprenticeships and lifelong learning are also offered in Technical Schools. The Apprenticeship

Scheme lasts for two years and provides Practical and Theoretical Training alternately, for three and two days per week respectively.

Tertiary education is provided both at university and non-university level. There are three public and three private universities in operation in 2009/10. There are also a number of public institutions and private colleges which provide non-university tertiary education.

Special education is provided at the primary and the secondary level of education and as vocational training to children and persons with special needs at all ages.

According to official statistics of the Statistical Service of Cyprus, during the school year 2006/07 a number of 1 258 full-time schools, registered with the Ministry of Education and Culture, operated in the government controlled areas at all levels of education. The total number of pupils was 172 361 and the total number of teachers was 15 213, thus giving a pupil/teacher ratio of 11.3.

1.2 Distribution of responsibilities

The educational system of Cyprus is mainly centralised, but with elements of decentralisation regarding the distribution of responsibilities. The main authorities or bodies responsible for education are the Council of Ministers, the Ministry of Education and Culture, the Education Service Commission and the Local School Boards (*Σχολικές Εφορείες*).

The Council of Ministers is the highest authority for educational policy making. Overall responsibility for education rests with the Ministry of Education and Culture, except for a small number of higher education institutions which come under the Ministries of Labour and Social Insurance, Agriculture and Health. The Ministry of Education and Culture is responsible for the administration of education, the enforcement of educational laws and the implementation of educational policy, the preparation of the education budget and educational bills and the construction of school buildings. Educational administration is centralised. Therefore, curricula, syllabuses and textbooks are set by the Ministry.

The Education Service Commission is a five-member body appointed by the President of the Republic for a six-year period. It is responsible for appointments, secondments, transfers, promotions and discipline (including dismissal) of teachers and inspectors.

Local School Boards are responsible for the maintenance and equipment of the school buildings in collaboration with the Ministry of Education and Culture.

The Planning Bureau, an independent authority of the Republic, also plays an indirect role in education as, amongst other undertakings, it is responsible for overall educational planning. The development plans of the Ministry of Education and Culture (as well as those of other Ministries responsible for some educational institutions) are first submitted to the Planning Bureau before they are forwarded to the Council of Ministers for final approval.

The role of the local community, the teachers' organisations and the parents' associations in policy making in education is mainly consultative and expressed in various ways, including participation in the *Pedagogical Council* (*Συμβούλιο Παιδείας*). The Pedagogical Council is a consultative body to the Ministry of Education and Culture, consisting of representatives of the Ministry of Education and Culture and other Ministries, the Church, the political parties, the House of Representatives, the teachers' and the parents' organisations and others. The members of the Pedagogical Council are appointed by the Council of Ministers. The Minister of Education and Culture presides over the Educational Council.

There are also institutionalised pupils' councils at the secondary education level, as well as students' organisations at the tertiary level of education, through which pupils and students can express their opinions on educational matters.

1.3 Financing

Public education at all levels is mainly financed by the government, either directly or through allotments to local authorities or School Boards. Private institutions mainly raise their funds through tuition fees. Private schools of secondary education receive a small subsidy from the government and in a few cases foreign aid from overseas religious organisations.

The national budget and the management of school assets and property is the only source of finance for public schools in the pre-primary, primary and secondary level of education, as receiving external money is not permitted. Public universities may receive gifts, grants and funding from outside sources other than the national budget. Private institutions at all levels are not in any way restricted from receiving external funding.

Public expenditure on all levels of education in 2006 accounted for 16.2 % of the government budget and 7.1 % of GDP. Pre-primary education absorbed 4.8 % of total public expenditure on education, primary education 26.3 %, secondary education 43.6 %, special education 1.3 % and tertiary education 23.3 %.

1.4 Quality assurance

Quality assurance is exercised at all levels of the education and training system including the whole education system itself. The bodies involved and the modalities employed at each case are described below.

At the pre-primary, primary and secondary level of education overall responsibility for quality assurance rests with the Inspectorates of the respective Directorates of the Ministry of Education and Culture. The inspectors of the Ministry are responsible for supervising the public schools and appraising their teaching staff. They also supervise the private schools in order to assure that they comply with the provisions of law, but they do not supervise their teaching personnel. Public schools also carry out an internal evaluation in the form of an informal summary report on the school, which the head teacher draws up with the cooperation of the teaching staff and submits to the Ministry at the end of the school year.

At the tertiary level of education quality assurance is exercised both in the form of internal and external evaluation. Internal evaluation is a form of self-evaluation which every institution is required to carry out. External evaluation is not the same for all institutions, depending on the type and the level of each institution.

At the non-university level of education public educational institutions are accountable to the respective Ministries which are responsible for ensuring that quality standards are retained. Private non-university level institutions are inspected by the officers of the Department of Tertiary Education of the Ministry of Education and Culture. In addition, their programmes of study are liable to accreditation by the *Council for Assessment and Accreditation* (SEKAP), an independent body entitled with the accreditation of the programmes of study of the private non-university level institutions of higher education.

At the university level of education public universities, as academically autonomous entities, are not liable to supervision. However, the University of Cyprus approved external evaluations to be carried out every five years by a body of external experts (the European University Association). Similarly, the Law of the Open University provides for external evaluation to be carried out by external evaluators.

Law 109(I)/2005 of Private Universities provides both for the evaluation of applications submitted for university accreditation, and for evaluation of the licenced private universities every five years. In addition, the *Cyprus Council for Academic Recognition* (KYSATS) is responsible for the recognition of degrees, diplomas and certificates from foreign universities, colleges or other institutions abroad.

It is worth mentioning that in the process of an on-going Educational Reform, the Ministry of Education and Culture is planning to replace both SEKAP and KYSATS by a new body, the *Cyprus Quality Assurance Agency*, the remit of which will be to carry out external evaluation of all, public and private, institutions of tertiary education.

Regarding the evaluation of the whole education and training system, the Department of Educational Research and Evaluation of the Pedagogical Institute, Ministry of Education and Culture, carries out research and evaluation projects according to the needs and priorities set by the Ministry. Research projects undertaken in 2008 regard the evaluation of new programmes and institutions, the operation of the State Institutes, the operation of School Canteens and others. By a decision of the Council of Ministers in June 2008, a new research centre has also been established – the *Centre for Research and Evaluation* – entitled to carry out research and evaluation studies on the whole educational system.

2. PRE-PRIMARY EDUCATION

Pre-primary education is open to children in the age range from three years to five years and eight months. As of 1 September 2004 pre-primary education has become compulsory for children aged four years and eight months to five years and eight months.

Pre-primary education aims at a smooth adaptation of children to the school and social environment; furthering children's social, cognitive, emotional, moral, religious and psychomotor development; satisfying the children's needs for a wholesome personality; and, enhancing their opportunities for success in primary school.

The educational programmes at kindergarten level retain as many elements of the natural way of living in the family, with emphasis on the free activation of children, on comfort, love, support, trust, safety and acceptance, in an experiential environment which respects personal uniqueness and maturity stage of every child.

Administratively the sector of pre-primary education belongs to the Department of Primary Education of the Ministry of Education and Culture. The main legislation governing pre-primary education is Law 99/1989 and Regulations ΚΔΠ 225/2008 which replaced earlier regulations, as well as the Laws on Private Schools and Institutes (Laws 5/1971 – 77(I)/2008) which provide for the establishment and operation of private schools and institutions.

There are three types of kindergartens in operation – the public, the community and the private ones. All three types are co-educational institutions registered with the Ministry of Education and Culture and subject to inspection by the Inspectorate of the Department of Primary Education.

Public kindergartens are established by the Ministry of Education and Culture in cooperation with the parents' association and the local authority of the area where the school operates. Public kindergartens are staffed by the state. As of 1 September 2004, the Ministry of Education and Culture undertakes all their operational expenses too. Attendance is free for children aged four years and eight months to five years and eight months (compulsory pre-primary education). Children aged three years to four years and eight months pay fees which are decided by the Ministry of Education and Culture in cooperation with the Ministry of Finance.

Community kindergartens may be established by local authorities, parents' associations or charitable organisations. They are open to children aged three years to five years and eight months and they operate on a non-profit basis. They usually operate together with public kindergartens, with common head teacher and parents' associations. Community kindergartens are established under the Laws on Private Schools and Institutes, but they follow the regulations and the programmes of the public kindergartens. The establishing bodies are responsible for the school buildings and equipment, as well as the recruitment of teachers and the remuneration of the school assistants. The government offers an annual subsidy. The children pay fees, which are decided by the parents' association of the school in order to meet operational expenses of the institution.

Private kindergartens are established by private bodies or individuals and they operate on a for-profit basis. They are established and regulated by the Laws on Private Schools and Institutes and they are supervised by the Ministry of Education and Culture. The children pay fees. The fees of Turkish Cypriot children enrolled in private kindergartens in the non-occupied area of Cyprus are totally undertaken by the government.

Statistics

Official data of the Statistical Service, reference year 2006/07, are as follows:

- There were 445 kindergartens in operation (246 public, 63 community and 136 private ones).
- A total number of 19 462 children (10 049 boys and 9 413 girls) were enrolled. Of these 9 813 were enrolled in public, 1 782 in community and 7 867 in private kindergartens.
- The teaching personnel numbered 1 333 full-time equivalent teachers (632 in public, 96 in community and 605 in private kindergartens).
- The pupil/teacher ratio was 14.6 (15.5 in public, 18.6 in community and 13.0 in private kindergartens).
- One more kindergarten operated in the occupied area with 13 children (7 boys and 6 girls) and one teacher. Pre-primary and primary education operates in the same school.
- The proportion of children aged from three to five years participating in pre-primary education was 70.1 % of the total population of this age range (an additional 16.5 % was enrolled in day-nurseries).

2.1 Admission

Parents or guardians of children of the age range from three years to four years and eight months are free to choose to enrol their children in a kindergarten or not. Parents or guardians of children of the age range of compulsory pre-primary education (four years and eight months to five years and eight months) are obliged to register their children with a kindergarten, the type and location of which they are free to choose.

Admission of a child in a public or community kindergarten is decided by the *Selection Committee* of the school and it is based on selection criteria laid down by the Council of Ministers. Selection criteria include previous attendance of the child or a sibling of him/her; any special needs; the financial status and other characteristics of the child's family, such as having many children, single-parent family, political refugees or immigrants; and, the chronological age of the child. A birth certificate must be presented in order to provide evidence of the child's date of birth.

Admission to a private kindergarten is decided by the owners of the institution.

2.2 Organisation of time, groups and venue

The management of time for children in the public pre-primary sector is determined by the Ministry of Education and Culture. Community kindergartens arrange the time for children in cooperation with the community. The owners of private kindergartens make their own decisions on the management of the children's time in their institution.

The school year for public kindergartens begins on 1 September and ends on 31 August. The teachers begin work on the first Monday of September and finish on the penultimate Friday in June. The allocation of classes begins on the Thursday following the first Monday of September. Classes begin on the second Monday of September and end on the penultimate Friday in June. Some community kindergartens may extend the teaching year upon certain arrangements they have with the respective community.

For organisation purposes the school year for public kindergartens is divided into three terms, the first term running from the first Monday of September until the Christmas holidays, which last for two weeks; the second term running from the end of the Christmas holidays until the Easter holidays, which also last for two weeks; and, the third term running from the end of the Easter holidays until the end of the school year.

In addition to the Christmas and the Easter holidays, there are twelve more days of either public, national or religious holidays. Different holiday patterns are followed for children of the Maronite religious group. The community and the private kindergartens are only obliged to be closed on the public holidays.

Children attend public kindergartens from Monday to Friday, from 7.45 a.m. to 1.05 p.m., except for the case of the all-day kindergartens (*ολοήμερα νηπιαγωγεία*), where attendance is extended until 4.00 p.m. The all-day kindergarten was introduced, on an experimental basis, by the Ministry of Education and Culture in 2005/06. In 2006/07, 14 public kindergartens operated all-day classes on a voluntary basis.

Community kindergartens may extend their daily teaching time until 2.45 p.m. Private kindergartens often operate in the afternoon offering meals and rest time for the children as well.

The timetable of public kindergartens is flexible and it is determined by the kindergarten teacher. Nevertheless, the Ministry of Education and Culture outlines a type of timetable, which might be considered as a 'typical' daily timetable for public (and community) kindergartens. This is as follows:

07.45 – 08.25: Free activities

08.25 – 09.05: Free activities

09.05 – 09.45: First period of teaching (group activities)

09.45 – 10.25: Washing – Breakfast – Outdoor Activities

10.25 – 10.45: Break – Outdoor play

10.45 – 11.25: Second period of teaching (group activities)

11.25 – 12.05: Refreshment – Fruits – Outdoor activities

12.05 – 12.25: Break – Outdoor play

12.25 – 13.05: Quiet activities

Private and community kindergartens must submit the proposed timetable of the school to the Ministry of Education and Culture for approval.

The age groups and the maximum/minimum class size for public kindergartens are determined by the Ministry of Education and Culture. In the private sector the owners of the kindergartens are free to decide the age-groups and the class sizes in their institutions.

The maximum class size in the public kindergartens varies from twenty for the age group of three years to three years and eight months; to twenty-six for the age group of three years and eight months to four years and eight months; and, to thirty for the age group of four years and eight months to five years and eight months. In the case that the three age groups are mixed in one class, the maximum class size is twenty-five. Resulting from a decision of the Council of Ministers (decision 65.536 of

16 May 2007) the maximum size of classes with mixed age groups in public kindergartens and elementary schools will be reduced to twenty by the school year 2010/11.

The minimum class size in public kindergartens is fifteen. However, under particular circumstances, e.g. kindergartens located in remote areas with a small population, the Ministry of Education and Culture may give permission to operate with fewer children.

2.3 Curriculum

The curriculum for public, community and private kindergartens is approved by the Council of Ministers following suggestions given by the Ministry of Education and Culture. It is the same for all types of kindergarten and must be followed in its entirety by all public and community kindergartens.

The current curriculum forms part of the Primary Curriculum, first published in 1994, revised in 1996 and enriched and re-edited several times since then. The curriculum was compiled by the Director of Primary Education, the Chief Education Officers and the Inspectors of Primary Education, members of the staff of the Pedagogical Institute and representatives of the Primary Teachers' Union, with contributions from the Directorate of Secondary Education, the Union of Inspectors of Primary Education and the Parents' Association for Primary Education.

The curriculum comprises the general aims and objectives of pre-primary education, the main subject fields with indicative activities, methodological approaches and assessment guidelines.

The kindergarten curriculum aims at a balanced development of the social, moral, cognitive, affective and psychomotor abilities of the child, through child-centred and problem-solving approaches and the active participation of children.

The subject matter is drawn from the natural, social and cultural environment; the personal and family life of the children; the school life; and, the needs, interests and abilities of the children. The programme constitutes a balanced succession of activities aiming at the active involvement of every child through the use of real objects, models, pictures, instruments, books and other teaching material. Most of the activities can be classified as 'playing', which constitutes a natural way of learning for children of pre-primary education.

The daily activities of the children are enlisted in a general framework of a 'minimum structured' programme, which is flexible and it is expected to be adapted to the children's needs by the teacher. The basic components of the programme are as follows (see also timetable, in 2.2):

- Free activities in the classroom: about 60 min.
- Problem-solving (activities and discourse) in some area of knowledge (language, science, mathematics, social issues, health, moral and religious life, expression, art): up to 30 min.
- Washing and breakfast: about 30 min.
- Outdoor play: up to about 50 min.
- Gymnastics: 15-20 min.
- Story telling, drama, music and movement, puppet show, poetry, making: up to 30 min.
- Music education: up to 30 min.

- On table games: 40 min.
- Outdoor structured games: 15 min
- Assessment activities on individual basis: These may be organised by the teacher during the free activities or any other part of the programme.
- Tidying up the classroom after the free activities: 15 min.

In the part of the methodological approaches of the curriculum, basic principles of teaching in kindergartens are laid down and analysed, such as the child- and problem-centred nature of the curriculum; the balance to be kept between the cognitive, emotional and psychomotor domain of knowledge; the emphasis to be placed on affective and social education; respect to the developmental and maturity stage of the child; active involvement of the child in learning through observation, experimentation, hypothesis-testing, generalising and coming to conclusions; and, emphasis on group work and cooperative learning. Teachers are free and responsible to choose their teaching methods and materials.

Assessment also forms a part of the curriculum (see 2.4, below).

2.4 Assessment

Assessment of children is considered an integral part of the kindergarten curriculum. Three types of assessment are described in the Primary School Curriculum (*Αναλυτικά Προγράμματα Δημοτικής Εκπαίδευσης*) to be used by teachers in Kindergartens – the initial or diagnostic assessment, the continuous or formative assessment, and the final or summative assessment.

Initial or diagnostic assessment takes place in the start of the school year and it involves close observation of the child's behaviour and note taking both in a formal and an informal way. The formal way of note taking involves the completion of a *diagnostic report* which contains basic cognitive, emotional and psychomotor objectives. The informal way of note taking involves free description of the child's behaviour. The aim of the initial assessment is to identify any behaviour or health problems of the child, in order to give him/her early support. Initial assessment also serves the purpose of giving teachers useful information before they plan new learning activities. As such, initial assessment may extend throughout the whole year, applied before the introduction of a teaching activity.

Continuous or formative assessment takes place throughout the school year by eventual or planned observation of the child's behaviour. The kindergarten teacher records notes on the child's development, progress, maturity or any behaviour problems, in the *continuous assessment report*. It is also possible for a teacher to select and assess, on his/her own, important objectives from the cognitive, the emotional and the psychomotor domain.

Final or summative assessment is done at the end of a learning activity or the end of the school year and aims at providing useful information both for the teachers' self-evaluation and the evaluation of the curriculum.

2.5 Teachers

All kindergarten teachers in the public sector are university graduates. Most of them are graduates of the University of Cyprus with a Bachelor degree from the Pre-School Section of the Department of Education (*Τμήμα Επιστημών της Αγωγής*), Faculty of Social Sciences and Education. There are also

graduates of Greek or other foreign universities, the qualifications of whom have been assessed as equivalent to those offered by the University of Cyprus.

Community and private kindergarten teachers must be suitably qualified as provided in the Laws on Private Schools and Institutions. As such, the community kindergarten teachers are appointed by a Special Committee of Appointment of the kindergarten. The private kindergartens have their own selection criteria.

The Bachelor degree programme at the University of Cyprus is a four-year full-time course, which comprises compulsory and elective courses. The main areas of study are Pedagogical Science, Teaching Methodology, Content Area Courses, General Education and Foreign Language. The programme is based on the system of the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) with a total number of 240 ECTS required for completion of the course. The programme follows the 'concurrent' model for the initial training of teachers with school experience being an integral part of it.

In-service training for pre-primary education teachers involves attendance on both compulsory and optional courses. The Ministry of Education and Culture is responsible for organising in-service training for teachers in the public sector. The Pedagogical Institute is the main provider of in-service training, offering both compulsory and optional courses. Some kind of compulsory in-service training is also provided at school level. As regulated (Law 99/1989), two forty-minute periods per week are devoted to the teachers' professional development at school level. In-service training is also provided by the Inspectorate of Primary Education of the Ministry. Other bodies or organisations involved in education may offer in-service seminars or day events as well.

The Pedagogical Institute provides the following compulsory courses, which take place in morning hours and the participants are relieved from their duties in order to attend them:

- Compulsory course for newly appointed head teachers;
- Compulsory course for newly appointed deputy head teachers; and,
- Compulsory course for newly appointed teachers (induction course).

Optional seminars of the Pedagogical Institute are usually held in afternoon or evening hours and they are open and free for all teachers. They cover a wide range of topics including Psychology, Sociology, Pedagogy and Information Technology. The Pedagogical Institute circulates a booklet at the beginning of each academic year, which includes all the information about the optional seminars to be held during the year.

Attendance certificates are issued to all participants of in-service training programmes of the Pedagogical Institute.

Kindergarten teachers in the public sector are civil servants appointed by the Educational Service Commission. A university degree in pre-primary education makes one eligible to be included in the official register (waiting list of the Education Service Committee) of candidates for appointment. A teacher's appointment comes according to his/her order in the waiting list, which is based on a system of accumulation of credits upon predetermined criteria.

Newly-appointed teachers are on probation for the first two years after their appointment to a permanent post. After completing the probationary period and upon the recommendation of the inspector allocated to the school they serve, the teachers become permanent public education

servants. There are also teachers in the public kindergartens who are employed on contract in order to cover immediate needs.

The conditions of service for teaching staff in pre-primary education are detailed in Laws 10/1969 to 113(I)/2003 and the regulations regarding the placement, movement and transfer of teachers (212/1987 to 267/1994). New regulations ΚΔΠ 225/2008 on the operation of public pre-primary, primary and special needs schools were introduced in 2008.

The Directorate of Primary Education is responsible for overseeing pre-primary educational staff.

3. PRIMARY EDUCATION

Primary education comprises a six-year cycle of studies, which is compulsory for children who have reached the age of five years and eight months. Some private schools extend their cycle of studies to seven or eight years. All primary schools are co-educational institutions registered with the Ministry of Education and Culture. Single-grade classes have been adopted for urban and large rural areas, while small communities may be catered by multi-grade classes. All classes run on a mixed-ability basis. Primary education is free in the public sector. Pupils in the private schools pay fees.

The fundamental aim of primary education is to create and secure the necessary learning opportunities for children, regardless of age, sex, family and social background, and mental abilities, so as to enable them to develop the characteristics of a wholesome personality. The aim includes the harmonious development of children in the cognitive, emotional and psychomotor domains; familiarisation with the school and the wider environment; promotion of socialisation; acquisition of positive attitudes towards learning; development of social understanding, belief in human values, respect for cultural heritage and human rights; and, development of sensitivity in preserving and improving environment.

Public primary schools are established by the Ministry of Education and Culture following a decision by the Council of Ministers. The main legislation governing primary education is Law 99/1989 and Regulations ΚΔΠ 225/2008 which replaced earlier regulations. The government is responsible for the construction of new buildings, the recruitment of the teaching personnel and the running expenses of the schools. Local School Boards are responsible for the maintenance and equipment of the school buildings in collaboration with the Ministry. Private primary schools are established and operated under the Laws on Private Schools and Institutes (Laws 5/1971 – 77(I)/2008).

The Directorate of Primary Education of the Ministry of Education and Culture is responsible for the administration of primary schools. No primary schools are attached to pre-primary or to secondary schools.

Statistics

Official data of the Statistical Service of Cyprus, reference year 2006/07, are as follows:

- There were 368 primary schools in operation (341 public and 27 private schools).
- A total number of 57 492 pupils were enrolled (53 876 in public and 3 616 in private schools).
- The teaching personnel (full-time equivalent) numbered 4 442 teachers (4 142 in the public and 300 in the private sector).
- The pupil/teacher ratio was 12.9 (13.0 % for the public and 12.1 % for the private sector).
- One more primary school operated in the occupied area, with 15 pupils (10 boys and 5 girls) and 3 part-time teachers.

3.1 Admission

Admission to a public primary school is based on the child's age. No child is accepted to be enrolled in a primary school before reaching the age of five years and eight months. Delayed enrolment is also

very rare and it can only be decided, usually for reasons of special needs, by the Ministry of Education and Culture.

Parents or guardians are not free to enrol their children in public schools of their choice. Instead, it is regulated (Regulations ΚΔΠ 225/2008) that children must enrol in the school that belongs to the educational area nearest to their home. Educational areas are decided by the Council of Ministers on the basis of the geographical distribution of the population. Only under particular circumstances will the Ministry of Education and Culture consider giving permission for enrolment in a primary school in a different educational area.

3.2 Organisation of time, groups and venue

The duration of the school year, the school calendar and the timetables for public primary schools are determined by the Council of Ministers upon suggestions by the Ministry of Education and Culture. The school year in public primary schools begins on 1 September and ends on 31 August. The school year for teachers begins on the first Monday of September and ends one week before the last Friday of June. Classes begin on the first Thursday after the first Monday of September and end on the Wednesday before the penultimate Friday in June each year.

For organisation purposes, the school year is divided into three terms, the first term running from the first Monday of September until the Christmas holidays, which last for two weeks; the second term running from the end of the Christmas holidays until the Easter holidays, which also last for two weeks; and, the third term running from the end of the Easter holidays until the end of teaching in June. There are also a further eleven days of public, national or religious holidays. Different religious holiday patterns are followed for the Maronite religious group.

The timetable is the same for all schools. Public primary schools run from Monday to Friday, with classes beginning at 7.45 a.m. and ending at 1.05 p.m. Each day at school consists of seven forty-minute periods of lesson attendance and three breaks totalling up forty minutes. Exception is only for the all-day schools, which run until 3.15 or 4.00 p.m.

Schools operate on the basis of single-grade classes, except for the case of a few remote communities where multi-grade classes are created by decision of the Ministry of Education and Culture. Classes are organised by age. No classes are organised on the basis of proficiency, aptitude or achievements, as mixed-ability grouping is promoted.

The maximum number of children per class is determined by the Council of Ministers following suggestions by the Ministry of Education and Culture. Decision 65.536 (16 May 2007) of the Council of Ministers provides for a gradual reduction of the maximum class size to 25 in all grades and 20 for multi-grade classes by the school year 2010/11. Currently the maximum class size is 25 in grades 1-5, 30 in grade 6 and 20 in multi-grade classes.

In rural areas primary schools are available in every town or village with a minimum number of 15 pupils. Remote communities with fewer than 15 pupils have 'area schools' (*περιφερειακά σχολεία*) which serve two or more villages.

Use of school premises is for one single group of pupils a day.

3.3 Curriculum

The National Curriculum for public primary schools is determined by the Council of Ministers upon suggestions by the Ministry of Education and Culture. The current Curriculum was first published in 1994, revised in 1996 and re-edited many times since then. The curriculum was compiled by the Director of Primary Education, the Chief Education Officers and the Inspectors of Primary Education, members of the staff of the Pedagogical Institute and representatives of the Primary Teachers' Union, with contributions from the Directorate of Secondary Education, the Union of Inspectors of Primary Education and the Parents' Association.

The curriculum includes the general aims of primary education and subject matter to be taught. For each subject of the curriculum the basic concepts, the teaching objectives, indicative teaching activities and assessment guidelines are allocated to different classes.

The curriculum is common to all public primary schools, but the time allocated to each subject varies, according to the school type – whether the school operates with one class, two classes, three to five classes or six or more classes. All the subjects are compulsory and they are taught in the language of instruction. There are no core curriculum options and no subjects are taught in a language other than the language of instruction. Drawing up the daily schedule is the responsibility of each individual school. The subjects taught and the teaching periods devoted to each subject for each grade per week, as they are prescribed for the type of primary school with six or more teachers, is given in the following:

Subject allocation in weekly periods in primary schools with six or more teachers

Subjects	Grades					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
Greek language	14	14	14	13	10	10
Mathematics	7	7	7	6	6	6
Religion	2	2	2	2	2	2
History	-	-	2	2	2	2
Geography	-	-	2	2	2	2
Science	1	1	2	2	2	2
Patridognosia (<i>Πατριδογνωσία</i>)	3	3	-	-	-	-
English as a foreign language	-	-	-	2	2	2
Art	2	2	2	2	2	2
Music	2	2	2	2	2	2
Physical Education	2	2	2	2	2	2
Design and Technology / Home Economics	2	2	-	-	2	2
Free activities	-	-	-	-	1	1
	35	35	35	35	35	35

Textbooks are prescribed by the Ministry of Education and Culture. Most of the textbooks currently in use have been prepared by the Curriculum Development Unit of the Ministry. However, teachers are free to use additional teaching materials of their choice in order to support their teaching. They are also free to choose their teaching methods and approaches.

3.4 Assessment, progression and certification

Assessment, as it is described in the Primary School Curriculum and other official documents of the Ministry, is considered an integral part of teaching aiming at the improvement of the pupils' progress, the teachers' effectiveness and the curriculum itself. A primary principle of assessment is that it does not aim at the selection or the rejection of pupils.

Teachers are required to adopt a systematic approach to the assessment of their pupils, employing different types of assessment and a variety of assessment techniques. The pupils are assessed on the degree of their participation in class, the results of oral and written tests set out by the classroom teacher, as well as the results of work done in the classroom and at home including project work.

The educational system at the primary level provides for three different types of assessment, the initial or diagnostic assessment, the formative or continuous assessment and the final or summative assessment.

- *Initial assessment* is applied at the beginning of a school year or term and forms the basis for planning for the teacher.
- *Formative assessment* is the prevailing type of pupil assessment, aiming at the continuous monitoring and improvement of the teaching-learning process. It takes place throughout the school year as an integral part of teaching and it provides direct feedback to both teachers and pupils.
- *Final assessment* is applied at the end of a long period of school work or the whole school year in order to determine the success of its results.

All three types of assessment are undertaken by the classroom teacher. The Ministry recommends that a variety of assessment techniques must be used, such as written tests, classroom observation, communication, and pupils' self-evaluation.

The results of assessment are mainly reported by communication with parents. A specific period is assigned each week in the teachers' timetables, which allows for regular meetings of the parents with the classroom teacher. Written reports on the results of pupil assessment are not provided. Nor a grading system exists.

As provided in Regulation 10 of the Primary Education Act of 1997 (ΚΔΠ 225/2008), a child progresses every year from one grade to the next on the basis of age. Regulation 12 of the same Education Act provides that only in exceptional cases a pupil may have to repeat a school year because of unsatisfactory progress with the curriculum. This may only occur once during the pupil's attendance of primary education, and it must have the approval of the school inspector, following notification of the pupil's parents or guardians.

At the end of each school year, each child in public primary schools is issued a progress certificate stating whether the child should progress to the next grade or not. This certificate is required in order to enrol in the next grade (or in the same grade if the child is repeating a year) (Regulation 11).

At the end of primary education, each child is issued a school leaving certificate stating that the child has successfully completed the cycle of studies of the sixth grade and is entitled to graduate and enrol in a gymnasium.

3.5 Guidance and counselling

The responsibility for providing guidance in the curriculum in public primary schools rests primarily with the teacher. Depending on the nature of the problem, he/she may choose to involve the head teacher who may deem to involve the school inspector or the psychologists of the Ministry. No provision of vocational/career guidance is there at this stage of education.

3.6 Teachers

Primary teachers in the public sector are either university graduates or graduates of the Cyprus Pedagogical Academy, which was abolished on the establishment and operation of the University of Cyprus. By an agreement between the teachers' union and the Ministry of Education and Culture, the graduates of the two- or three-year programme of the Pedagogical Academy were considered as university graduates upon graduating from a special programme (*Πρόγραμμα Εξομοίωσης*) which was conducted by the University of Cyprus and other Greek universities in the period 1997-1999.

Most of the university graduates hold a Bachelor's degree from the Primary-School Section of the Department of Education (*Τμήμα Επιστημών της Αγωγής*), Faculty of Social Sciences and Education of the University of Cyprus. There are also graduates of Greek or other foreign universities, the qualifications of whom have been assessed by KYSATS as equivalent to those offered by the University of Cyprus.

The Bachelor degree programme at the University of Cyprus is a four-year full-time course, which comprises compulsory and elective courses. The main areas of study are Pedagogical Science, Teaching Methodology, Content Area Courses, Specialisation, General Education and Foreign Language. The programme is based on the system of the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) with a total number of 240 ECTS required for completion of the course. The programme follows the 'concurrent' model for the initial training of teachers with school experience being an integral part of it.

In-service training provisions for primary school teachers are the same as those detailed for pre-primary teachers (see 2.6).

Primary teachers are allocated by class providing instruction in all or most of the subjects of the curriculum for their pupils. However, in large schools some teachers may act as 'specialists' for some subjects, such as Music, Art, Physical Education, Design and Technology and Home Economics.

4. SECONDARY EDUCATION

Secondary education is offered in two different types in Cyprus, namely Secondary General Education and Secondary Technical and Vocational Education. Each type of education is guided by different aims and underlying philosophies and is administered by a different Directorate of the Ministry of Education and Culture – the Directorate of Secondary General Education and the Directorate of Technical and Vocational Education respectively. Public secondary education is open to children aged twelve to eighteen and it comprises a six-year cycle of studies, which is free for all pupils and compulsory up to the age of fifteen or the end of the third year of studies, whichever comes first. Some private schools extend their cycle of studies to seven years in order to prepare pupils for international examinations.

Secondary general education is school-based. Secondary technical/vocational education is mainly school-based, except for the case of apprenticeship which involves both a school-based and a work-based part. All the types of secondary schools are co-educational institutions functioning on a mixed-ability basis.

Secondary general education

There are two main, broad aims of secondary general education:

- the dissemination of knowledge with emphasis on general education and a gradual transition to specialisation in order to prepare students for an academic, professional or business career; and,
- the development of sound and morally refined personalities in order to provide society with competent, democratic and law-abiding citizens.

It is open to children aged twelve to eighteen and it comprises a six-year course of studies, which is divided into two successive cycles, the first one being the *Gymnasium* and the second one being the *Lyceum*. The Gymnasium offers general education with emphasis on humanities, which is expected to prepare pupils for subject selection in the Lyceum. The educational objectives in the Gymnasium include:

- broadening the value system of pupils (moral, social, personal, aesthetic, technical and economic);
- providing knowledge that will help pupils meet personal, social and economic challenges;
- developing skills for critical literacy through the acquisition of the pupils' first language;
- leading pupils to acquaint themselves with a range of different art forms, express their artistic talents and progressively form their own sense of connoisseurship;
- helping pupils become self-aware of their potential in terms of skills, interests and talents, and be able to appreciate the importance of both intellectual and vocational aspects of work in order to select the type of work they aspire; and,
- developing pupils physically by cultivating their kinaesthetic skills.

The Lyceum offers a three-year cycle of studies which is subdivided into common core subjects, optional stream subjects and subjects of special interest and/or enrichment. The Lyceum aims at:

- offering pupils the opportunity to develop all facets of their capabilities through general as well as specific scientific and technological knowledge, so that they can respond to a changing world and adapt to an evolving work environment; and,
- linking the school with the outside world, thus offering to pupils opportunities to familiarise themselves with the world of work and production, so that they become able to effectively plan their careers, whether they aim to be employed, venture into entrepreneurship or pursue higher education.

Secondary Technical and Vocational Education

Secondary Technical and Vocational Education is open to students who have graduated from the Gymnasium and it offers three types of programmes – formal secondary technical and vocational education; apprenticeship scheme; and, lifelong learning. In the framework of this chapter only formal secondary technical and vocational education will be examined. The Apprenticeship Scheme and the Lifelong learning programmes offered will be examined in Chapter 7.

Formal STVE is offered in two main directions, the theoretical direction and the practical direction, both of which have duration of three years. The ultimate aim of Formal STVE, as outlined in official documents of the Ministry of Education and Culture, is to provide students with sound knowledge and skills, which will prepare them to enter the world of work or continue with further studies at the university or the non-university level of tertiary education. The subjects offered are classified into six categories:

- common core subjects;
- related subjects;
- elective subjects;
- technological/workshop subjects;
- optional subjects of special interest; and,
- industrial training.

Private secondary education

Private secondary education schools are established by private bodies or individuals and they operate on a for-profit basis. They are established and regulated by the Laws on Private Schools and Institutes (Laws 5/1971 – 77(I)/2008) and they are supervised by the Ministry of Education and Culture.

Legislation

The main legislation governing secondary education is Law 99/1989 and Regulations ΚΔΠ 310/1990, as well as the Laws on Private Schools and Institutes, which provide for the establishment and operation of private schools and institutions.

Statistics

Official data of the Statistical Service of Cyprus, reference year 2006/07, are as follows:

- There were 124 secondary schools in operation in 2006/07, of which 64 were gymnasia, 35 Lyceums, 13 technical/vocational schools, 6 evening schools and 6 gymnasia & lyceums.

- A total number of 65 790 pupils were enrolled in secondary education (56 405 in public and 9 385 in private schools). Of these 27 017 were enrolled in gymnasia, 23 025 in lyceums, 4 204 in technical/vocational schools, 937 in evening schools and 10 607 in gymnasia & lyceums.
- The teaching personnel numbered 7 151 (5 477 in public general, 750 in technical/vocational, and 924 in private education).
- The pupil/teacher ratio was 9.2 (9.5 in public general, 5.7 in technical/vocational, and 10.2 in private education).
- One more secondary general school operated in the occupied area with 27 pupils (12 boys and 15 girls).

4.1 Admission

There is no system of entrance examinations for admission to any level of public secondary education. A birth certificate and a school-leaving certificate from a primary school are the only requirements for enrolment in a Gymnasium. Similarly, a school-leaving certificate from a Gymnasium is the only requirement for enrolment either in a Lyceum or a Technical/Vocational School.

A pupil attends the nearest school in his/her neighbourhood, as defined by the catchment area of each school. Only few exceptions may be permitted by the Ministry of Education and Culture, usually for reasons of special needs.

Admission to private secondary schools is based on criteria determined by the owners of the school. Some private schools set entrance examinations.

4.2 Organisation of time, groups and venue

The school calendar and weekly and daily timetables for public secondary general and technical schools are determined by the Ministry of Education and Culture and approved by the Council of Ministers. The academic year in all public secondary schools commences on 1 September and ends on 31 August. Lessons begin on 10 September and end on 31 May.

The academic year is divided into three trimesters, the first trimester beginning on 10 September and ending on 10 December, the second trimester beginning on 11 December and ending on 10 March, and the third trimester beginning on 11 March and ending on 31 May. The teaching time during the academic year is divided into two four-month sessions, which run from 10 September to 20 January and from 21 January to the end of lessons. School holidays include two weeks for Christmas, two weeks for Easter and eleven more days for public, national or religious holidays.

Classes in the Gymnasium take place from Monday to Friday. The school day starts at 07.30 and finishes at 13.35. There are thirty-seven periods a week and three breaks totalling up to fifty or forty minutes each day (fifty or forty minutes for days with seven or eight periods respectively).

Classes in the Lyceum take place from Monday to Friday. The school day starts at 07.30 and finishes at 13.35. There are seven forty-five-minute periods every day with three breaks totalling up to fifty minutes.

Classes in Technical and Vocational Schools take place from Monday to Friday. The school day starts at 07.40 and finishes at 13.35. There are seven forty-five-minute periods every day with three breaks totalling up to fifty minutes.

Pupils in a class are generally of the same age, unless a pupil has repeated a class. No classes are organised on the basis of level of proficiency, aptitudes or achievements, as mixed ability grouping is promoted.

The maximum/minimum class size is determined by the Council of Ministers upon suggestions by the Ministry of Education and Culture. Maximum class size at the Gymnasium level is currently 25 and at the Lyceum level 25 reduced to 20 for laboratory sessions. At the STVE level maximum class size in the Theoretical Stream is 25 and in the Practical Stream 28 reduced to 16 for laboratory sessions in both Streams.

4.3 Curriculum

The National Curriculum for public secondary schools is determined by the Council of Ministers after the approval of a proposal by the Ministry of Education and Culture. The common practice is that subject curricula are drawn up by writing committees consisting of Chief Education Officers and Inspectors of the Ministry, staff of the Pedagogical Institute, Academics and representatives of the Teachers' Unions and the Parents' Associations. Within the framework of the ongoing Educational Reform, guidelines and objectives for the revision of curricula have been drafted on the basis of which subject syllabuses are being revised.

Textbooks are also prescribed by the Ministry. The Curriculum Development Unit of the Ministry of Education and Culture is responsible for the production of textbooks and other teaching materials, which are provided to schools free of charge.

Teachers are obliged to apply the national curriculum and use the prescribed textbooks in their classes, but they are free to choose their teaching methods and materials in order to support their teaching.

The education programmes and the specific elements of the curricula currently in use for each stage of secondary education (Gymnasium, Lyceum and Technical and Vocational Education) are described in the following.

Curriculum – Gymnasium

At the Gymnasium level a three-year programme of general education enriched with elements of technical knowledge is offered. All the subjects taught are compulsory. There are syllabuses for each subject consisting of goals and subject matter and indicative teaching methods and materials.

The allocation of hours per subject is fixed, therefore not subject to any changes. Subject allocation in weekly periods is shown in the following table:

Subject allocation in weekly periods in the Gymnasium

Subject	Number of periods per week		
	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3
Religious Education	2	2	2
Modern Greek	5	5	5
Classical Greek	3	3,5	3,5

Mathematics	4	3	4
History	3	2	2
Civics	0	0	0,5
Vocational Guidance	0	0	0,5
Physics	0	2	2
Chemistry	0	1	1
Biology	0	0	2
Geography	1	2	0
Natural Sciences	2	0	0
English	3	3	3,5
French	2	2	2
Art	2	2	1
Music	2	2	1
Physical Education	3	3	3
Home Economics	1,5	1	1
Design and Technology	1,5	1	1
First Aid	0	0,5	0
Computer Science	2	2	2
Total	37	37	37

Curriculum – Lyceum

The Lyceum (*Eniaio Lykeio*) offers a study programme which is subdivided in common core subjects, optional stream (specialisation) subjects and subjects of special interest and/or enrichment. Both specialisation subjects and subjects of special interest are only offered in the second and the third grade of the Lyceum. Specialisation subjects are offered for 12 and 16 weekly periods in grade 2 and grade 3 respectively. Subjects of special interest are offered for 4 and 2 weekly periods in grade 2 and grade 3 respectively. Pupils in the first grade follow a common core curriculum.

There are syllabuses for every subject, which consist of goals and subject matter and indicative teaching methods and materials. The allocation of subjects in weekly periods in the Lyceum is shown in the following table:

Allocation of subjects in weekly periods in the Lyceum

Subjects	Teaching periods		
	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3
Core Subjects			
Religious Education	2	1,5	2
Modern Greek	4	4	5
Civics	-	-	1
Biology	-	-	-
Music	1	-	-
Art	1	-	-
Physical Education	2	1	1
Classical Greek	3	1	-
History	3	1,5	2

Mathematics	4	3	2
Physics	2	2	-
Chemistry	1	1	-
Natural Science	1	-	-
English	3	-	-
French	2	-	-
Language 1	-	2	2
Language 2	-	2	2
Economics	2	-	-
Computer Studies	2	-	-
Technology	2	-	-
Total periods (core subjects)	35	19	17
Specialisation Subjects			
Specialisation 1	-	4	4
Specialisation 2	-	4	4
Specialisation 3	-	4	4
Specialisation 4	-	-	4
Total periods (specialisation)	0	12	16
Special Interest Subjects			
Lesson 1	-	2	2
Lesson 2	-	2	-
Lesson 3	-	-	-
Total periods (special interest)	0	4	2
Grand total	35	35	35

Curriculum –Secondary Technical and Vocational Education

Responding to the needs of modern society the Ministry of Education and Culture prepared a reform proposal for STVE in 2001, on the basis of which the old system which involved a Technical and a Vocational Direction was replaced by a new system which involves a Theoretical and a Practical Direction. In this framework a new curriculum has been prepared, aiming at a balance to be reserved between general education subjects, technological education subjects and practical workshop subjects. This is expected to be achieved through a number of innovative provisions in the curricula, such as the introduction of a common year of study for both the Theoretical and the Practical Direction, the introduction of new branches of specialisation and the introduction of elective subjects of special interest. The subject allocation in weekly periods is shown in the following table:

Subject allocation in weekly periods in STVE

Subjects	Teaching Periods Per Week					
	Theoretical Direction			Practical Direction		
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Common Core Subjects						
Religious Education	1	1	1	1	1	1
Modern Greek	4	4	4	4	4	4
History and Social Studies	1	1	1	1	1	1

Computers	2	-	-	2	-	-
Physical Education	1	1	1	1	1	1
Total	9	7	7	9	7	7
Related Subjects						
Mathematics	4	4	4	2	2	2
Physics	3	4	4	2	2	2
Chemistry	1	1	1	1	1	1
English	3	2	2	3	2	2
Total	11	11	11	8	7	7
Elective Subjects	-	4	4	-	4	4
Technological Workshop Subjects (Cluster)	15	-	-	18	-	-
Technological Workshop Subjects (Specialty)	-	12	13	-	16	10
Elective Subjects of Special Interest	-	1	-	-	1	-
Practical Training in Industry	-	-	-	-	-	7
Total Periods per Week	35	35	35	35	35	35

4.4 Assessment, progression and certification

Both continuous and final assessment is applied in the Gymnasium. Continuous assessment is both oral and written including quizzes, revision tests and individual or group projects. The grading system is on a scale A – E. Final assessment involves internally set final examinations with a grading system on a scale 1 – 20. Pupils that successfully complete an academic year are awarded a certificate that is the only requirement for enrolment to the next grade.

The same assessment provisions apply to the Lyceums and the Technical/Vocational Schools as well, except for their final grade (Grade C), where final internal examinations are replaced by the *Pancyprian Examinations* centrally organised and set by the Ministry of Education and Culture. The Pancyprian Examinations serve both as final examinations of the Lyceums and the Technical/Vocational Schools and entrance examinations for the public universities of Cyprus and the Greek universities. Following the Pancyprian Examinations, an aggregate of marks based on the results of both the continuous assessment and the final examinations determines the pupil's successful graduation. A school-leaving certificate (*Apolytirio*) is issued upon successful graduation, which is a qualification for employment and a prerequisite for access to tertiary education.

4.5 Guidance and counselling

In the last year of the Gymnasium pupils are offered career and vocational guidance (0.5 per week) as part of their curriculum (see 4.3, allocation of subjects in weekly periods in the Gymnasium). The aim

is to help pupils choose the field or combination of studies they wish to follow in the upper division. Moreover, the Guidance and Counselling Service of the Ministry offers career guidance to pupils at all stages of secondary education.

4.6 Teachers and trainers

A university degree in the subject of specialisation makes one eligible to be included in the official register (waiting list of the Education Service Committee) of candidates for appointment. A teacher's appointment comes according to his/her order in the waiting list, which is based on a system of accumulation of credits upon predetermined criteria. Successful completion of a 26-week pre-service training programme in pedagogy, offered by the University of Cyprus, is a prerequisite for appointment.

In-service training is offered to teachers in secondary education by similar provisions as those existing for primary and pre-primary teachers (see 2.5 and 3.5). Additionally to this, the Directorate of STVE has introduced a plan for systematic staff development through scholarships, exchanges of teaching staff with other countries and cooperation with the European Training Foundation-ETF.

As all secondary school teachers are subject specialists, they are allocated by subject. Therefore, a teacher provides instruction for pupils in different classes, either of the same or different grades.

5. POST-SECONDARY NON-TERTIARY EDUCATION

The educational system of Cyprus does not provide for a post-secondary non-tertiary (ISCED 4) level of education institutionalised as such; nor are there any institutions issuing certificates of 'post secondary non-tertiary education'. Therefore, all the sub-divisions of this chapter will be omitted as not applicable.

5.1 Admission

Not applicable

5.2 Organisation of time, groups and venue

Not applicable

5.3 Curriculum

Not applicable

5.4 Assessment, progression and certification

Not applicable

5.5 Guidance and counselling

Not applicable

5.6 Teachers and trainers

Not applicable

6. TERTIARY EDUCATION

Tertiary education in Cyprus is provided at university and non-university level, both in public and private institutions of higher education. There are currently (academic year 2009/10) three state and three private universities, seven public higher education institutions and twenty-five private higher education institutions in operation. Another private university has got an initial license and it is expected to start operating in the academic year 2010/11.

State universities

The three state universities are the University of Cyprus, the Open University of Cyprus, and the Cyprus University of Technology. All three universities have been founded as public corporate bodies. They are academically autonomous governed by their Council and Senate and their different faculties and departments are governed by Boards, each faculty headed by a Dean and each department by a Chairperson. The official languages of the universities are Greek and Turkish, the official languages of the Republic of Cyprus.

The *University of Cyprus* was founded in July 1989 by Law 144/1989, and it started operating in 1992. The main objectives of the university, as stated in the governing law, are two:

- the advancement of science, knowledge, learning and education through teaching and research; and,
- the enhancement of social, cultural and economic development in Cyprus.

The university offers programmes at the Bachelor, Master and Doctorate level of education, through the following Faculties:

- Faculty of Humanities;
- Faculty of Pure and Applied Sciences;
- Faculty of Social Science and Education;
- Faculty of Economics and Management;
- Faculty of Engineering; and,
- Faculty of Letters.

The *Open University of Cyprus* was established in 2002 by Law 234 (I)/2002 and it started operating in the academic year 2006/07. It is the only university in Cyprus dedicated to distance learning. The aims of the university, as stated in the founding law, are two:

- the provision of equal opportunity in higher education, irrespective of age, time or place; and
- the promotion of science, knowledge, education, research and lifelong learning.

Until its complete autonomy, the university is governed by an Interim Governing Board appointed by the Council of Ministers.

The Open University of Cyprus offers programmes at Bachelor, Master and Doctorate level, as well as training and vocational programmes tailored to the needs of the community and the labour market. The university is in the process of establishing the following Faculties:

- Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences;
- Faculty of Economics and Management; and,
- Faculty of Pure and Applied Sciences.

The *Cyprus University of Technology* was established in 2003 by Law 198 (I)/2003, and it started operating in 2007/08. Orientated towards applied science and research, the university aims at the following:

- to offer students high level scientific, technological and vocational education;
- to produce high quality research and transcend the traditional boundaries between basic and applied research; and,
- to improve university cooperation with industry and the economic sector.

The university offers programmes at Bachelor, Master and Doctorate level through the following five Faculties:

- Faculty of Geotechnical Sciences and Environmental Management;
- Faculty of Economics and Management;
- Faculty of Health Sciences;
- Faculty of Applied Arts and Communication; and,
- Faculty of Engineering and Technology.

Until its complete autonomy, the university is governed by an Interim Governing Board appointed by the Council of Ministers.

All three public universities have established international relations with leading educational institutions and international organisations.

Private universities

By decision of the Council of Ministers in September 2007, three Private Universities began operating in October 2007. These are the Frederick University, the European University-Cyprus and the University of Nicosia-Cyprus. Through their Faculties and Departments, private universities offer programmes at Bachelor and Master level. Doctorate programmes are not yet offered.

Law 109 (I)/2005 is the governing legislation for private universities, providing for their establishment and operation.

Non-university level public institutions

Non-university level public tertiary education is currently offered by seven institutions, operating under different ministries, which are fully responsible for the organisation and the regulation of each

institution. The general aim of each institution is to train professionals in its respective field, in order to satisfy the needs of local industry in Cyprus. The language of instruction is Greek or English.

The following institutions are in operation in 2009/10: The Higher Technical Institute, the Forestry College, the School of Nursing and Midwifery, the Mediterranean Institute of Management, the Higher Hotel Institute of Cyprus, the Tourist Guides School and the Police Academy.

The Higher Technical Institute and the School of Nursing admitted their last students in 2006/07 as their programmes will be phased out in view that they are covered by upgraded programmes offered by the Cyprus University of Technology. The same applies for one of the programmes of the Higher Hotel Institute.

Private non-university level institutions

There are currently (academic year 2009/10) twenty-five private institutions of higher education registered with the Ministry. All of these run on a for-profit basis offering vocational and academic programmes, at the undergraduate or the postgraduate level, in various fields of study, such as Secretarial Studies, Business Administration, Banking, Accountancy, Hotel Management, Computers and Engineering. The duration of the programmes varies from one to four years according to the level of studies.

The establishment, operation and control of private non-university institutions is governed by Laws 67(I)/1996-1(I)/2004.

The programmes of study of non-university level institutions are accredited by the *Council for Assessment and Accreditation* (SEKAP). By the start of the academic year 2009/10 SEKAP has accredited programmes of study at the certificate level (one-year duration), the Diploma level (two-year duration), the Higher Diploma level (three-year duration), the Bachelor level (four-year duration) and the Master level (one- or two-year duration). No programmes at the Ph.D. level have yet been accredited.

Bologna Process

Cyprus joined the Bologna process at the ministerial meeting in Prague, in 2001. Since then Cyprus has been promoting the Bologna main objectives for increasing mobility and transparency in higher education, by developing policies and taking measures conducive to this end. Developments include:

- the adoption of the three cycle qualification framework – Bachelor, Master and Doctorate – in both public and private universities;
- the adoption of the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) and the Diploma Supplement by the public universities and some public institutions, as well as the intention of the government to promote this system both in the public and the private sector;
- the adoption of the Europass and the establishment of a Europass Centre (in the Cyprus Productivity Centre);
- the adoption of the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) and the European Credit Transfer System for Vocational Education and Training (ECVET); and,
- the expansion of the higher education sector by the establishment of new universities – public and private;

Statistics

Official data of the Statistical Service, reference year 2006/07, are as follows:

- The percentage of graduates of upper secondary education who pursued further studies in Cyprus or abroad was 82 % (37 % in Cyprus and 45 % abroad).
- The total number of students was 43 415 (22 227 in Cyprus and 21 188 abroad)
- Of the 22 227 students in Cyprus, 16 266 were Cypriots and 5 961 foreign students.

6.1 Admission

Admission – Universities

All three public universities follow a policy of restricted numbers of admission, which are set annually by the Council of the university. The exact admission procedures, at each level of studies (undergraduate or postgraduate), for each university, are described in the following.

The University of Cyprus

Admissions at the undergraduate level of studies are based on the system of entrance examinations, with the exception of a small percentage of the whole number of admissions, which are based on special criteria.

The entrance examinations, namely the *Pancyprrian Examinations*, are set every June by the Ministry of Education and Culture according to the provisions of the relevant law (2006 Law of Conduct for the Pancyprrian Examinations). In order to be eligible for the examination, applicants must be Cypriot citizens with at least one Cypriot parent. They must also have a school-leaving certificate from a lyceum, a technical school or a recognised private school.

Admissions by special criteria apply, amongst others, to Cypriot applicants of special categories (e.g. children of missing persons as a result of the Turkish invasion, persons with special needs, mature students); Greeks of the diaspora and Cypriots who belong to specific religious or ethnic groups; Turkish Cypriots; and, international students.

Admissions at the postgraduate level, as provided in the Postgraduate Studies Regulations, include University level education in a relevant area as well as academic ranking; letters of recommendation; personal interview at the discretion of each department; and, possible additional criteria that a Department may adopt.

Open University of Cyprus

Admissions to the Open University of Cyprus are based on predetermined criteria and not on written examinations. Prospective students submit their applications online and on the basis of the set criteria they are ranked by an automated system of evaluation. In order to be eligible to apply to a course at the undergraduate level of studies, prospective students must be graduates of secondary level education and have a good knowledge of Greek. In addition they must be able to adequately operate a personal computer and use the Internet.

Admission (ranking) criteria include grades and number of years elapsed since graduating from secondary education; knowledge of foreign (European) languages; post secondary level diplomas; and, unemployment.

In order to be eligible to apply for a postgraduate course, prospective students must be holders of a University level degree. In order to apply for a PhD degree, prospective students must hold a postgraduate level degree on a related subject.

Ranking criteria for admission to a postgraduate course include grades and years elapsed since obtaining a first degree; working experience relevant to the course; knowledge of foreign (European) languages; participation in conferences, certificates, scholarships and awards; and, references.

Cyprus University of Technology

Admission procedures to the Cyprus University of Technology, at all levels, are much the same as those for the University of Cyprus.

Private universities

As stipulated by Law 109(I)/2005, a leaving certificate from a recognised school of secondary education or an equivalent qualification acquired in Cyprus or abroad, is required for admission at the undergraduate level of studies. Admission at the postgraduate level of studies is based upon possession of a university degree or an equivalent qualification.

Admission – Non-university level institutions

Public non-university institutions

As provided in the governing law for tertiary education (Laws (67(I)/1996 to 1(I)/2004), the number of students in each public institution is determined by a decision of the Council of Ministers, upon the recommendation of the responsible Minister. A school-leaving certificate from a secondary school in Cyprus or an equivalent qualification from abroad is a prerequisite for admission. In addition, all institutions running three-year diploma courses allocate potential students on the basis of the results obtained at the Pancyprian Examinations.

Private non-university institutions

The school-leaving certificate of a recognised secondary school or an equivalent qualification is a prerequisite for admission to certificate, diploma, higher diploma or bachelor programmes of study. A Bachelor degree or equivalent is the prerequisite for admission to a Master's programme of study.

6.2 Students' contributions and financial support

Students' contribution and financial support varies according to the level and type of the institution and the individual programme of studies. All Cypriot students, either in university or non-university education, receive a grant from the government, totalling €1 708 per academic year, increased to €2 562 if they are paying fees. Students from large families receive an additional €854.

The fees of the public universities are set by their Council and they are paid to the universities. Fees for Cypriot and EU undergraduate students at the University of Cyprus total €1 709 per semester and are fully paid by the government. International undergraduate students from out with the EU countries pay fees which total €3 417 per semester. Postgraduate students, Cypriot or international, pay fees set by the Council of Ministers. According to the 2009/10 Postgraduate Prospectus, the current fees are as follows:

- Master programmes: €5 125 per programme

- Master in Business administration: €10 251
- PhD programmes: €427 per course for the taught stage; €854 per semester for the research stage; €170 per semester for the dissertation writing stage.

The fees at the Cyprus University of Technology are much the same as those at the University of Cyprus.

Cypriot and EU citizens do not pay fees at the Open University of Cyprus. They only pay €220 for administration expenses. International students from out with the EU countries pay fees, which are set at €1 350 per module.

Students in the public non-university level institutions do not pay fees. In some cases they are offered free accommodation and board.

Students at the private institutions, either at the university or the non-university level of studies, pay fees, which are approved by the Ministry of Education.

6.3 Organisation of the academic year

Organisation of the academic year at the university level is determined by the Councils of the universities. Length, beginning and end of the academic year of public non-university level institutions are decided by the competent Minister based on the recommendation of the Council of the institution.

In most cases the academic year begins in September or October and ends in June or July. It is usually divided into two semesters and comprises 36 weeks, including examinations, Christmas holidays and Easter holidays.

6.4 Assessment, progression and certification

Every institution of higher education has an organised system of student assessment. Students are assessed internally by the teaching staff of the institution. Additional examinations set by external bodies are conducted only in a few cases of public non-university level institutions, such as the Cyprus Forestry College and the School of Nursing and Midwifery.

Assessment methods include written and/or oral examinations at the mid-term or the end of a semester, continuous assessment focused on the student's active participation, laboratory exercises, written or practical assignments, projects and dissertations. Written examinations are set by all the institutions.

Student progression from one year/stage of studies to the next is based on the relevant regulations of each institution. Students are promoted on the precondition that they have obtained at least the minimum pass mark (usually 50 %) in all prescribed evaluations and have attended at least a minimum required percentage of the programme (ranging from 75 % to 100 % in the different institutions).

Certification is the responsibility of each institution of higher education. Upon successful completion of the programme of studies the institution awards the respective qualification. Public universities issue Bachelor, Master and PhD degrees. The award of a Bachelor or a Master degree is subject to the approval of the Board of the Department. The award of a PhD degree is subject to the approval of the Senate. Private universities award Bachelor and Master, but not PhD degrees.

Public and private non-university level institutions issue certificates of attendance, diplomas, higher diplomas and Bachelors for studies of one, two, three, or four years duration respectively. The degrees of public institutions are recognised by KYSATS. The degrees of the private institutions are not recognised unless they have been accredited by SEKAP.

A final degree/qualification is usually the prerequisite for the next higher stage of studies, e.g. a Bachelor's degree is the prerequisite for admission to a Master's programme and a Master's degree is the prerequisite for admission to a PhD programme.

A degree/qualification is usually the prerequisite for access to a field of specialisation, but it does not necessarily give direct access to a certain profession. By exception, the final qualifications of some public non-university level institutions give direct access to a certain profession. Such is the case with the Police Academy and the School of Nursing and Midwifery.

6.5 Guidance and counselling

Academic and career guidance services are available for students in all the universities and the non-university level institutions. At the university level there are usually Careers Offices or Services for Academic Affairs and Student Welfare, which are responsible for advising students, both during and on completion of their studies, on employment and career prospects and postgraduate studies abroad. In the same way, the Guidance and Counselling Services of the institutions offer information and help prospective students to choose suitable programmes of study.

6.6 Academic staff

Public universities

The academic staff positions, the procedures of appointment and the qualifications required for each position are almost the same for all three public universities. The existing academic staff positions are those of the Professor, the Associate Professor, the Assistant Professor and the Lecturer. In addition, there exist the posts of Professors Emeriti, Visiting Professors, Postgraduate Research Associates and Specialist Teaching Staff. All posts are open to any applicant, Cypriot or not, provided that he/she has the necessary qualifications.

A doctoral degree awarded by a recognised university and evidence of competence in teaching and research at the university level are the minimum required qualifications for appointment (Lecturer post). Additional requirements for three or more years of autonomous teaching and research at a recognised university, as well as original publications in reputable international scientific journals are set for positions higher than that of the Lecturer.

The employment status of the permanent academic staff of public universities is not that of a public servant. Systematic in-service training is not provided for the academic staff.

Private universities

As provided in the governing law for private universities (Law 109(I)/2005) the qualifications of the teaching/research staff, the selection procedures and the conditions of service must be prescribed in the Charter of each private university and must correspond to international standards and anything applicable at the University of Cyprus.

The positions provided for the teaching/research staff are the same as those for public universities. No systematic in-service training is provided for the academic staff.

Non-university level public institutions

Teaching posts are filled either by appointment after vacancies have been announced publicly or by promotion, according to procedures provided by the governing regulations of the institute. In the case that a vacant position has been announced, any qualified individual may apply, provided that he/she is a citizen of the Republic of Cyprus or of the European Union.

Members of academic staff hold, as a minimum, a first degree in their subject area and usually a postgraduate qualification. Their professional status is that of a civil servant, therefore they serve on probation for the first two years after their appointment to a permanent post. Their conditions of service are outlined in the relevant schemes of service which are approved by the Council of Ministers. There are no provisions either for pre-service or in-service training.

Non-university level private institutions

Teachers in the private non-university sector are accountable to their employers, i.e. the owners of the institutions. No provisions for systematic in-service training are there, nor is any pre-service training required.

7. CONTINUING EDUCATION AND TRAINING

There is an abundance of courses on offer for adults in Cyprus, either in the category of formal, non-formal or vocational education, aiming to satisfy different needs for continuous and lifelong learning.

The objective of formal adult education is to give working people the opportunity to gain a qualification that will improve their career prospects and enable them to reach their full potential.

Non-formal continuing education aims at improving the quality of life of the individuals involved by offering them opportunities for self-development.

Vocational training aims at upgrading the skills of individuals working in technical fields and train unskilled or semi-skilled workers in vocational trades.

Continuous education is mainly provided through the State Institutes of Further Education, the Apprenticeship Scheme, the evening classes of the Technical Schools, the Adult Education Centres, the Human Resource Development Authority, the Cyprus Productivity Centre, the Cyprus Academy of Public Administration and part-time private institutes.

According to official statistical data, reference year 2006/07, enrolments in continuing education were as follows:

- State Institutes for Further Education, 19 134;
- Apprenticeship Scheme, 370;
- Evening classes of Technical Schools, 1 368;
- Adult Education Centres, 22 014;
- Human Resource Development Authority, 58 357;
- Cyprus Productivity Centre, 820;
- Cyprus Academy of Public Administration, 2 419;
- Part-time Institutes, 37 605

7.1 Policy and legislative framework

An 'Adult Education and Training Legislation' expressing a 'national policy' on continuing education and training does not exist. Nor is there any single authority responsible for the organisation, application and coordination of these courses. Instead, a number of different agencies are involved in the field, and a number of laws, provisions and decisions are passed with a view to securing satisfactory levels of continuing education.

The main agencies involved in the field of continuing education and training are the Ministry of Education and Culture, the Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance, the Ministry of Finance, semi-government organisations and private companies. The major pieces of legislation governing all sectors of continuing education to this day are as follows:

- A special agreement between the Government of Cyprus and the International Labour Office (ILO) in 1963 regarding the establishment of the Cyprus Productivity Centre, the aim of which was the provision of initial and continuing technical and vocational training to adults.
- Laws 21/1974, 6/1975, 17/1980 and 94/1988, which provided for the establishment of the Industrial Training Authority, a semi-government organisation whose remit was to plan and approve programmes aimed at the technical and professional training and continuing education of adults.
- Law 125(I)/1999, which provided for the evolution of the Industrial Training Authority into the Human Resource Development Authority (HRDA).
- Regulations governing the operation of the Public Evening Secondary Schools (Official Gazette of the Republic of Cyprus, 9 March 1990), amended in 1999 to cover the operation of the afternoon and evening classes of the Technical Schools as well.
- Decision number 35.582 (22/05/91) of the Council of Ministers, by which the Cyprus Academy of Public Administration (CAPA) was established.
- Law 234(I)/2002, providing for the establishment and operation of the Open University of Cyprus.
- Decision 11.330 of the Council of Ministers, by which the Pedagogical Institute was established.
- Law 180/87 and its amendment 4/99, which provide for pre-service training of prospective teachers as a prerequisite for appointment in public secondary schools.
- Special provisions issued by the Department of Primary Education of the Ministry of Education and Culture concerning the operation of the Adult Education Centres.
- Special provisions issued by the Department of Secondary Education of the Ministry of Education and Culture concerning the operation of the State Institutes of Further Education.

The aforementioned pieces of legislation outline the rights and duties of adults with regard to continuing education and training as well.

7.2 Distribution of responsibilities

The main providers of continuing education and training are the Ministry of Education and Culture, the Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance and the Ministry of Finance, as well as private companies. Their specific responsibilities are as follows:

The Ministry of Education and Culture is responsible for:

- The Evening Technical School and the afternoon and evening classes at the Technical schools, operating under the Directorate of Secondary Technical and Vocational Education of the Ministry;
- The Adult Education Centres, operating under the Directorate of Primary Education of the Ministry;

- The State Institutes of Further Education, operating under the Directorate of Secondary General Education;
- The Cyprus Pedagogical Institute, which offers compulsory and optional programmes of in-service training for practicing teachers;
- The Open University, which offers lifelong training and vocational programmes in addition to its undergraduate and postgraduate programmes of study;
- Part-time private institutes registered with the Department of Secondary Education; and,
- Private institutions of tertiary education registered with the Department of Tertiary Education.

The Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance is responsible for:

- The Cyprus Productivity Centre;
- The Human Resource Development Authority; and,
- The Mediterranean Institute of Management, which is the international part of the Cyprus Productivity Centre;

The Ministry of Education and Culture jointly with the Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance are responsible for:

- The Apprenticeship Scheme, which is run at the premises of the Technical and Vocational Schools.

The Ministry of Finance is responsible for:

- The Cyprus Academy of Public Administration, which offers seminars and workshops to civil servants.

Officials in the three ministries take decisions on the creation of continuing education programmes in consultation with the various social partners involved in continuing education, including the employers' organisations, the trade unions and representatives of the trainees themselves.

Private companies also run training programmes for their personnel, aiming to satisfy their short- or long-term needs. A company may request a subsidy from the Human Resource Development Authority (HRDA) in order to organise some programmes. In this case, the proposed programme must be submitted to HRDA for approval. No other governmental control is exercised on any programme of a private company.

7.3 Financing

Most financing for continuing education and training is granted through the state budget, since most of the programmes offered are state-run. In addition, programmes run by private companies are often subsidised by HRDA which is a semi-governmental organisation.

The ministries involved in continuing education and training prepare budgets regarding the programmes they offer, which they submit to the Ministry of Finance in order to include them in the national budget. The HRDA however, in addition to funds from the national budget, receives funding from a training levy, which is set at 0.5 % on the payroll of all enterprises of the private sector.

In some cases participants pay fees that cover part of the cost of the programmes. Such is the case with the programmes of the Adult Education Centres (only persons over 65 do not pay fees), the afternoon/evening courses offered at the Technical Schools and the programmes of the HRDA, where the participants – always coming from the private sector – are required to pay a small contribution (usually paid by the employers). Employers' organisations offering seminars to their members may also charge the trainees with some fees.

7.4 Programmes and providers

Formal adult education

Formal adult education programmes are offered at the secondary level of education by evening schools and at the tertiary level of education by the Mediterranean Institute of Management and the Open University of Cyprus.

The evening schools run on a full-time basis, on evening hours, on the premises of public schools, and offer adults (over 18) and young school leavers (over 15) a 'second chance' to gain the secondary school leaving certificate.

The Mediterranean Institute of Management offers postgraduate programmes in management, either in morning or in evening hours, in its premises.

In 2008/09, the Open University of Cyprus offered self-funded lifelong course modules and issued certificates of attendance in the following areas:

- At the undergraduate level: Business Administration.
- At the postgraduate level: Open and Distance Education; Introduction in Adult Education; Teaching of Natural Sciences; Business Administration; and, Banking/Finance.

Non-formal adult education

Non-formal adult education is mainly offered through Adult Education Centres and the State Institutes of Further Education run by the Ministry of Education and Culture.

The Adult Education Centres operate from October to the end of April offering a variety of programmes to individuals over the age of fifteen. They usually operate on the premises of public schools with most of the classes taking place in afternoon and evening hours. Moreover, the Adult Education Centres organise special courses for disadvantaged groups, such as people with special needs, disabilities and learning difficulties, mentally ill people, prisoners and elderly people in care homes.

The State Institutes of Further Education operate from mid-September to the end of May on the premises of public schools, offering programmes to high school graduates seeking to improve their knowledge of languages, accounting or computers.

Continuing vocational training

Continuing vocational training is offered through the Cyprus Productivity Centre, the Cyprus Academy of Public Administration, the afternoon and evening classes at the Technical Schools, the Apprenticeship Scheme and in-company courses of the Human Resource Development Authority.

The Cyprus Productivity Centre offers short modular programmes that focus on technical occupations and management, aiming to offer those already working the opportunity to upgrade their skills and knowledge.

The Cyprus Academy of Public Administration (CAPA) offers continuing learning workshops and seminars to civil servants, focusing on management in the public sector, personal and interpersonal skills and EU issues. As of April 2004, newcomers in the public service are obliged to attend an induction training programme at the premises of CAPA.

The afternoon and evening classes run on the premises of technical schools offer both short modular courses leading to a certificate or longer programmes which lead to the acquisition of a qualification equivalent to the school leaving certificate of the technical schools.

The Apprenticeship Scheme, run jointly by the Ministry of Education and Culture and the Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance on the premises of Technical Schools, addresses drop-out from formal education. The scheme is open to graduates of the second grade of the Gymnasium (about 15 years old) and lasts for two years, offering alternate practical and theoretical training. Practical training takes place in industry, and trainees are paid for working three days a week. Theoretical training is provided at a technical school two days per week. Apprentices are trained on building, furniture and woodwork, electrical installations, car mechanics, metal work, aluminium manufacturing, machine work, silver/gold work, dressmaking, cooking, depending on the needs of the labour market. The present scheme is to be replaced by a new scheme, which will offer a wider spectrum of specialization.

7.5 Quality assurance

The various agents offering continuing education programmes are responsible for retaining quality standards of the respective programmes.

The Inspectorate of the Ministry of Education and Culture is responsible for supervising and assuring quality of teaching at the Evening Technical School, the afternoon and evening classes at the Technical Schools, the Adult Education Centres and the State Institutes of Further Education.

The HRDA Board of Governors is responsible for quality assurance for the HRDA programmes. In this framework it invited, in 2006, external experts to carry out an ex-post evaluation study of the programmes of the period 1998-2004. A system for the assessment and certification of training centres and training providers has also been implemented since 2006.

7.6 Guidance and counselling

The Department of Labour of the Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance is responsible for applying the Government's policy on employment and human capital development. Amongst others it provides information and takes action on human rights in employment, incentives for job finding for unemployed persons and individuals from vulnerable groups, employment trends, employment of EU and NON-EU citizens and employment of foreign students in Cyprus and asylum related individuals. Through its Register and Search for Job Vacancies On-Line System, individuals have the opportunity of immediate service and access to information.

Career guidance and counselling is also offered at all continuing education institutions. Courses, subjects and career opportunities are frequently advertised in these institutions.

7.7 Teachers and trainers

Teachers and trainers in the evening schools are qualified secondary school teachers assigned to teach in these schools with the provision that one morning teaching period counts as one and a half in evening schools. Trainers at the State Institutes of Further Education are also teachers of secondary education, either seconded or paid an extra fee for teaching in these institutes. Secondary or primary teachers teach most of the courses offered at the Adult Education Centres as well.

The teaching staff of the Mediterranean Institute of Management consists of experts who hold relevant degrees in the subjects they teach. They are full-time public servants or guest lecturers from universities of Cyprus or abroad.

Trainers for vocational training programmes are selected by the authorities of bodies or organisations offering such programmes.

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Useful websites

The Government Portal: www.cyprus.gov.cy/portal/

Ministry of Education and Culture: www.moec.gov.cy/

SEKAP: www.moec.gov.cy/sekap/

KYSATS: www.kysats.ac.cy/

Pedagogical Institute: www.pi.ac.cy/

HRDA: www.hrdauth.org.cy/

Productivity Centre: www.mlsi.gov.cy/kepa/