

EQAVET, Athens Peer Review on Quality Assurance Methodology & Implementation Manual for IVET Study Programmes - Flash Report

The Greek Peer Review

The 19th EQAVET Peer Review in 2023 took place 4-5 of May in Athens, hosted by the National Organization for the Certification of Qualifications & Vocational Guidance (EOPPEP). Six peers from Germany, Hungary, Croatia, Luxembourg and Slovenia participated in the event.

The Peer Review focused on a new Greek project on a Quality Assurance Methodology (QAM) and a complementary Implementation Manual for IVET providers, which is currently piloted in two IVET Institutes, both located in the Attica region. It is an initial approach to a systematic QAM applied at IVET provider level in Greece and the initiative is embedded in a wider policy agenda on enhancing the linkages between IVET and the labour market needs. EOPPEP will evaluate the pilot project to draw lessons for the implementation on a larger scale. The Peer Review was regarded as a good opportunity to gain international feedback, which will feed into the evaluation of the pilot.

The Peer Review meeting was launched with welcome speech by the Secretary General of Vocational Education, Training, Lifelong Learning and Youth of the Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs, who referred to the implementation of the reform law 4763/2020 on upgrading and strengthening of Vocational Education and Training.

The Greek host presented an overview on the wider policy agenda and the piloted QA methodology and Implementation Manual and facilitated a panel discussion with social partners. The peers appreciated the opportunity to discuss with Greek stakeholders and IVET providers, who shared their experiences participating in the pilot project.

Quality Assurance to support linkages between IVET and the needs of the labour market

Greece introduced a holistic reform of the VET system in 2020 (Law 4763/2020), where VET and lifelong learning are linked in a common strategy aiming to limit overlaps among HQF¹ levels 3-5 and to meet the needs of the labour market. The engagement of social partners constitutes an important new element of the new Greek VET approach. A set of different national and regional councils were established to allow stakeholders to regularly discuss topics related to cooperation in VET.

The host explained how baselines, classifications and comparisons on learning outcomes are needed to build a foundation for a wider systematic approach and quality culture. Introducing QA at IVET provider level constitutes a crucial step towards this direction. Given the novelty of the pilot, the Greek host explained that they put considerable attention to establishing a contextually relevant QA terminology for Greece, that would make sense at provider level and is at the same time aligned with EQAVET indicators and EU frameworks.

The social partners emphasised the need for a skilled workforce and underlined that QA is an important tool to ensure this and to combat unemployment. The Greek host and the social

¹ The Hellenic Qualifications Framework (HQF) is referenced directly to the eight levels of EQF

partners discussed how they can reinforce their collaboration for IVET to become more attractive and ensure VET provision is based on skills forecasting and considers emerging trends on the labour market.

Introducing a new Quality Assurance Methodology at IVET provider level

Objective of the pilot project was to test the newly developed QA Methodology and the Implementation Manual with two public IVET providers (IEK), and to analyse the results in view of necessary revisions before a nation-wide roll out. Three IVET specialties at level HQF 5 were selected for the pilot:

- Air Transport Services Officer, implemented by the Experimental Public Initial Vocational Training Institute (IEK) of Glyfada,
- Communication and Information Technologies in the Travel Industry (V.I.C.T. Travel), implemented by the Thematic (STEAM) Public IEK of Aegaleo, and
- Digital Marketing in e-Commerce specialist (implemented by both IEK).

The two IVET providers received the Implementation Manual and got tailored support on how to assess and analyse the quality of their provided study programmes. According to the IEK, experiences with the pilot were overall positive, yet the timeline and the additional workload related to carrying out the different QA steps were mentioned as challenges.

Continuous improvement and feedback loops to enhance VET-provider ownership of self-assessment

The QAM and the Implementation Manual were designed with the purpose of establishing a 'quality culture' in IVET schools, based on self-assessment as well as external evaluation. The QA manual stipulates a series of steps, including a SWOT-analysis and a compliance analysis against several quality standards (KPIs), followed by an improvement plan. The manual provides a set of recommended KPIs, but the IVET providers are also allowed to define other, locally relevant indicators. Results from the internal QA form the basis of an external evaluation.

Peer discussion

The Greek host and peers discussed the preliminary outcomes from the pilot initiative and explored how the implementation could be scaled up in a sustainable manner. Focus of the discussions was the EQAVET quality cycle and the culture of continuous improvement it implies, where IVET providers use the collected data and findings from the self-assessment to improve in those areas where weaknesses and shortcomings were identified.

The EQAVET Peer Review initiative 2022 – 2023

The [2020 Council Recommendation on VET](#) called upon the EQAVET Network to develop a specific methodology for EQAVET peer reviews, with the objective to support the improvement and transparency of quality assurance arrangements at system level in the Member States. Over the course of 2021, with the support of DG EMPL and the EQAVET Secretariat, the EQAVET Network agreed on a joint methodology and prepared a Peer Review Manual.



The Quality Assurance National Reference Points (EQAVET NRPs) from 21 Member States have agreed to take part in the first phase of the EQAVET Network's peer review initiative. The Greek Peer Review was the ninth out of twelve Peer Reviews that are scheduled to take place in 2023, following nine Peer Reviews in 2022.