

## Social Cohesion and Development

Vol 11, No 2 (2016)

# Social Cohesion and Development

Biannual Scientific Review,  
Autumn 2016, volume 11, issue 2

# Κοινωνική Συνοχή και Ανάπτυξη

**22** Εξαμηνιαία Επιστημονική Επεθεώρηση,  
Φθινόπωρο 2016, τόμος 11ος, τεύχος 2

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**Αντώνης Κώστας**, Η Σημασία και Ο Ρόλος των Οργανώσεων της Κοινωνικής Οικονομίας και των Κοινωνικών Συνεταιριστικών Επιχειρήσεων στην Ελλάδα. Μια Μελέτη Περίπτωσης στην Περιφερειακή Ενότητα Καβάλας

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Θ. Σακελλαρόπουλος (επιμ.)

# Η ΚΟΙΝΩΝΙΚΗ ΠΟΛΙΤΙΚΗ ΤΗΣ ΕΥΡΩΠΑΪΚΗΣ ΕΝΩΣΗΣ



Θεόδωρος Σακελλαρόπουλος  
επιμέλεια

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ISBN 978-960-6619-62-5

ΣΕΛΙΔΕΣ 608

ΔΙΑΣΤΑΣΗ 17 x 24

ΤΙΜΗ 42 €

Ο συλλογικός τόμος Η Κοινωνική Πολιτική της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης, που παραδίδεται στο επιστημονικό και αναγνωστικό κοινό, έχει ως σκοπό την παροχή βασικών και ειδικών γνώσεων στο θέμα των Ευρωπαϊκών πολιτικών απασχόλησης και κοινωνικής προστασίας, όπως ασκούνται σήμερα από τους θεσμούς και τα όργανα της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης. Οι συγγραφείς είναι έμπειροι και αναγνωρισμένοι επιστήμονες και ερευνητές στον τομέα τους. Πραγματεύονται τις επιμέρους θεματικές, όπως το θεσμικό πλαίσιο (Συνθήκες, Ανοικτός Συντονισμός), τα όργανα (ΕΚΤ, Επιτροπή απασχόλησης και κοινωνικής προστασίας) καθώς και τις ευρωπαϊκές πολιτικές απασχόλησης, ασφάλισης, υγείας, κοινωνικής ενσωμάτωσης, μετανάστευσης, εκπαίδευσης, την Εταιρική κοινωνική ευθύνη, την τοπική κοινωνική πολιτική, τα δίκτυα κ.λπ.

Ο τόμος αποτελεί μια σύγχρονη και ενημερωμένη εισαγωγή για όλους όσους ενδιαφέρονται να αποκτήσουν ειδικές γνώσεις για την πορεία της σύγχρονης Ευρωπαϊκής κοινωνίας και τις πολιτικές κοινωνικής προστασίας και αλληλεγγύης που εφαρμόζονται στην Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση.

## Labor Market Trends in Greece over the Crisis Period, 2009-2014

Maria Botsari, *Panteion University*

Stavros Zografakis, *Agricultural University of Athens*

### Τάσεις στην Ελληνική Αγορά Εργασίας κατά την Περίοδο της Κρίσης, 2009-2014

Μαρία Μπότσαρη, *Πάντειο Πανεπιστήμιο*

Σταύρος Ζωγραφάκης, *Γεωπονικό Πανεπιστήμιο Αθηνών*

#### ABSTRACT

In this paper we present key statistics on the labor market of Greece and the Eurozone over the crisis period 2009-2014, with particular emphasis given to youth and long-term unemployment and its consequences. Statistics on the previous occupations of the unemployed, methods used for seeking work and type of employment sought are also presented. Used data reveal that the change of the working-age population in Greece during the crisis follows a U-shape over age with a greater decline occurring in the 25 to 29 years age group as a result of high emigration of the young age group attributable to the decline in economic activity. Greece suffers from unprecedented and socially unacceptable rates of unemployment with the youth and long-term unemployment rates being even more alarming and worrying as they may have such devastating and long-term debilitating effects on young people that have been called 'scarring effects'. Those scarring effects on young people are interpreted in the literature' in terms of two factors, the first factor relating to the depreciation of their human capital and readiness to work and the second relating to the so-called 'unemployment stigma'.

**KEY WORDS:** Trends, population, employment, unemployment, effects, Greece, Eurozone.

#### ΠΕΡΙΛΗΨΗ

Στην εργασία αυτή παρουσιάζουμε βασικούς δείκτες της αγοράς εργασίας στην Ελλάδα και την Ευρωζώνη κατά την περίοδο της κρίσης 2009-2014, με ιδιαίτερη έμφαση στη νεανική και τη μακροχρόνια ανεργία και τις επιπτώσεις τους. Παρουσιάζουμε, επίσης, στατιστικούς δείκτες σχετικούς με το πρότερο επάγγελμα των ανέργων, τις χρησιμοποιούμενες μεθόδους αναζήτησης εργασίας και το είδος της αναζητούμενης απασχόλησης. Τα δεδομένα αποκαλύπτουν ότι η μείωση του πληθυσμού εργάσιμης ηλικίας στην Ελλάδα κατά την περίοδο της κρίσης, από το 2009 μέχρι το 2014, ακολουθεί με την πάροδο της ηλικίας μια καμπύλη μορφής U, με τη μεγαλύτερη μείωση να καταγράφεται στην ηλικιακή ομάδα 25 – 29 ετών, ως αποτέλεσμα της μετανάστευσης των νέων εξαιτίας της συρρίκνωσης της οικονομικής δραστηριότητας. Η Ελλάδα μαστίζεται από πρωτοφανή και κοινωνικά απαράδεκτα επίπεδα ανεργίας, με τα ποσοστά νεανικής και μακροχρόνιας ανεργίας να είναι ακόμα πιο ανησυχητικά, καθώς μπορεί να έχουν τόσο ολέθριες και τραγικές μακροχρόνιες επιπτώσεις στους νέους, ώστε να αποκαλούνται 'ουλές ανεργίας'. Αυτές οι ουλές ερμηνεύονται στη βιβλιογραφία στη βάση δύο παραγόντων. Ο πρώτος παράγοντας σχετίζεται με την υποτίμηση του ανθρώπινου κεφαλαίου των νέων και της ετοιμότητάς τους για εργασία. Ο δεύτερος παράγοντας σχετίζεται με το αποκαλούμενο 'στίγμα της ανεργίας'.

**ΛΕΞΕΙΣ-ΚΛΕΙΔΙΑ:** Τάσεις, πληθυσμός, απασχόληση, ανεργία, επιπτώσεις, Ελλάδα, Ευρωζώνη.

## 1. Introduction

**K**ey statistics on the labor market of Greece have significantly worsened since the onset of the financial and fiscal crisis in 2009. As the recession was deepening, the number of the working age population was falling with the decline being most noticeable among those aged 25 to 29 years, while the outflows of Greek nationals in search of work towards other OECD countries was substantially increased. Over the period 2009 – 2014, hundreds of thousands jobs were lost mainly because of the downturn in the sectors of construction, manufacturing and wholesale and retail trade. In contrast to the part-time employment which recorded an increase, full-time employment has plunged and, while the proportion of employees, employers and unpaid family workers has fallen during the recessionary period, the share of own account workers in the continuously shrinking employed labor force rose. Moreover, between 2009 and 2014, unemployment has hit an *unacceptable* high with the key statistics on youth and long-term unemployment being even more alarming.

This paper presents the labor market trends, specifically the population, employment and unemployment trends by sex, age group, educational attainment, economic activity, occupation and professional status, with particular emphasis given to youth and long-term unemployment. Statistics on the previous occupations of the unemployed, methods used for seeking work and type of employment sought *are also* included in the paper.

## 2. Population Trends: The New Wave of Emigration

**T**able 1 presents the population trend in Greece from 2009 to 2014. A survey of the data in Table 1 reveals that Greece witnessed, over this period, a continuous decline of the working-age population (those aged 15–74). As is evident in Figure 1, the percent change of the working-age population from 2009 to 2014 follows a U-shape over age with a greater decline, equal to –19.87, occurring in the 25 to 29 years age group. We argue that the shrinking of the Greek population, especially the shrinking the young age group, since the financial meltdown is the result of high emigration attributable to the decline in economic activity.

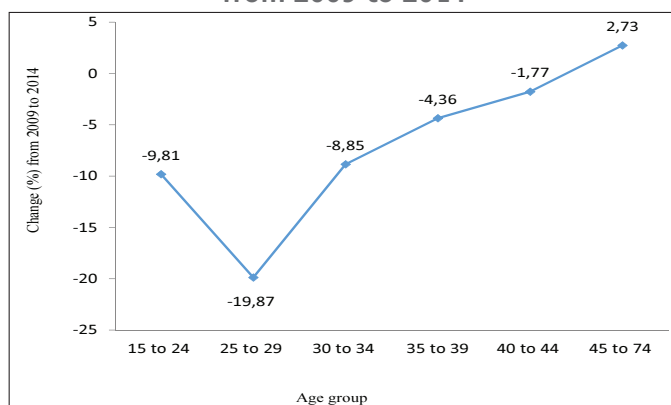
Data published by the OECD (2013a) show that, as a result of the deteriorating labor market situation, Greece – and countries of southern Europe – witnessed a dramatic increase in the outflows of their nationals in search of work towards other OECD countries, which have been less affected, if at all, by the economic downturn and debt crisis. Figure 2 illustrates the outflows of nationals (indexed 100 in 2007) from six OECD countries, most affected by the economic crisis, to main European and other OECD destination countries, over the period 2007 – 2011. There can be seen that migration outflows rose sharply in the hard-hit countries of Europe, with Greece experiencing the largest relative increase in outflow of nationals to other OECD countries. OECD (2014a) notes that where young and skilled population groups leave in large numbers, countries face significant additional challenges and the prospect of a worsening demographic outlook and less favorable economic development.



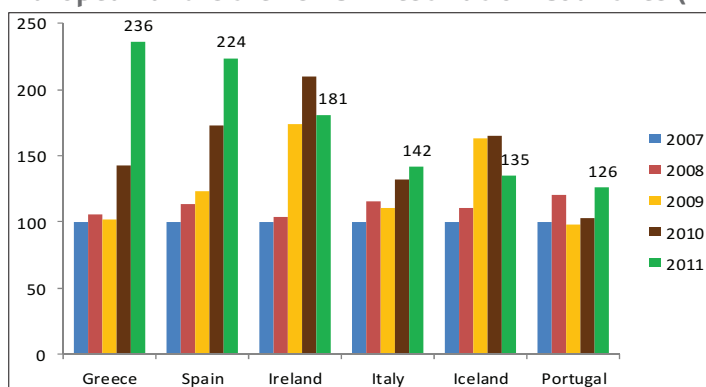
**Table 1: Population Trend in Greece by Age Group (persons in thousands)**

Age group	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
15 to 24 years	1210.5	1180.0	1151.1	1129.8	1110.0	1091.7
25 to 29 years	796.7	764.3	735.4	698.4	661.1	638.4
30 to 34 years	854.1	846.7	827.6	812.1	799.5	778.5
35 to 39 years	811.6	809.4	829.7	815.9	798.4	776.2
40 to 44 years	881.0	883.8	858.1	858.0	856.6	865.4
45 to 74 years	3878.6	3883.1	3904.5	3932.4	3958.0	3984.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>8432.5</b>	<b>8367.2</b>	<b>8306.4</b>	<b>8246.5</b>	<b>8183.7</b>	<b>8134.8</b>

Source: Eurostat, LFS 2014

**Figure 1: Percent Change of the Working-Age Population by Age Group from 2009 to 2014**

Source: Eurostat, LFS 2014

**Figure 2: Outflows of Nationals from Selected OECD Countries to Main European and Other OECD Destination Countries (2007=100)**

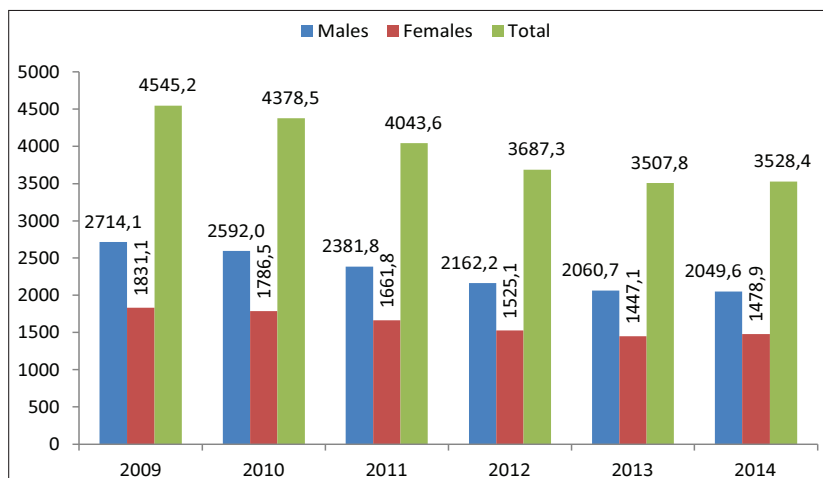
Source: OECD, 2013a.

The OECD (2013a) data show also that the main countries of destination are Germany and the United Kingdom. In particular for Germany, figures suggest that movements from Greece and Spain have reached 34000 and 28000 persons, respectively, for 2012 (year ending in September) while the increases observed relative to 2011 are 73% for Greek nationals, close to 50% for Spanish and Portuguese nationals and 35% for Italian nationals. Altogether, this represents an increase of almost 40000 additional immigrants from crisis countries to Germany in 2012 compared to 2011.

### 3. Employment Trends

As the data in Figure 3 indicate, an accelerated decline in employment is observed after the onset of the crisis, in 2009, until around 2013. Over the period 2009 – 2014, 1016800 jobs were eliminated representing 22.4% of employment in 2009. Moreover, while the fall in men's employment was by almost 50% greater than for women, females' employment rates remained constantly much smaller than that of males. Job losses picked up in 2011 and 2012, when austerity measures, labour market institutional changes, wage changes and uncertainty about Grexit were in full swing, with job losses of 334900 and 356300, respectively. In 2014, the labor market seems to be *stabilized* as employment grew slightly (by 0.1% for males and by 1% for females) and a small gain of 20600 jobs was observed.

**Figure 3: Employment of Persons Aged 15-74 Years  
(in thousands) in Greece by Sex**



Source: Eurostat, LFS 2014.

As shown in Table 2, the fall in employment is mainly attributed to the downturn in construction-, manufacturing- and wholesale and retail trade-related jobs. Construction was the sector which saw the deepest decline in employment of 219100 jobs, followed by manufacturing

(202000 jobs) and wholesale and retail trade (200800 jobs). With the exception of administrative and support activities, all sectors incurred also job losses. We note that, according to the European industrial activity classification (NACE Rev.2), the sector 'Administrative and Support Service Activities' includes rental and leasing activities, travel agency, tour operator and other reservation service and related activities, security and investigation activities, services to buildings and landscape activities, and office administrative, office support and other business support activities. After a loss of 13100 jobs over the period 2009 – 2013, this sector recovered and added 21700 new jobs between 2013 and 2014, thus regaining the jobs it lost and bringing total employment in the sector to 83700 in 2014, representing a 11.5% increase from employment in 2009. We argue that the increased activity in the Greek tourism industry during 2014 has spurred the growth of the administrative and support service activities sector. The data in Table 2 show further that private sector was the hardest hit by the recession. Note that the public administration, defense and compulsory social security sector employment suffered also a net loss of 66000 positions from 2009 through 2014. However, job losses in the public sector appear to have exceeded this number taking into consideration public services in sectors such as education, health, infrastructure, transport etc.

Figure 4 graphically illustrates full- and part-time employment by educational attainment. As can be seen, from 2009 to 2014, full-time employment has declined by almost 25%, while part-time employment recorded an increase of 20.6%. Out of the 1073400 full-time jobs lost, 606600 jobs were related to individuals with less than primary, primary and lower secondary education; 418400 jobs were occupied by individuals with upper secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary education as the highest educational qualification; and only 48400 jobs, i.e. only 4.5% of the full-time jobs lost, were served by individuals with tertiary education. Over the period 2009 – 2014, the number of part-time jobs added was 56600. These jobs were almost equally distributed across the two educational attainment groups with a qualification higher than lower secondary education. In contrast, part-time employment of individual with less than primary, primary and lower secondary education declined slightly by 5500 positions.

**Table 2: Employment of Persons Aged 15-74 Years (in thousands) in Greece by Economic Activity (NACE, Rev. 2)**

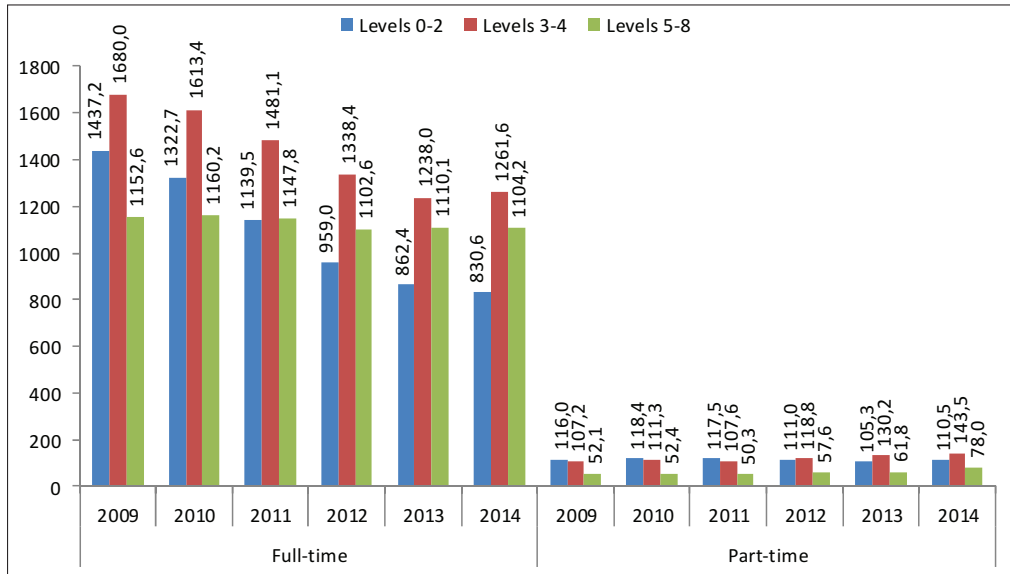
Economic activity	Year						Jobs lost from 2009 to 2014
	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	526,2	537,4	494,5	476,2	478,2	475,7	50,5
Mining and quarrying	14,2	13,2	11,1	11,1	9,6	11,3	2,9
Manufacturing	518,3	467,9	409,1	350,9	324,5	316,3	202,0
Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply	28,5	25,9	24,2	26,0	27,7	27,5	1,0
Water supply; sewerage, waste management	30,5	32,7	26,3	21,8	22,3	22,8	7,7

Economic activity	Year						Jobs lost from 2009 to 2014
	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	
Construction	370,5	319,5	245,4	200,7	162,3	151,4	219,1
Wholesale and retail trade; repairs	825,8	797,2	751,0	662,5	630,1	625,0	200,8
Transportation and storage	217,0	208,2	196,3	178,2	173,0	171,5	45,5
Accommodation and food service activities	320,4	307,7	294,7	271,8	258,6	296,4	24,0
Information and communication	87,6	87,1	75,5	71,8	76,2	75,5	12,1
Financial and insurance activities	114,6	115,7	113,5	110,9	107,1	93,0	21,6
Real estate activities	8,5	6,2	5,6	5,8	2,9	3,9	4,6
Professional, scientific and technical activities	234,2	217,1	213,8	217,7	196,8	195,5	38,7
Administrative and support service activities	75,1	75,4	77,3	67,5	62,0	83,7	-8,6
Public administration and defense; compulsory social security	377,1	369,9	354,9	326,6	325,0	311,1	66,0
Education	328,7	321,7	304,4	290,2	274,8	290,2	38,5
Human health and social work activities	234,4	245,8	237,8	223,2	212,5	208,8	25,6
Arts, entertainment and recreation	53,9	48,8	47,4	40,3	42,9	47,0	6,9
Other service activities	88,3	88,4	85,1	76,3	69,6	72,0	16,3
Activities of households as employers	89,8	90,8	73,6	55,9	50,4	48,5	41,3
Activities of extraterritorial organizations and bodies	1,6	1,6	2,2	1,8	1,3	1,4	0,2
<b>Total</b>	<b>4.545,2</b>	<b>4.378,5</b>	<b>4.043,6</b>	<b>3.687,3</b>	<b>3.507,8</b>	<b>3.528,4</b>	<b>1.016,7</b>

Source: Eurostat, LFS 2014.

Note: In the last column, a negative number indicates an increase in employment.

**Figure 4: Full- and Part-Time Employment of Persons Aged 15-74 Years (in thousands) in Greece by Educational Attainment**



Source: Eurostat, LFS 2014.

Note: Levels 0-2 – less than primary, primary and lower secondary education; Levels 3-4 – upper secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary education; Levels 5-8 – tertiary education.

Table 3 summarizes the composition of employment across the International Classification of Status in Employment (ICSE). The data show that, while the proportion of employees, employers and unpaid family workers had gone down from 2009 to 2014, the share of own account workers in the continuously shrinking employed labor force rose from 21.1% in 2009 to 24.9% in 2014. The figures in Table 3 show further that, between 2009 and 2014, employers' proportion of total employment has fallen by almost two percentage points and that 151900 businesses have closed, while many others are struggling to survive the financial crisis. The vast majority of these businesses are small, family-run affairs. This is a very worrying trend in the labor market as family businesses are the backbone of the Greek economy and make a major contribution to economic activity and employment (Agapitou and Theofanides, 2008).

**Table 3: Employment of Persons Aged 15-74 Years (in thousands and as percentage of total employment) in Greece by Professional Status**

Employment status	Year					
	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Employees	2948,6 (64,9)	2826,4 (64,6)	2586,1 (64,0)	2340,3 (63,5)	2213,3 (63,1)	2263,1 (64,1)
Self-employed persons with employees (employers)	374,8 (8,2)	342,8 (7,8)	308,8 (7,6)	259,4 (7,0)	233,1 (6,6)	222,9 (6,3)
Self-employed persons without employees (own-account workers)	958,1 (21,1)	962,8 (22,0)	929,7 (23,0)	904,0 (24,5)	891,3 (25,4)	878,7 (24,9)
Family contributing workers	263,7 (5,8)	246,5 (5,6)	219,1 (5,4)	183,6 (5,0)	170,2 (4,9)	163,7 (4,6)
<b>Total</b>	<b>4.545,2</b>	<b>4.378,5</b>	<b>4.043,7</b>	<b>3.687,3</b>	<b>3.507,9</b>	<b>3.528,4</b>

Source: Eurostat, LFS 2014.

Note: Numbers within parentheses are percentages of total employment in the corresponding year.

Table 4 presents own-account workers, employers and employees as percentage of the total number of employed persons, aged 15-74 years, in the Eurozone member-states in 2009 and in 2014. There can be seen that, in 12 out of the 19 Eurozone countries, the own-account workers' share of total employment has increased between 2009 and 2014; in two countries (Germany and Portugal) decreased; and in five countries (Austria, Malta, Cyprus, Slovakia and Italy) remained almost stable. Among the Eurozone countries, where the own-account workers' share of total employment has increased, Greece, with an increase of 18%, occupies the fourth highest position after Netherlands (30.4%), Estonia (27.9%), Slovenia (25%) and France (19%). Moreover, in Greece, the own-account workers' proportion of total employment is the highest among the Eurozone countries, higher by almost 50% from the corresponding proportion in Italy and at least double from the percentage of own-account workers in all the other Eurozone countries. As can be further seen from Table 4, across the Eurozone, among the self-employed, own account workers outnumber employers and this is consistent with a worldwide finding (Chen and Doane, 2008).

A k-means cluster analysis was conducted to identify different groups of countries within the Eurozone according to their own-account workers' and employers' share of total employment in 2014. The number of clusters to detect was specified by the rule of thumb  $k \approx \sqrt{19/2} \approx 3$ . Table 5 shows the three clusters that were identified along with the means of the above variables for each group. On the basis of the aforementioned means, these clusters can be characterized as high, medium, and low in terms of the own-account workers' and employers' share of total employment. The low cluster included 11 countries, while the medium cluster consisted of 7 countries, 4 of which were countries of Southern Europe (Italy, Spain, Portugal and Cyprus). The high cluster comprised solely of Greece.

**Table 4: Own-Account Workers', Employers' and Employees Proportions of Total Employment (ages 15 through to 74) in the Eurozone in 2009 and 2014**

Country	Own-account workers		Employers		Employees	
	2009	2014	2009	2014	2009	2014
Estonia	4,3	5,5	3,9	3,4	91,7	90,9
Luxembourg	5,2	5,8	2,8	2,4	91,4	91,2
France	5,8	6,9	4,5	4,2	89,1	88,5
Germany	6,1	5,8	4,8	4,6	88,5	89,2
Latvia	6,2	6,8	3,8	4,0	88,5	88,4
Austria	6,7	6,5	4,7	4,7	86,6	87,0
Slovenia	7,2	9,0	3,4	3,5	84,4	82,0
Lithuania	7,9	8,5	2,4	2,3	88,0	88,0
Belgium	9,0	9,5	4,5	4,1	85,3	85,5
Finland	9,0	9,3	4,1	4,2	86,4	86,0
Netherlands	9,2	12,0	3,8	4,0	86,6	83,5
Malta	9,4	9,3	4,3	4,4	86,2	86,2
Spain	10,3	11,9	5,6	5,0	83,2	82,4
Ireland	11,1	11,7	5,5	4,6	82,7	83,0
Cyprus	12,1	12,3	5,1	3,7	80,6	82,3
Slovakia	12,1	12,1	3,4	3,2	84,3	84,6
Portugal	16,3	12,8	5,4	5,2	77,4	81,5
Italy	16,6	16,6	6,7	6,5	75,2	75,5
<b>Greece</b>	<b>21,1</b>	<b>24,9</b>	<b>8,2</b>	<b>6,3</b>	<b>64,9</b>	<b>64,1</b>

Source: Eurostat, LFS 2014.

As is also evident in Table 4, the share of the wage and salaried employees in Greece is the lowest in the Eurozone. In contrast, Greece is ranked top (with Italy only slightly ahead in 2014) among the Eurozone countries as far as employers' proportion of total employment is concerned. In fact, the employers' slice of the employment pie is bigger than its global maximum of 5% (Hunter, 2013) and almost double than the corresponding EU-28 average of 4.2%. The data in Table 4 reveal further that Greece witnessed the second highest percent decrease in the employers' share of total employment (23.2%), with Cyprus leading the list with a decrease of 27.5%.

**Table 5: Classification of the Eurozone Countries According to Their Own-Account Workers' and Employers' Share of Total Employment, 2014**

Cluster		Own-account workers' share of total employment	Employers' share of total employment
Low			
	Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Belgium, Germany, France, Luxembourg, Malta, Austria, Slovenia, Finland	7,5	3,8
Medium			
	Italy, Spain, Portugal, Cyprus, Ireland, Netherlands, Slovakia	12,8	4,6
High			
	Greece	24,9	6,3

This is particularly worrisome as Greece has one of the largest numbers of SMEs businesses within the EU, most of which are family businesses that, by common belief and reality, are considered to be the backbone of the Greek economy. Available data show that 80% of business owners in Greece consider their business as "family business", while on a European level, 70%-80% of enterprises are family businesses accounting for 40%-50% of employment and for about 40% of private sector turnover whereas their share in GDP ranges from 20% to 70% (Szabó, 2013; Vassiliadis and Vassiliadis, 2014). Family firms are important, not only because they make an essential contribution to the economy, but also because of the long-term stability they bring, the responsibility they feel and the values they stand for (Vassiliadis and Vassiliadis, 2014). Agapitou (2013) notes that Greek SMEs contribute to total employment more than 80-85% and to gross value added (at factor costs) at a share exceeding 70% for the 2005 – 2012 period, averaging more than EUR 53 billion, while almost half of SMEs' gross value added involves firms employing fewer than 10 employees. In addition, within the SME sector, microenterprises correspond to 96.6% of businesses, 56.6% of employment and 33.9% of value added in contrast to the EU averages of 92.2%, 29.7% and 21.2% respectively.

## 4. Unemployment Trends

**T**able 6 presents the unemployment rates by sex and age group in the Eurozone in 2014. With 26.5 %, Greece was the country with the highest overall unemployment rate in 2014. From 2009 to 2014 total unemployment has risen by almost 17 percentage points. Concerning the unemployment gender gap, defined as the difference between female and male unemployment rates (Albanesi and Şahin, 2013), female unemployment in 2014 was 30.2% that is 6.5 percentage points higher than male unemployment, both being the highest among the Eurozone countries. Moreover, in 2014 Greece recorded the largest unemployment gender gap across the Eurozone, with the second larger – notably in favor of females – being that of Ireland (equal to 3.5 percentage points).



Table 6: Unemployment Rates by Sex and Age Group in the Eurozone, 2014

Country	15 to 24 years			25 to 39 years			40 to 64 years			15 to 74 years		
	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T
Belgium	24,0	22,3	23,2	10,0	8,6	9,3	6,3	5,3	5,9	9,0	7,9	8,5
Germany	8,3	7,1	7,7	5,9	4,9	5,4	4,6	4,2	4,4	5,3	4,6	5,0
Austria	10,6	9,9	10,3	6,2	6,3	6,3	4,6	3,7	4,2	5,9	5,4	5,6
Luxembourg	26,1	18,1	22,6	4,9	5,6	5,2	4,5	4,5	4,5	5,9	5,8	5,9
Malta	13,8	9,7	11,8	5,2	4,1	4,7	5,2	4,9	5,1	6,1	5,4	5,9
Estonia	19,3	10,0	15,0	7,0	9,3	8,0	6,8	5,2	6,0	7,9	6,8	7,4
Netherlands	12,4	13,1	12,7	6,0	6,6	6,3	6,4	6,8	6,6	7,2	7,8	7,4
Finland	22,8	18,4	20,5	7,9	7,5	7,7	7,7	6,0	6,8	9,3	8,0	8,7
Slovenia	19,4	21,3	20,2	10,0	13,6	11,7	7,0	7,3	7,1	9,0	10,6	9,7
France	25,1	23,1	24,2	11,2	11,2	11,2	7,5	7,3	7,4	10,5	10,0	10,3
Lithuania	19,6	18,7	19,3	10,6	9,0	9,8	12,2	8,4	10,2	12,2	9,2	10,7
Latvia	19,4	20,0	19,6	11,2	11,0	11,1	11,3	8,3	9,7	11,8	9,8	10,8
Ireland	26,6	20,9	23,9	13,2	8,9	11,2	10,9	7,6	9,5	12,9	9,4	11,3
Italy	41,3	44,7	42,7	14,2	17,3	15,5	7,8	8,7	8,1	11,9	13,8	12,7
Slovakia	29,5	30,1	29,7	13,0	14,2	13,5	9,6	11,4	10,5	12,8	13,6	13,2
Portugal	34,2	35,4	34,8	12,7	15,0	13,9	12,5	11,8	12,1	13,7	14,5	14,1
Cyprus	37,4	34,6	36,0	16,4	13,6	14,9	14,6	12,2	13,5	17,1	15,1	16,1
Spain	53,4	52,9	53,2	23,7	25,4	24,5	20,0	22,0	20,9	23,6	25,4	24,5
Greece	47,4	58,1	52,4	28,7	34,3	31,2	17,6	23,5	20,1	23,7	30,2	26,5

Source: Eurostat, LFS 2014.

Note: M = Males, F = Females, T = Total.

The *most worrying data*, however, in Table 6 is youth unemployment which is generally much higher, even double or more than double, than unemployment for all ages. In Greece, the unemployment rate for the age group 15 to 24 years climbed in 2014 to 47.4% for males and to 58.1% for females. This historically high level of youth unemployment presents Greece with a huge social and economic challenge (Bell and Blanchflower, 2015). Undoubtedly, high unemployment rates are by themselves worrisome. However, even more alarming is the persistence of unemployment, the length of time individuals, especially young workers are unemployed, often while seeking their first job.

Table 7 shows the unemployment rates by educational attainment in the Eurozone in 2009 and in 2014. The data in Table 7 suggest that, between 2009 and 2014, unemployment rates in Greece had almost tripled across all educational levels. Notably, these rates had also almost tripled from 2008 to 2012 (OECD, 2014b). However, tertiary-education graduates' unemployment rate in 2014 was almost 10 percentage points lower than the unemployment rate of those with lower educational attainment. This is consistent with the study of Bell and Blanchflower (2015), who found that, in Greece, the most educated have the lowest probability of being unemployed or long-term unemployed. Yet, tertiary-education graduates' unemployment rate was 5.2 percentage points higher than the next highest tertiary-education graduates' unemployment rate in the Eurozone, reported in Spain (14.8%). Similar trends are observed among unemployed with upper secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary education. Only for those with less than primary, primary and lower secondary education the unemployment rate in 2014 was lower in Greece (28.2%) than in Spain (33.8%).

**Table 7: Unemployment Rates by Educational Attainment in the Eurozone (2009 and 2014)**

Country	Educational attainment					
	Less than primary, primary and lower secondary education (levels 0-2)		Upper secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary education (levels 3-4)		Tertiary education (levels 5-8)	
	2009	2014	2009	2014	2009	2014
Germany	15,7	11,8	7,6	4,6	3,4	2,5
Austria	10,7	11,4	4,6	5,0	2,6	4,0
Luxembourg	8,1	10,2	4,3	6,3	4,2	3,9
Malta	9,0	9,1	5,6	3,7	2,5	2,6
Estonia	28,1	13,6	15,7	8,2	6,2	4,8
Netherlands	5,5	12,1	3,1	7,5	2,2	4,1
Belgium	13,6	16,2	8,1	8,8	4,5	4,7
Finland	14,8	17,2	9,1	9,4	4,0	5,1
Slovenia	8,8	15,4	6,3	10,4	3,2	6,3
EU-28	14,4	18,5	8,3	9,4	4,9	6,1
France	13,6	17,1	8,4	10,6	5,3	6,3

Country	Educational attainment					
	Less than primary, primary and lower secondary education (levels 0-2)		Upper secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary education (levels 3-4)		Tertiary education (levels 5-8)	
	2009	2014	2009	2014	2009	2014
Lithuania	29,7	29,8	16,4	13,5	6,0	4,2
Latvia	31,1	24,0	18,9	11,7	7,9	5,6
Ireland	17,3	19,0	13,6	13,6	7,2	6,5
Euro area	14,9	20,2	8,6	10,1	5,4	7,2
Italy	9,5	16,6	7,3	11,9	5,4	7,9
Slovakia	41,5	41,1	11,5	12,6	4,2	6,4
Portugal	10,3	15,3	9,6	15,3	6,5	10,0
Cyprus	6,1	19,4	5,7	18,2	4,6	12,9
Spain	24,5	33,8	16,8	24,2	9,7	14,8
Greece	9,5	28,2	11,1	30,2	7,5	20,0

Source: Eurostat, LFS 2014

As can be also seen in Table 7, in 2014, the unemployment rates in Greece for individuals with upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary education and tertiary education were almost triple than the corresponding mean EU-28 rates, while the unemployment rate for individuals with below secondary education was only by 50% higher than the corresponding EU-28 average. Using educational attainment as a proxy for skill level, Monastiriotis and Marteli (2013) argue that large parts of Greece are characterized by an over-supply of skills and that the crisis is unlikely to have raised in any significant degree the skill-content of new jobs, but it has rather created conditions of job-competition and bumping down, leading to lower unemployment risks associated with education in large parts of the country. They also note that still, a number of regions, some of which are at least partly exposed to international demand (e.g., Attica and the touristic region of South Aegean), exhibit even today a curious absence of penalties for lower education. The researchers concluded that these results indicate an overall deficiency in the creation of skilled jobs in the country and possibly also a qualitative mismatch between skills supplied and demanded.

Tables 8 and 9, and Figures 5 and 6 present key statistics on long-term unemployment in Greece and the Eurozone over the period 2009 – 2014. As can be seen in Table 8, the highest incidence of long-term unemployment in the Eurozone in 2014, both as % of active population and as % of total unemployment, was in Greece, equal to 19.5% and 73.5%, respectively. These data reveal that 7 of every 10 unemployed persons were unemployed and have been seeking a job for a year or more. As is also evident in Figure 5, long-term unemployment in Greece, as percentage of total unemployment, has increased from 40.4% in 2009 to 73.5% in 2014. The data in Table 9 indicate further that the number of long-term unemployed has increased from 2009 to 2014 by 741200 and reached the historically elevated and unacceptable level of 936900, the worst legacy of the economic crisis. Moreover, these data show that the percentage of the

long-term unemployed who were jobless for 2 years or longer was 66.4% while the proportion of the long-term unemployed who were jobless for 4 years or over was 32.4%. In addition, from the data in Figure 6 it follows that the vast majority (81.7%) of the long-term unemployed are younger than 50 years, while the percentage of the long-term unemployed was about the same across the two sexes. Such high long-term unemployment rates, especially among young persons, have severe negative implications and are a likely factor of social and political tensions. Studies have shown that long spells of unemployment create permanent scars rather than temporary blemishes and that persons unemployed for an extended period lose their skills and their ties to the workplace, while growing frustration over unemployment may also lead a large number of discouraged youths to give up looking for a job (Bell and Blanchflower, 2015; Morsy, 2012).

**Table 8: Long-Term Unemployment in the Eurozone in 2014**

Country	as% of active population	as% of unemployment
Austria	1,5	27,2
Luxembourg	1,6	27,4
Finland	1,9	22,4
Germany	2,2	44,3
Malta	2,7	46,8
Netherlands	3,0	40,0
Estonia	3,3	45,3
Belgium	4,3	49,9
France	4,4	42,8
Latvia	4,7	43,0
Lithuania	4,8	44,7
Slovenia	5,3	54,5
Ireland	6,7	59,2
Cyprus	7,7	47,7
Italy	7,8	61,4
Portugal	8,4	59,6
Slovakia	9,3	70,2
Spain	12,9	52,8
Greece	19,5	73,5

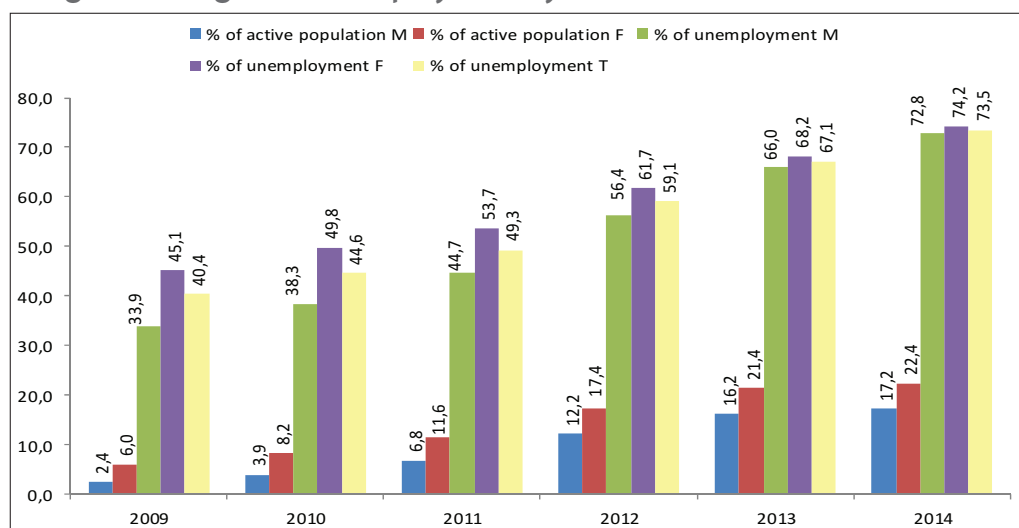
Source: Eurostat, LFS 2014

**Table 9: Long-Term Unemployment in Greece by Duration of Unemployment from 2009 to 2014 (persons, in thousands)**

Duration	Year					
	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
12 to 17 months	55,6	90,2	143,9	201,3	198,0	171,2
18 to 23 months	34,3	54,3	80,0	137,3	146,0	143,5
24 to 47 months	46,4	70,1	113,5	211,9	319,2	319,1
48 months or over	59,4	70,7	97,6	155,6	229,5	303,1
<b>Total</b>	<b>195,7</b>	<b>285,3</b>	<b>435,0</b>	<b>706,1</b>	<b>892,7</b>	<b>936,9</b>

Source: Eurostat, LFS 2014

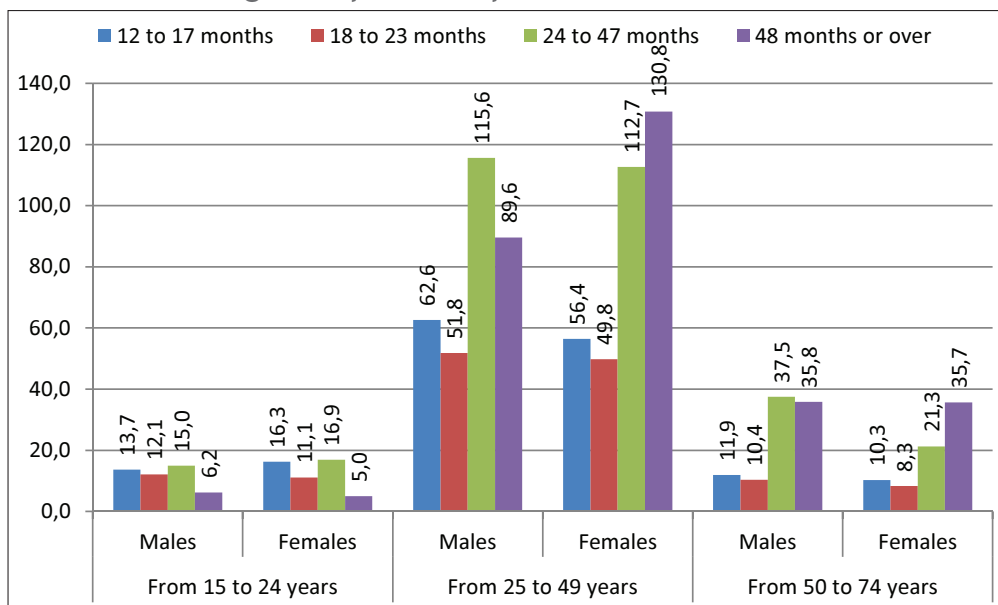
**Figure 5: Long-Term Unemployment by Sex in Greece from 2009 to 2014**



Source: Eurostat, LFS 2014.

Note: M = Males, F = Females, T = Total.

**Figure 6: Long-Term Unemployment by Duration of Unemployment, Sex and Age Group in 2014 (persons, in thousands)**



Source: Eurostat, LFS 2014

Unemployment has such devastating and long-term debilitating effects on young people that have been called 'scarring effects' (Arulampalam, 2001; Arulampalam, Booth and Taylor, 2000; Gregg, 2001; Gregg and Tominey, 2004; Gregory and Jukes, 2001; Heckman and Borjas, 1980; Kahn, 2010). Those scarring effects on young people have been interpreted in terms of two factors. The first factor relates to the depreciation of their human capital and readiness to work. Deterioration of skills and forgone work experience decrease the chances of future employment of those who experience unemployment early in their life, thus pushing them to accept more vulnerable, less paid and of poorer quality jobs. Studies have shown that, even once reemployed, displaced young workers, especially those who experience unemployment at the time of college graduation, face significant earnings losses up to 20 years after being laid-off, with wages about 15% lower for laid-off workers after being reemployed compared with their peers who find employment early and were employed continuously (Barnette and Michaud, 2012; Morsy, 2012). This effect is often referred to in the literature as 'unemployment state dependence'. The second factor of unemployment scarring relates to the so-called 'unemployment stigma', that is to the employers' belief that unemployed youth will not be productive. This is because very often employers judge workers' productivity and performance by their employment history. In addition to the negative effects on future earnings and employability, studies have provided evidence that unemployment has wide psychological implications as it has been linked with a number of psychological disorders, antisocial behavior and lower levels of physical well-being, happiness and job satisfaction.

## 5. Job losses and Unemployed's Profile

### 5.1 Previous Economic Activity and Occupation

**T**ables 10a & b present the job losses in Greece over the period 2009-2014 by economic activity and occupation, according to the European industrial activity classification (NACE Rev. 2) and to the 2008 International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO-08).

There can be seen that managers and craft and related trades workers were the occupations with the greatest job losses, equal to 331000 and 269700 eliminated positions, respectively, followed by clerical support workers (152700 positions lost), technicians and associate professionals (115500 positions lost) and plant and machine operators and assemblers (108200 positions lost). The vast majority of employment losses in the managerial category were in the wholesale, retail trade and repairs sector with 195300 eliminated positions. Employment losses in the craft and related trades workers occupation group were also unevenly distributed across sectors. Out of the 269700 eliminated positions in this occupation group, 160000 have come from the construction sector and 78800 from the manufacturing sector. These figures reveal that job losses during the recession occurred not only in the low-income occupations but they spread in both the high- and the mid-income occupations such as managers, craft and related trades workers, and technicians and associate professionals.

The service and sales workers occupation group was the only occupational group which had a net gain of 105100 jobs over the period 2009 – 2014. Most of these jobs (80500) added in the wholesale, retail trade and repairs sector, while another 32500 jobs were created in the accommodation and food service activities sector. According to ISCO-08, in the service and sales workers group are classified occupations, such as travel attendants, conductors and guides, cooks, and waiters and bartenders, mostly related to the tourism and hospitality industries including hotels, restaurants, and travel agencies.

**Table 10a: Job Losses (in thousands) in Greece over the Period 2009-2014 by Economic Activity and Occupation**

Economic activity	Occupation				
	Managers	Professionals	Technicians and associate professionals	Clerical support workers	Service and sales workers
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	1,9				1,5
Mining and quarrying				1,5	0
Manufacturing	30,7	7,0	14,1	15,5	0,1
Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply		-3,1	2,0	2,4	0
Water supply; sewerage, waste management		-1,9	-1,6	-0,5	0
Construction	13,0	0,2	2,0	4	0
Wholesale and retail trade; repairs	195,3	-0,3	19,3	34,2	-80,5
Transportation and storage	5,6	-2,8	2,2	11,7	-1,3

Economic activity	Occupation				
	Managers	Professionals	Technicians and associate professionals	Clerical support workers	Service and sales workers
Accommodation and food service activities	59,9	-3,3	3,5	-2,7	-32,5
Information and communication	1,3	2,8	10,4	-0,5	-3,8
Financial and insurance activities	7,8	1,5	-2,0	14,6	0
Real estate activities	2,5		2,3		0
Professional, scientific and technical activities	3,9	-3,6	23,9	13	0
Administrative and support service activities	2,3	-0,8	1,1	0,7	-2,8
Public administration and defense; compulsory social security	3,9	3,8	11,9	36,5	0
Education	0,2	35,1	3,7	4,1	-4
Human health and social work activities	0,9	-22,9	18,0	8,8	13,2
Arts, entertainment and recreation	0,3	-3,0	0,7	8,3	-4,4
Other service activities	2,8	-1,6	2,2	0,7	7,4

**Table 10b: Job Losses (in thousands) in Greece over the Period 2009-2014  
by Economic Activity and Occupation**

Economic activity	Occupation				
	Skilled agricultural, forestry and fishery workers	Craft and related trades workers	Plant and machine operators and assemblers	Elementary occupations	Armed forces occupations
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	46,0		0,4	3,1	
Mining and quarrying		1,9	0,4		
Manufacturing		78,8	51,9	4,3	
Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply		1,3	0,1	-0,5	
Water supply; sewerage, waste management		3,0	1,9	5,5	
Construction		160,0	12,6	27,8	
Wholesale and retail trade; repairs		10,0	14,8	9,2	



Economic activity	Occupation				
	Skilled agricultural, forestry and fishery workers	Craft and related trades workers	Plant and machine operators and assemblers	Elementary occupations	Armed forces occupations
Transportation and storage		1,1	28,3	0,5	
Accommodation and food service activities			2,9	-5,5	
Information and communication		0,6	-1,7		
Financial and insurance activities		0		1,9	
Real estate activities					
Professional, scientific and technical activities		0,7		2,4	
Administrative and support service activities	1,7		-4,7	-6,0	
Public administration and defense; compulsory social security	2,2	6,8	1,0	1,0	-0,4
Education			-2,8	0,6	
Human health and social work activities		2,5	-0,5	5,1	
Arts, entertainment and recreation		0,2		5,2	
Other service activities		3,4	1,4	0,8	

Note: Authors' calculations based on Eurostat's LFS 2014. A negative number indicates an increase in employment.

Table 11 presents the previous occupations of the unemployed by sex for the years 2009 and 2014, while Figure 7 illustrates the number of unemployed within each occupational group in 2014 against the sum of the number of workers unemployed within the occupational group in 2009 plus the job losses in the occupational category over the period 2009 – 2014. As can be seen, especially for the managerial group of occupations, the number of unemployed in 2014 who were previously managers, technicians and associate professionals or craft and related trades workers is much lower than the sum of the number of workers unemployed within the corresponding occupational group in 2009 plus the job losses in the occupational category over the period 2009 – 2014. Note that the occupational groups of managers, professionals and technicians are sometimes classified as high-skilled – and thus as high-income – occupations, while the occupational group of craft and related trades workers as mid-skilled manual occupations (European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions, 2014). We argue that the much smaller number of unemployed within a high-skilled, high-

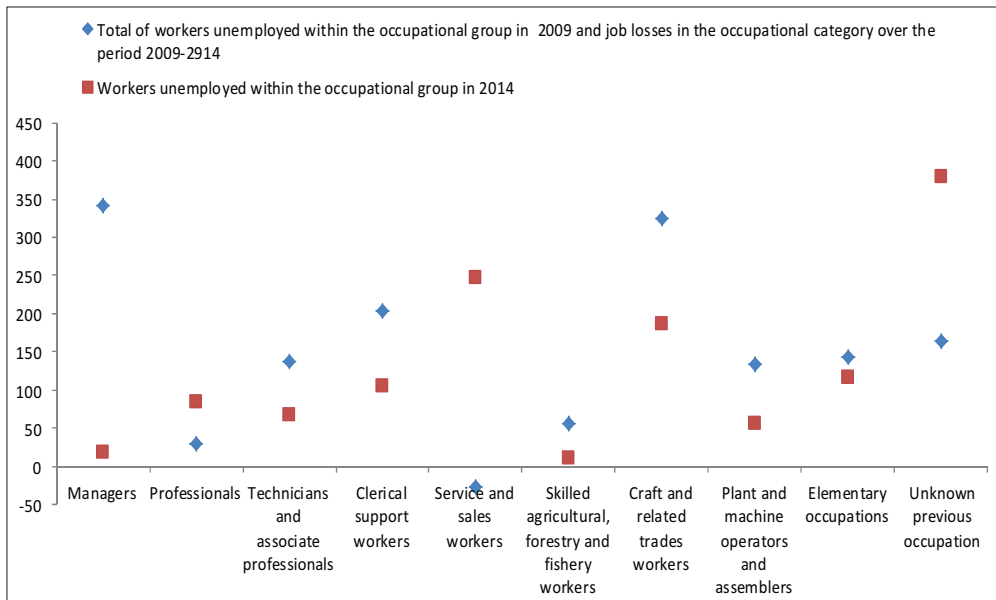
income occupational group compared to the job losses in the same occupational category *may be an indication* that high-income occupations are largely being replaced by lower-wage jobs. This is consistent with research findings showing that many of the unemployed managers and professionals are most likely to adjust their expectations moving to lower paying occupations and to contend with much less well paid and less powerful positions than they had held earlier or with an assortment of part-time, casual and voluntary work (Gabriel, Gray, and Goregaokar, 2013; Longhi and Taylor, 2013).

**Table 11: Previous Occupations of the Unemployed by Sex  
(persons, in thousands)**

Occupation	Total		Males		Females	
	2009	2014	2009	2014	2009	2014
Managers	10,6	18,8	4,9	11,7	5,8	7,1
Professionals	20,3	84,4	7,8	30,4	12,5	54,0
Technicians and associate professionals	21,8	67,8	7,5	31,2	14,3	36,6
Clerical support workers	50,8	106,0	13,6	34,1	37,2	72,0
Service and sales workers	77,4	247,1	28,2	102,5	49,1	144,6
Skilled agricultural, forestry and fishery workers	4,0	11,2	2,5	7,8	1,5	3,3
Craft and related trades workers	55,4	186,8	45,7	169,1	9,7	17,7
Plant and machine operators and assemblers	26,1	55,1	18,5	47,4	7,6	7,7
Elementary occupations	54,3	116,2	23,8	51,1	30,5	65,1
Unknown	163,1	379,8	50,4	148,6	112,6	231,2
<b>Total</b>	<b>484,7</b>	<b>1274,4</b>	<b>203,8</b>	<b>635,0</b>	<b>280,9</b>	<b>639,4</b>

Source: Eurostat, LFS 2014

**Figure 7: Number of Unemployed and Job Losses (in thousands)  
Across the Occupational Groups in 2014**



Note: Authors' calculations based on Eurostat's LFS 2014. Job losses refer to the period 2009 – 2014.

## 5.2 Methods Used for Seeking Work and Type of Employment Sought

Table 12 shows the method used and the type of employment sought by unemployed job seekers in Greece, the EU-28 and the Eurozone-19 during 2014. There can be seen that unemployed job seekers do not differ substantially across the three regions in terms of their preference over the type of employment sought. In contrast, substantial differences are observed in the methods used by the unemployed when searching for a job. The most pronounced difference occurs in the percentage of unemployed who contact a private employment office for seeking work. This percentage in Greece is as low as 3.6% whereas in the EU-28 and the Eurozone this percentage ranges over 20%. According to the European Labor Force Survey, this channel of job search was most frequently used in 2014 in Belgium, where 45% of the unemployed contacted a private employment office for job search, followed by the Netherlands and Portugal, both with a share of about 42%. At the other end of the scale, Denmark and Cyprus reported fewer than 3% of unemployed persons contacting a private employment office. The percentage of unemployed who contacted public employment offices for seeking work was much higher across the EU-28, of the order of 50%. Eichhorst (2013) argues that, given that unemployed persons typically have to register at the public employment office in order to receive unemployment benefit, this high percentage does not necessarily say anything about the importance of public employment offices as a job search channel and does not imply anything about the success of the search strategy. We also note that the importance of private employment agencies is emphasized within the scope of Lisbon strategy and their operation is within the scope of the harmonization process with the European Union. It is to be noted, however, that until recently private employment services were banned in Greece.

**Table 12: Method Used and Type of Employment Sought by Unemployed Job Seekers in 2014 (%)**

Method used for seeking work		EU-28	EA-19	Greece
	Contact public employment office	49,1	46,0	65,7
	Contact private employment office	23,0	24,9	3,6
	Apply to employers directly	63,3	65,2	89,6
	Ask friends, relatives, trade unions	72,4	74,5	94,1
	Publish or answer advertisements	44,5	42,9	40,7
	Study advertisements	65,6	62,7	76,9
	Took test, interview, examination	15,9	17,3	16,8
	Look for land, premises, equipment	1,4	1,1	1,0
	Look for permits, licenses, financial resources	1,4	1,2	1,4
	Other method	8,0	7,6	17,1
Type of employment sought				
	Self-employment	2,2	2,1	2,2
	Full-time employee	21,5	20,0	20,0
	Part-time employee	8,3	8,2	0,8
	Full-time or part-time employee	68,0	69,7	77,0

Source: Eurostat.

## 6. Conclusion

The data presented in this paper show that, as Greece has entered its sixth year of recession, the country suffers from unprecedented and socially unacceptable rates of unemployment with the youth and long-term unemployment rates being even more alarming and *worrying*. High youth unemployment rates do reflect the difficulties faced by young people in finding jobs, as young people have less work experience, less knowledge about how and where to look for work, fewer job-search contacts and many of them lack the skills employers need, often because of backward-looking education system. Some labor market practices, such as temporary employment and the tendency 'last hired – first fired' contribute also to youth unemployment (Morsy, 2012). The data of Eurostat's Labor Force Survey 2014 reveal that, in 2014, 11.8% of the temporary employees in Greece were in the age group 15-24 years, 75.4% were in the age group 25 – 49 years, 12.8% were in the age group 50 – 74 years and 66.2% were in the age group 15 – 39 years.

Our data have also revealed that, while the proportion of employees and employers declined throughout the recession, the own account workers employment category expanded remarkably. Own-account workers and contributing family workers have been identified as vulnerable, while non-vulnerable employment comprises employers and employees. Although not all own-account self-employed workers are necessarily vulnerable, they constitute an important sub-group of those

in vulnerable employment and own-account self-employment can be an indicator of precarity, particularly when coupled with low wages because it does not include the protections associated with employment (Law Commission of Ontario, 2012; Sparreboom and Staneva, 2014). Own-account workers are less likely to have formal work arrangements, and are therefore more likely to lack elements associated with decent work, such as regularity and stability in income position, adequate earnings, adequate social security and social protection, possibilities of a unified voice in labor relations (trade unions) and a chance of an improvement in the labor market situation (Elder, 2009; Sparreboom and Staneva, 2014). Studies have revealed that own account workers fare far less well than the self-employed who hire others and that informal employers have a lower risk of poverty than own account workers (Chen et al., 2005). Hessels et al. (2015) found that employers are significantly more satisfied with their work than both own-account workers and paid employees. Their results revealed also that Greek own-account workers reported the lowest overall satisfaction with work among the different labor market statuses and all European countries participated in the study.

Sparreboom and Staneva (2014) note that workers in vulnerable employment are severely disadvantaged by both higher levels of qualifications mismatch and much lower levels of educational attainment. This is consistent with the data for Greece since, out of the 878700 own-account workers in 2014, the majority (43.3%) had less than primary, primary and lower secondary education, 34.0% had upper secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary education and only 22.7% were tertiary education graduates. Sparreboom and Staneva (2014) found also that the returns to education for youth in own-account work are different from those for youth in paid employment and, in particular, the relationship to years of education is much weaker.

From the data in Table 3, it can be estimated that self-employment in Greece, as percentage of total employment, has increased from 29.3% in 2009 to 31.2% in 2014 and that this is due to the increase in the own-account workers' proportion of total employment. This finding is in agreement with findings across industrialized nations where growth in self-employment in the 1980s and 1990s was concentrated in own-account self-employment which also seems to play a significant part in recessionary growth of self-employment (Cranford et al., 2005; LaRochelle-Côté, 2010; OECD, 2000). We postulate that the wide use of subcontracting and outsourcing strategies by public and private sector employers contributed to a great extent to this increase in own-account workers. However, as the role of own-account work seems to be an option of last resort and the understanding of what it means to be self-employed is often biased towards the entrepreneurial class of employers, own-account employment more closely resembles employment than entrepreneurship and should not be interpreted as increased entrepreneurial activity (Chen and Doane, 2008; Cranford et al., 2005; Sparreboom and Staneva, 2014).

Getting people back to work, ameliorating the effects of adjustment by supporting the most vulnerable and distributing the costs of adjustment equitably must remain priorities for inclusive growth and are crucial for the success of fiscal consolidations, as fair fiscal adjustments may provide the double dividend of enhancing the probability of success of the adjustment and of promoting social cohesion (Kaplanoglou et al., 2013; Koutsogeorgopoulou et al., 2014).

## Notes

1. The ICSE, approved by the 15th International Conference of Labor Statisticians of the International Labor Organization (ILO) in 1993, provides a system for the classification of the eco-

nomically active population by their status in employment which enables international comparison. The ICSE is adopted for use in household surveys. Four basic categories are constantly present since 1938 recommendation of the Committee of Statistical Experts of the League of Nations: employees, employers, own-account workers and contributing family workers. In 1958, the UN Statistical Commission introduces: members of producers' cooperatives and persons not classifiable by status.

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# Guaranteed Minimum Income 'à la Grecque': The Chronicle of a Long-Awaited Scheme

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## Η Ελληνική Εκδοχή του Ελαχίστου Εγγυημένου Εισοδήματος: Το Ιστορικό Ενός από Μακρού Αναμενόμενου Προγράμματος

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### ABSTRACT

This article chronicles the history of the guaranteed minimum income (GMI) in Greece, a third-generation social assistance scheme targeted at individuals and families facing extreme poverty. Greece has only recently experimented with the scheme, with full nationwide implementation being expected in January 2017. Drawing on an extensive range of primary and secondary sources and interviews with key stakeholders, the article first highlights how the indifferent and segmented attitudes of political parties, within an environment marked by the hesitant attitude or even absence from the GMI debate of other types of social and political actors who had influenced that debate in other countries, led to long-term inertia over the GMI. Moreover, the relatively recent decision to implement the scheme should be viewed in the light of the severe implications of the crisis and austerity measures. The article additionally focuses on the evaluation of the GMI pilot programme and shows how, despite its obvious utility, the evaluation underscores chronic problems of the Greek state, such as the improvisatory nature of policy-making, including the lack of an effective design for the evaluation process itself.

**KEY WORDS:** Guaranteed Minimum Income, Greece, extreme poverty, crisis, policy design and evaluation.

### ΠΕΡΙΛΗΨΗ

Το παρόν άρθρο καταγράφει την ιστορία του ελαχίστου εγγυημένου εισοδήματος στην Ελλάδα, ενός τρίτης γενιάς προνοιακού μέτρου, το οποίο στοχεύει σε άτομα και οικογένειες που βιώνουν ακραία φτώχεια. Μόλις πρόσφατα εφαρμόστηκε στη χώρα ένα πειραματικό πρόγραμμα ελαχίστου εγγυημένου εισοδήματος, με την υλοποίηση σε εθνικό επίπεδο να αναμένεται τον Ιανουάριο 2017. Χρησιμοποιώντας ευρείας έκτασης πρωτογενείς και δευτερογενείς πηγές, καθώς και συνεντεύξεις με άτομα που έπαιξαν κεντρικό ρόλο στη συζήτηση για το ελάχιστο εγγυημένο εισόδημα, το άρθρο αναδεικνύει πώς η αδιάφορη και κατακερματισμένη στάση των πολιτικών κομμάτων, σε ένα περιβάλλον που χαρακτηριζόταν από τη διστακτική στάση ή και την απουσία από το δημόσιο διάλογο για το ελάχιστο εγγυημένο εισόδημα κοινωνικών και πολιτικών φορέων που επηρέασαν τη σχετική συζήτηση σε άλλες χώρες, οδήγησε σε μακροχρόνια αδράνεια σε αυτό το πεδίο. Η πρόσφατη απόφαση για την υλοποίηση του προγράμματος συνδέεται με τις σοβαρές συνέπειες της κρίσης και των μέτρων λιτότητας. Το άρθρο υπογραμμίζει πώς η αξιολόγηση, εκτός των άλλων, αποκαλύπτει και τα χρόνια προβλήματα του ελληνικού κρατικού μηχανισμού, όπως είναι ο αυτοσχεδιαστικός χαρακτήρας του τρόπου διαμόρφωσης πολιτικής, συμπεριλαμβανομένης της έλλειψης αποτελεσματικού σχεδιασμού ακόμη και για την ίδια τη διαδικασία αξιολόγησης του προγράμματος.

**ΛΕΞΕΙΣ-ΚΛΕΙΔΙΑ:** Ελάχιστο Εγγυημένο Εισόδημα, Ελλάδα, ακραία φτώχεια, κρίση, σχεδιασμός και αξιολόγηση πολιτικής.

## 1. Introduction

**S**ocial assistance schemes, such as the guaranteed minimum income (GMI), are relatively under-researched. Social policy analysts and scholars usually prefer to probe into other policy areas (e.g. pensions, health) rather than the field of social assistance. Although there are difficulties in finding a common, acceptable definition of social assistance, it refers more often than not to benefits and services, the allocation of which is based upon means-testing; i.e. the assessment of a claimant's means (Alcock, Erskine and May, 2002: 145-6, 226). Given that social assistance is provided only to citizens whose income and/or capital resources are below a fixed level, means-testing is therefore used as the equivalent of 'poverty-testing'. Social assistance provisions are targeted at vertical redistribution, from the rich to the poor (Hills, 2004: 185-6).

The GMI is a third-generation social assistance scheme. This means that it combines the 'traditional' monetary allowance, which usually covers the difference between a household's actual resources and the income that the household should have according to a sum established for a specific region or country, with programmes that aim at the social integration or reintegration of the qualifying beneficiaries (e.g. vocational training programmes, second chance schools, etc.) (Kazepov, 2011: 106).

While in the 1990s the lack of such a safety net was regarded as a basic feature of the rudimentary social assistance model characteristic of southern Europe (Gough, 1996: 13; Gough et al., 1997), by the 2010s Greece was the only southern European country (and one of the very few European countries) not to have even experimented with a GMI. A decision to institute a pilot GMI was taken only in 2012 and two GMI programmes were run in 2014-2015 and 2016 (in 13 and 30 municipalities respectively). Full-scale implementation throughout the country is expected in January 2017.

Against this backdrop, drawing on an extensive range of primary and secondary sources and interviews with key stakeholders, this article chronicles the history of the Greek GMI, from inertia to policy change, including the evaluation of the scheme. The article seeks to contribute to the fast-growing literature on the GMI and social minima in general (see e.g. Bahle, Hubl and Pfeifer, 2011; Marx and Nelson, 2013; Jessoula et al., 2014). The severe implications of the recent crisis have revived the discussion on whether these schemes are effective in combating poverty and triggered a series of academic studies. The respective literature attempts, inter alia, to explain the different timing and development of GMI schemes in different countries, as well as the impact of a range of variables such as family structures, the administrative ability of a state, the extent of the underground economy, the pressure exerted by poverty and unemployment and the role of partnerships.

This should be viewed in conjunction with the literature on the sui generis Greek GMI experience, which has been at the centre of the analysis by prominent social scientists such as Matsaganis (2004 and 2013) and Matsaganis and Leventi (2012), as well as the central theme of a 2013 collective volume of the National Institute of Labour and Human Resources. More rarely, the Greek GMI experience has been part of the comparative analysis of the GMI pathways taken by different (usually southern European) countries (see e.g. Matsaganis et al., 2003; Ferrera, 2005; Lalioti, 2013, 2014 and 2016).

The following sections provide the reader with a brief overview of the GMI experience in Greece and the major points on the GMI trajectory, from the introduction of the issue into the national policy agenda to the decision to experiment with a pilot scheme. The analysis then discusses the evaluation of the GMI pilot, followed by the final GMI act and the conclusions.

## 2. The Road to Inertia

As in the rest of southern Europe, the pressures of Europeanization sparked a discussion in Greece in the 1990s about establishing a GMI. In 1998, Georgios Sourlas, a deputy from the centre-right New Democracy party (Νέα Δημοκρατία, ΝΔ, ND), who represented ND's social/populist wing, was the first to submit a parliamentary motion for a GMI. At this time, there was a Panhellenic Socialist Movement (*Πανελλήνιο Σοσιαλιστικό Κίνημα*, ΠΑΣΟΚ, PASOK) government and ND was in opposition.

In order to move social conservatives within his own party, Sourlas made a specific reference to economic misery as disastrous for the central cell of the Greek nation, defined as the family. For the sake of the family, the proposed GMI was expected to be comprised of a monetary allowance that would be complemented by the provision of in-kind benefits, such as food, bed linen and shoes.

Nonetheless, many of the ND deputies to whom Sourlas appealed for support expressed fears that the scheme would benefit mainly foreigners. In an (unsuccessful) effort to convince ND deputies to support it, the motion's final version stipulated that beneficiaries would only be Greek citizens who were permanent residents.

Just as with the reluctance of his own party's deputies to support the motion, the ensuing parliamentary debate (July 1999) was indicative of the minimal interest among all Greek political parties towards establishing a GMI mechanism (Parliamentary Proceedings, 1999: 489-510). The PASOK representative argued, *inter alia*, that the motion submitted by Sourlas and 14 MPs from ND was characterized by an exaggeration of the extent of poverty in Greek society and that it overlooked existing policies that were targeted at low-income groups. The 'Coalition of the Left and Progress' (*Συνασπισμός της Αριστεράς και της Προόδου*, *Synaspismos*) representative underscored two major reasons as to why her party would reject the motion: Sourlas' proposal would lead to the 'ghettoization' of a large share of the population that faced serious social problems; and, because the motion contributed to the one-dimensional development of 'allowance policies'. The Greek Communist Party (Κομμουνιστικό Κόμμα Ελλάδος, ΚΚΕ) opposed the motion on the grounds that the problem of poverty should be solved by securing the right to employment, not by introducing policies which failed to address the deeper causes of the phenomena that afflicted the working class. Sourlas' motion was voted down without the need for a roll call of deputies voting for and against.

After the PASOK victory in the April 2000 elections, and despite the party's assertions about the inappropriateness of a GMI scheme, it was now the Socialists' turn to put the GMI on the agenda. The Minister of Labour and Social Insurance, Tasos Giannitsis, formed a group of experts to discuss anti-poverty measures, GMI included. That group, nonetheless, soon abandoned the idea of a GMI, arguing that the causes of poverty often differed for different groups within the population, so that the scheme would be inadequate in combating them. They instead proposed an increase in activities and interventions focused on select groups, a strategy that was adopted by the government (Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance, 2001: 7-19).

Interviews with key stakeholders suggest that the abandonment of the proposed GMI was also due to three main reasons. First, the government had opted for measures that could be regarded as functional equivalents to a GMI, such as an expansion of means-tested benefits, along with an increase in the 'pensioners' social solidarity supplement' (*Επίδομα Κοινωνικής Αλληλεγγύης Συνταξιούχων*, ΕΚΑΣ, EKAS). Second, the Ministry of Finance and its Minister, Nikos Christodoulakis, opposed a GMI and instead favoured a negative income tax system, in

which individuals earning up to a certain income level would pay no taxes. Third, the social and political environment was hostile to the scheme, as exemplified by the unions' fierce reaction to the government's stated intention to reform the social insurance system. Even prominent labour movement cadres who did not oppose the GMI feared that it would lead to the open contestation and subsequent abolition of the national minimum wage and a decrease in the minimum pension (Lalioti, 2013: 319-20).

The subject was to create internal cleavages in the ruling party. On 6 December 2000, PASOK deputy Theodoros Tsoukatos, an associate of prime minister Kostas Simitis whose relationship with the prime minister had recently deteriorated (To Vima, 2008), submitted a bill to Parliament for the introduction of a national GMI signed by 52 of PASOK's 158 deputies (out of a 300-member Parliament). The prime minister saw the tabling of the proposal, at a time when the government had already opted for alternative policies, as a vengeful act of internal opposition (*Ethnos on Sunday*, 2000). Simitis' spokesman described the move as unfortunate and Tsoukatos' proposal was never discussed.

In July 2003, the authors of the 'National Action Plan for Social Inclusion, 2003-2005' once again rejected the GMI option, claiming that a GMI could also be achieved by benefits aimed at those individuals and groups in greatest need (Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance, 2003: 30-2). Similarly, rumours of the government's intention to establish a GMI on the eve of the 2004 elections were soon proved wrong in practice (Matsaganis, 2004: 23).

Other parties on both the right and left sought to explore and exploit the 'power resources' associated with the scheme's introduction, more often than not before general elections. The ND leader Kostas Karamanlis flirted with the prospect of implementing a GMI, when both in opposition and in government (Matsaganis, 2004: 22-5; Tsouparopoulos and Triantafyllou, 2006). Indicative of this is the fact that on the eve of the 2004 elections, Karamanlis asked the party officials responsible for ND's social policy agenda to elaborate a plan for the possible implementation of a GMI. The result was a lengthy study, which included various suggestions on the introduction of a GMI mechanism. However, partly because of internal opposition to the GMI scheme within ND and partly because of the political cost associated with the abolition of a large number of welfare benefits, the conservatives quickly abandoned the idea of establishing a national GMI (Lalioti, 2013: 324).

The 'Coalition of the Left and Progress', at that point the weaker party on the fragmented Greek left, was the only party to draft and submit bills for a GMI to Parliament in 2002 and 2005 (in 2005 under the party's new name of 'Synaspismos-Coalition of the Left, Movements and Ecology', *Συνασπισμός της Αριστεράς, των Κινήματων και της Οικολογίας*). The first was never even discussed, however, because it was tabled after the statutory deadline for parliamentary debate. The second bill was blocked from a vote on the grounds that the Greek Constitution (Article 73, Paragraph 3) permits no legislation to be passed that would cause a significant budget increase (Parliamentary Proceedings, 2005a and 2005b).

While these circumstances reveal, once again, the minimal interest of the Greek political system in the establishment of a GMI, the discussion of the 2005 motion submitted by Synaspismos also confirms the negative stance towards the GMI that was largely dominant among all political parties (Parliamentary Proceedings, 2005b: 2149-75). ND's 'official' position was against establishing a GMI, for two main reasons: the lack of a mechanism for keeping a record of those truly in need; and the country's bad financial situation. High-profile PASOK members claimed, inter alia, that the institutionalization of a GMI might lead to the retrenchment of purchasing power among the

financially weak. The KKE representative argued that rejection of a GMI was a matter of principle, since establishing a GMI practically meant abolishing the minimum wage and GMI beneficiaries would end up being used as cheap labour by capitalists. Finally, as Dragasakis admits, even within Synaspismos there was confusion over the concept of a GMI (Lalioti, 2013: 330).

Yet, before the onset of the crisis in 2008, the GMI card was to be played for the last time on the eve of the 2007 elections, this time by ND. Georgios Alogoskoufis, the Minister of Finance, commissioned the Centre of Planning and Economic Research (*Κέντρο Προγραμματισμού και Οικονομικών Ερευνών*, ΚΕΠΕ, ΚΕΡΕ) to produce a study on the possibility of implementing a GMI; but, once again, the government was to abandon the plan. The reason for this was the continuing internal opposition within ND on the issue, and, above all, the indifference that characterized a large part of the party's cadres towards the needs of the financially weak (Lalioti, 2013: 333).

Although fear of the financial burden at a time when integration with the European Monetary Union was the top policy priority (Matsaganis, 2004: 20) as well as the meagre administrative capacity of the Greek state (Matsaganis, 2012: 115-6) are often cited as reasons for the long-standing inertia towards the GMI, both reasons are weak. First, the programme was affordable (Matsaganis, 2012: 115, especially note 6). Second, purely 'institutionalist' arguments cannot suffice when accounting for policy outcomes, since they suggest unrealistic levels of state autonomy and a dichotomy between state and society (Lalioti, 2016: 81).

Overall, for almost a decade, the GMI debate was characterized by the isolated initiatives of a few political actors and the segmented interests of others, more often than not in the run-up to national elections. Furthermore, in stark contrast to what happened in other southern European countries, the (minimal) GMI debate in Greece was typified by the hesitancy or absence from the debate of social and political actors that had played key roles in the establishment of GMI schemes in other countries. The reluctant attitude of the Greek labour movement towards the GMI was an expression of its interest in protecting well-established provisions, which the GMI was thought to endanger. At the same time, the relatively limited involvement of the Greek Church in the field of social assistance (Lalioti, 2013: 276-82; Petmesidou and Polyzoidis, 2013) and the fact that Christodoulos, the Archbishop from April 1998 until his death in January 2008, pursued a relatively 'secular' agenda (Fokas, 2008) largely explain the absence of Greek Orthodox religious organizations from the GMI debate in Greece. This further limited the interest of political parties in the establishment of a GMI and resulted in policy inertia towards the scheme, in contrast with the promotion of alternative policies that reached broader 'clienteles' (Dimoulas, 2014: 53, 62; Lalioti, 2016).

Nonetheless, the years since 2008 were to see the launch of a new phase, both for the Greek state and the GMI.

### 3. From Stalemate to Policy Change

**W**hen a deep economic crisis began in 2008, in exchange for unprecedented rescue packages the socialist government of George Papandreou (in 2010 and 2011) and the subsequent coalition government<sup>1</sup> under ND's new leader Antonis Samaras (June 2012 – January 2015) committed to meeting the terms of loan agreements and the so-called Memoranda of Understanding with the European Commission (EC), the European Central Bank (ECB) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) (informally known as the 'troika'). The combined impact of

the severe crisis and the austerity measures resulted in dramatic changes in the living standards of large sections of the population and the drastic transformation of the post-1974 political system in Greece.

While in 2012 the country was experiencing its fifth consecutive year of recession, the average wage had fallen significantly, the minimum wage was reduced, substantial pension cuts were imposed and the increases in rates of poverty and unemployment were dramatic. The political parties held responsible for the crisis and austerity were 'punished' in the successive national elections in May and June 2012 and Synaspismos (now the 'Coalition of the Radical Left', *Συνασπισμός Ριζοσπαστικής Αριστεράς*, SYRIZA, SYRIZA), a small party previously without hope of building a government, became the strongest contender for power almost overnight in the 2012 elections. The former PASOK-ND confrontation was replaced by a SYRIZA-ND confrontation that was intensely class-based (Lalioti, 2016: 87-8).

In an environment where social policy became much more important in political party competition, the Greek government pressed for the institutionalization of a GMI. The stance of the 'troika' towards this proposal was far from unanimous. The IMF was more pro-GMI, arguing that the abolition of several welfare benefits and their integration into a GMI would bring cost savings (IMF, 2012: 19-20; Matsaganis, 2013: 13), as opposed to the EC and the ECB, which were sceptical over both the cost of the scheme and the Greek administration's institutional capacity to implement it.

The Medium-Term Fiscal Strategy for 2013-2016, developed in November 2012, stipulated that a pilot GMI would be carried out in two regions starting in January 2014 (Law 4093/2012, Subparagraph IA.3). These were to be regions with different socioeconomic characteristics, which were expected to be defined in a forthcoming ministerial decision. The credit for the pilot was 20 million euros.<sup>2</sup> A decision for or against a permanent nationwide GMI was to be taken after the pilot programme had been evaluated.

The institutionalization of the GMI provided the Samaras government with the opportunity to express an interest in the needs of the lowest socioeconomic strata at a relatively low cost and with possible electoral gains. The government's GMI initiative also deprived SYRIZA of the opportunity to benefit politically from the establishment of a scheme, the GMI, that was part of its electoral programme. Moreover, the government's initiative was facilitated by the weakening of the labour confederations and the development of a closer relationship between the government and the Orthodox Church under the new Archbishop, Ieronymos (Lalioti, 2016: 88).

After the official announcement of the scheme in October 2014, long after the original January 2014 start date, the Ministerial Decision of 7 November 2014<sup>3</sup> allocated 20 million euros for a 6-month pilot scheme (under the name *Guaranteed Social Income*, *Εγγυημένο Κοινωνικό Εισόδημα*) in 13 municipalities, one in each Greek state prefecture. The ministerial decision was the result of the work of an inter-ministerial group, which was dissolved after the ratification of the decision (World Bank, 2015: 9).

Beneficiaries qualified for three forms of support: income support; better and assured access to social services; and goods and labour-market integration or reintegration measures. The maximum monthly income support was €200 per adult and €50 per minor, with the first dependent minor in a one-parent family counting as an adult. Hence, the annual floor of income for a single adult was €2,400, while for a couple with one dependent adult and a minor it was €5,400. The amount of monetary support had been determined in accordance with the common practices among EU member states. The maximum amount of monetary support (€200 for a



single adult) corresponded to approximately 24% of the median equivalized income and 40% of the net minimum wage (€489).

Social services and goods included, for example, individualized consultancy services and social grocery services. Last, labour-market integration or reintegration measures targeted beneficiaries who belonged to the active population, were capable of working and were below the age of 67. These were implemented by the Manpower Employment Organization (*Οργάνισμός Απασχόλησης Εργατικού Δυναμικού*, ΟΑΕΔ, O.A.E.D.) and other agencies and included public work programmes, vocational training programmes and the suchlike.

Qualifying 'units' (individuals and families) had to meet criteria for residence, an income ceiling and asset limits. For instance, all members of qualifying units (except for the newly-born and recently married couples) were required to have been legal and permanent residents in one of the municipalities participating in the pilot scheme for at least six months before the publication of the ministerial decision. In the case of third-country citizens, municipalities had to certify that they had been legally resident in Greece for more than five years. Individuals who were housed or received care in closed care units or shelters of supported living, as well as individuals and families that were in special programmes that covered their basic needs for housing, food, etc. (e.g. in social hostels) were not eligible for participation in the programme.

The change in government in January 2015, when the SYRIZA-ANEL (Independent Greeks, *Ανεξάρτητοι Έλληνες*, ANEL) coalition government came to power, raised questions regarding the continuation of the pilot GMI and, especially, its transformation into a national programme after the evaluation of the pilot scheme at the end of 2015. Nonetheless, despite large delays in payments and various problems, the GMI pilot continued under the new government with relative success.

Moreover, the governmental agencies that were responsible for the programme also designed its subsequent phase. After the completion of the pilot GMI, a new GMI phase was expected to begin on the 1st of April 2016, this time in 30 municipalities. Although this phase was often discussed in the media as a second pilot phase, no official document referred to it as such. In reality, this was the first phase of the nationwide implementation of the programme and the beginning of its extension to other regions.

Nevertheless, a few months before the expected beginning of the new phase of the programme, the GMI was at the centre of public debate. This was largely due to the submission of a draft law and parliamentary questions by Democratic Alignment (*Δημοκρατική Συμπράταξη*), consisting of PASOK and DIMAR, where the party, inter alia, accused the government of inertia over the GMI and asked for the scheme's nationwide implementation starting on the 1st of April 2016 (Explanatory Report, 2016; Draft Law by Democratic Alignment, 2016; Democratic Alignment, 2016a and 2016b). Democratic Alignment also asked about the results of the evaluation of the pilot phase, triggering a response from the Ministry of Labour according to which the evaluation of the programme by the World Bank and the Ministry's agencies argued against the programme's extension at the national level in its present form and in favour of its redesign (Ministry of Labour, Social Insurance and Social Solidarity, 2016).

Indeed, while the transition from longstanding inertia to experimentation with the scheme should be viewed in the light of the severe implications of the crisis and changes in the political and social environment in Greece, the results of the pilot phase evaluation, discussed in the next section, were also particularly useful for revealing significant problems that needed to be dealt with in the subsequent phases of the programme.

## 4. The Evaluation of the Pilot Phase

The GMI pilot was evaluated by both the National Institute for Labour and Human Resources (*Εθνικό Ινστιτούτο Εργασίας και Ανθρώπινου Δυναμικού*, ΕΙΕΑΔ, ΕΙΕΑΔ) and the World Bank. A series of issues highlighted in their reports reveal, first of all, the existence of severe constraints in the evaluation process per se. Despite arguments in favour of transparency and of selecting municipalities based on their good administrative capacity as well as their populations and rates of unemployment and poverty, in reality the 13 municipalities that participated in the pilot were not selected according to strict criteria. This may have created a space for clientelism. The lack of clarity in the criteria for the selection of the candidate municipalities and the 'selection bias' posed serious limitations for the scheme's evaluation (Dimoulas, 2015: 2).

The evaluation process had also not been designed beforehand, from the beginning of the programme.<sup>4</sup> The data collection was unsystematic and there were mistakes in codification and many missing values that hindered the elaboration of data.

Furthermore, since the GMI pilot scheme was not governed by the rules of a proper 'experiment', it was not possible (as it should have been) to compare units participating in the programme with others that had similar characteristics but were not selected for participation. The way the GMI pilot was 'designed' and implemented meant that certain questions could not be answered. For example, it was impossible to answer whether the units selected for the programme were those that were most in need, what the programme's impact on the living standards of the units was, or how successful was their professional and social integration. Overall, the way the programme was conducted did not allow its in-depth and effective evaluation.

Yet, the evaluation was useful in highlighting a number of issues that need to be 'fixed' in next phases of the programme. For instance: due to the very high percentages of tax evasion in Greece, means-testing for the provision of the GMI favours farmers and the self-employed at the expense of salaried employees and the unemployed. Moreover, there is no prediction for when and how often the search for employment should be proved by GMI beneficiaries (Dimoulas, 2015: 6-9).

The evaluation also underscored delays in payments and problems in the cross-checking and verification of data and documents.<sup>5</sup> The municipal agencies involved in the pilot implementation were often understaffed and incapable of fulfilling their duties. There was a lack of data on the number of individuals who requested information about the programme but did not in the end submit an application. The application process was complex and many applicants had to ask for help from municipality and welfare agency staff or even accountants. The 'support' of accountants often worsened, however, the quality of the applications. Moreover, the programme's technical support, as exemplified by problems in the programme's information system and difficulties in accessing the GMI electronic platform, was inadequate.

The list of problems does not end here: publicity for the programme was marked by significant variation. As with the lack of standardized publicity procedures for different municipalities, there were no standardized procedures for accepting complaints and appeals, thus allowing much space for improvisation. The monitoring of the indicators for the implementation of the programme was not continuous, the overall monitoring of the pilot phase by the central administration was unsystematic and the burden of work on the municipalities excessive (World Bank, 2015: 3-6).

Although in theory monetary support was combined with actions for social integration (e.g. access to social groceries), there was no data on how systematic this combination was



and to what degree the existing needs of the beneficiaries were covered (Kaminioti, 2015: 6). Moreover, labour market integration and reintegration measures were essentially not implemented (Charisis, 2015: 7).

The evaluation showed the need for accompanying measures to be designed in accordance with individualized programmes of action and for using all the data the tax agencies have at their disposal so as to trace undeclared income (Kaminioti, 2015: 7). It indicated that the roles of the agencies involved in the GMI programme should be clear, the application form less complex, the tools for the publicity of the programme standardized, the payments normalized, the process for the verification of data and information redesigned and the strategy for monitoring the programme made explicit. Data collection should be done on a regular basis and be utilized as a tool for the attainment of the project's desired targets (World Bank, 2015: 6-8).

It should be noted that not all municipalities believed that the selected beneficiaries were representative of the most vulnerable and poor groups in their region, with the evaluation conducted by the World Bank suggesting a more 'successful' selection of beneficiaries compared to EIEAD's evaluation (World Bank, 2015: 25). At the same time and despite all its weaknesses, the acceptance rate of the GMI pilot scheme among beneficiaries and the municipality staff was high. Indeed, it was argued that the programme was the most important social policy programme running at that time in Greece (World Bank, 2015: 3-6, 57).

The weak spots of the programme are confirmed by sources in the Greek Ministry of Labour, who also claim that there was a sense of urgency, and in some cases things were done in a reverse and thus incorrect order. For instance, the guide for the implementation of the GMI pilot that clarified the content of the 2014 ministerial decision reached the municipalities with a two-month delay, at the end of January 2016, when the programme had already started in November. Furthermore, the construction of the information system that was to support the GMI programme began only ten days before the launch of the programme. Overall, the limited administrative capacity of the Greek state – both at central and local levels – posed serious limitations to the implementation of the GMI pilot scheme.

Aside from highlighting the weaknesses and the qualitative features of the GMI pilot, the evaluation was also invaluable, however, in bringing to light the scheme's quantitative dimensions. The analysis of the quantitative data from the programme stresses the – in some cases – significant variation of data among municipalities.<sup>6</sup> For instance, the highest numbers of applications were submitted in the municipalities of Chalkida and Kallithea (5,572 and 5,618 respectively), as opposed to the smallest numbers, which were submitted in the municipalities of Syros-Ermoupoli and Lefkada (616 and 876 respectively). The variation in the percentage of the selected applicants who had not attended school was also significant, with percentages ranging from 30.1% and 27.1% in the municipalities of Chalkida and Mesologgi respectively to only 2.2% and 2.7% in the municipalities of Malevizi and Syros-Ermoupoli respectively.

Similarly, there was variation in the ability of municipalities to offer goods and services for social integration to beneficiaries, with some municipalities offering just information on these goods and services. Nonetheless, it is not possible to say whether such outcomes are due to random variation or whether they reflect real differences in the characteristics of beneficiaries, and whether they are associated with the administrative capacity of each municipality or with the existence of prejudices that may have played a role in the rejection of applicants (as in the case of third-country citizens). In fact, the size and spread of the deviations speak in favour of differences and variations due to non-systematic parameters.

Some of the general conclusions from the analysis of the quantitative data of the GMI pilot are as follows:<sup>7</sup>

- The number of submitted applications was a little more than 30,500. This figure corresponded to 6.1% of the population in the 13 municipalities and to the initial expectations of the agencies that designed the pilot that it would concern approximately 5-7% of the population in the selected municipalities.
- 86% of beneficiaries had Greek citizenship, with small variations from municipality to municipality.
- Most applicants were single. The family situation of the rejected applicants is different from that of the selected applicants. There were more married persons among the selected applications than among the rejected applications (30.8% vs 22.9%). The same holds true for those who were divorced (12.2% vs 8.7%).
- At least one third of the qualifying units had minor, dependent members. The number of those over the age of 65 was minimal. The combination of the relatively young age of the applicants and the number of the minor, dependent members leads to the conclusion that a high percentage of the qualifying units included young couples or relatively young couples with children.
- The vast majority of the applicants and those who were eventually selected were unemployed (74.4% and 77.4% respectively).
- Approximately half of the qualifying units (55%) declared zero income and only 16% of beneficiaries over the age of 18 declared income from salaried employment. Less than 5% of the beneficiaries declared that they had bank savings.
- At least two thirds of the qualifying units did not own the house where they lived and paid rent. Only one out of five qualifying units declared that they had movable assets, such as a car or a motorcycle.

Overall, the evaluation of the pilot GMI reveals the improvisation of the Greek state machinery, which is notorious for its meagre administrative capacity. However, at the same time the evaluation is invaluable in highlighting the characteristics of the beneficiaries, who are members of the lowest-socioeconomic strata, and the sectors where the intervention of the state in the subsequent GMI phases could improve implementation.

## 5. Towards the Final Act

**A**ccording to sources from the Ministry of Labour, while the plan for the new phase of the GMI that was expected to begin in 30 municipalities in April 2016 was ready on time and the draft of the relevant ministerial decision had also been submitted to the 'institutions' (the former 'troika') on time, by mid-May the response of the 'institutions' was still pending. The ultimate aim of this new GMI phase was to check that all aspects of the programme were on track, in view of the programme's nationwide implementation on the 1st of January 2017.

*Nationwide implementation is in line with the country's obligations in the Memoranda of Understanding. The social welfare review is expected to create a fiscal space equal to 0.5% of the GDP that will enable the Greek state to fund the full-scale implementation of the GMI programme at the national level. The resources needed will be found from savings that will be made thanks to the expenditure review or from savings in areas of so-called 'non-discretionary*

spending' (Supplemental Memorandum of Understanding, 2016: 19). The World Bank is expected to complete the social welfare review in September 2016.

The Supplemental Memorandum of Understanding signed by the European Commission and the Greek government on 16 June 2016 explicitly refers to the provision of help to the Greek state from international organizations for the introduction of a series of measures, including a basic social safety net in the form of a GMI. The aforementioned Memorandum mentions a series of administrative measures, such as the review of categories of expenditures (e.g. defence expenses) that, if they are effective, will help the Greek government to decide – in collaboration with the 'institutions' – on strengthening social protection and the GMI programme in particular. For the same reason, and if the desired fiscal aims are attained, the Greek government may decide to reduce taxes (Supplemental Memorandum of Understanding, 2016: 1, 5).

The Memorandum describes the GMI, in conjunction with a temporary package of humanitarian measures for food, housing and electricity, as part of the government's priority to protect vulnerable population groups that have been irreparably affected by the dramatic implications of the crisis. The GMI is also expected to improve the effectiveness of social assistance provisions in Greece, which are well below the European average. The Memorandum discusses in detail the various phases of the GMI programme, including completing by September 2016 the preparation for the programme's full-scale implementation at the national level on the 1st of January 2017 (Supplemental Memorandum of Understanding, 2016: 19-20).

After a few months' delay, the ministerial decision announcing the terms and conditions of the new phase of the GMI programme was issued on 7 July 2016.<sup>8</sup> While the press attributed the delay to technical problems, such as problems in the staffing of the agencies in charge of the programme and difficulties in determining beneficiaries, as well as legal issues and the lack of funds (Salourou, 2016), sources from the Ministry of Labour pointed to a different reason: the delay was due to the belated response of the institutions to the draft of the ministerial decision and disagreements among them on whether the non-contributory disability allowance would be calculated as income for the purpose of the GMI.

The new phase of the GMI programme will be implemented in 30 municipalities between 14 July 2016 and 31 December 2016. The application period will last from 14 July 2016 to 30 November 2016. With nine municipalities in the Prefecture of Attica, the selection of municipalities has been based on population criteria, poverty indicators and percentages of unemployment. In 2016 the programme will cost 57 million euros and is estimated to benefit approximately 40,000 families or 87,000 individuals (Salourou, 2016).

The 2016 ministerial decision describes the GMI (under the new name of *Social Income of Solidarity, Κοινωνικό Εισόδημα Αλληλεγγύης*) as a social assistance programme that targets households in situations of extreme poverty and will be complementary to other policies against poverty and social exclusion. It will combine monetary support with complementary social services, provisions and goods, such as school meals, as well as 'activation' services, such as participation in vocational training programmes and second chance schools. Overall, the support provided in the framework of the programme is similar, if not identical, to the one offered in the pilot phase.

Furthermore, although the selection of beneficiaries will be based on criteria similar to those used in the pilot phase, the new GMI phase is not without changes, as exemplified by the change in the length of the period taken into account for the calculation of the income of beneficiaries (six months as opposed to one year in the pilot phase). The household income for these six months cannot exceed the amount of the six-month guaranteed income, that is €1,200

in the case of a single-person household and €2,700 in the case of a household comprising three adults and one minor or two adults and three minors or a single-parent family with four minors.

In the new GMI phase there are also changes to the application procedure, as reflected in the fact that applicants have the option to submit their applications via the municipalities or Citizen Service Centres (*Κέντρα Εξυπηρέτησης Πολιτών*, ΚΕΠ, ΚΕΡ), in contrast with the pilot phase, when their only option was to use the programme's electronic platform. Likewise, the 2016 ministerial decision includes improvements in areas such as updating beneficiaries on the status of their application and changes in the data of the application.

More importantly, the new phase attempts to enforce the social integration component of the scheme, for instance by making it explicit that beneficiaries need to collaborate with employment advisors at OAED Centres for the Promotion of Employment and that adults who have not completed mandatory education must attend second chance schools. Indeed, if an adult refuses to register at a second chance school, the monetary allowance is suspended until they have registered. Finally, the circular for the implementation of the programme refers to a series of indicators for its monitoring, such as procedure and performance indicators as well as intermediate and final outcome indicators.

The changes in the new phase of the GMI programme sound promising. However, it still remains to be proved that the weak administrative capacity of the Greek state will not pose new, serious limitations to the implementation of this new phase and its full-scale implementation at the national level in January 2017.

## 6. Conclusions

**T**his article chronicled the sui generis Greek GMI experience, from the moment the issue first entered the public agenda up to the recent policy changes with regard to the GMI, including the scheme's evaluation. The long-term inertia over the scheme is largely explainable by the negligible and segmented interest in the subject on the part of political parties, in an environment distinguished by the hesitancy or absence from the minimal GMI debate of the social and political actors that influenced this debate in other countries.

More often than not, both the socialists and the conservatives played the GMI card on the eve of general elections, arguably counting on the possible electoral gains of such a political initiative. The traditional left splintered over the scheme, labour organizations distrusted or opposed the prospect and religious organizations did not participate in the debate. In short, for years little consensus was reached in Greece on the GMI and a pro-GMI coalition was absent.

The relatively recent decision for a GMI should be viewed in conjunction with the severe implications of the crisis and the austerity measures, which have resulted in the dramatic deterioration of the living standards of large sections of the population and the drastic transformation of the political landscape. The scheme provided the Samaras coalition government with a chance to show an interest in low-income groups at a limited economic cost and with possible electoral gains. It also prevented the largest opposition party, SYRIZA, from playing the GMI card in the next elections. The weakening of the trade unions and the rapprochement between government and Church should also be taken into account.

Finally, delays in the launch of the GMI pilot in November 2014 and the new GMI phase in July 2016, in conjunction with the outcomes of the evaluation of the GMI pilot and the weaknesses of the evaluation process per se, all illustrate the 'improvisatory' nature and the deficiencies of the Greek state apparatus, which is notorious for its weak administrative capacity. The lack of a 'proper' experimental design, alongside delays in payments and the essential 'cancellation' of the labour market integration component of the scheme, are only a few of the problems experienced during the GMI pilot. Although most of those involved in the programme describe the GMI as the most important social policy programme in Greece at present, the overall experience is revealing of the absence of a culture of careful and effective policy design and scientifically-planned evaluation.

Changes in the new phase of the programme sound promising both for its successful continuation and its future nationwide implementation. In all cases, this is a gamble that the Greek state cannot afford to lose.

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## Notes

1. The latter at first included ND, PASOK and the reformist Democratic Left (*Δημοκρατική Αριστερά*, ΔΗΜΑΡ, DIMAR) founded in June 2010, although DIMAR dropped out of the coalition in June 2013.
2. *Journal of the Greek Government*, vol. A, no. 229/2012, p. 5697.
3. No. 39892/ΓΔ1.2. See *Journal of the Greek Government*, vol. B, no. 3018/2014.
4. The information in this and the next paragraph draws on Kaminioti, 2015: 2-8.
5. The information in this and the next paragraph draws on World Bank, 2015: 3-6, 22.
6. The information in this and the next paragraph draws on Gavroglou, 2015: 2, 16, 19.
7. The conclusions from the quantitative data of the programme draw on Gavroglou, 2015 and the World Bank, 2015.
8. No. Δ23/οικ.30299/2377, *Journal of the Greek Government*, vol. B, no. 2089/2016.
9. Previously *Means-Tested Income Support Program*.

## Biographical Note

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# Local Child Care Policies: A Reformulation of the Structural Deficiencies of Social Protection

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## Τοπικές Πολιτικές Φροντίδας Παιδιού, η Αναδιατύπωση Θεμελιωδών Αδυναμιών της Κοινωνικής Προστασίας

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### ABSTRACT

For years, care has been at the fore of social policy among local government authorities in Greece. In a context of budgetary constraints and protracted austerity policy, both of which lead to a retrenchment in social protection, the contribution of local government authorities has become essential. Our study engages with the present-day context, and with the features, objectives and prospects for the dynamic role of local government authorities in preschool care. We highlight those features that shape the new environment, while accounting for the demand and supply of the relevant services, the funding of the facilities, and finally, their contribution to social protection, as the latter proliferates at the local level.

**KEY WORDS:** Social policy at local level, crisis, social services, childcare

### ΠΕΡΙΛΗΨΗ

Η φροντίδα αποτελεί για σειρά ετών την αιχμή της κοινωνικής πολιτικής των ΟΤΑ στην Ελλάδα. Σε πλαίσιο δημοσιονομικής στενότητας και εκτεταμένων πολιτικών λιτότητας που απολήγουν στη συρρίκνωση της κοινωνικής προστασίας, η συμβολή των ΟΤΑ έχει καταστεί κεντρική. Η έρευνά μας αναλύει την υφιστάμενη κατάσταση, τα χαρακτηριστικά, τις στοχεύσεις και τις προοπτικές του εξελισσόμενου ρόλου των ΟΤΑ, αναφορικά με τη φροντίδα παιδιών προσχολικής ηλικίας. Αναδεικνύουμε τα στοιχεία εκείνα που διαμορφώνουν το νέο περιβάλλον λαμβάνοντας υπόψη δεδομένα της ζήτησης αλλά και την προσφορά των σχετικών υπηρεσιών. τη χρηματοδότηση των δομών και τελικά τη συμβολή τους στο παράδειγμα κοινωνικής προστασίας που αναπτύσσεται στο τοπικό επίπεδο.

**ΛΕΞΕΙΣ-ΚΛΕΙΔΙΑ:** Κοινωνική πολιτική στο τοπικό επίπεδο, κρίση, κοινωνικές υπηρεσίες, φροντίδα προσχολικής ηλικίας

## 1. Introduction

The development of care services was the starting point and, for several years, also the heart of municipal social policy. Childcare is a key preoccupation not only for the policies that local government agencies initiate and execute, but also for the broader system of social protection.

Childcare highlights some of the key views related entire structure of social protection; It is present in every system, and as such reflects its central goals and character.

Notably, it assumes a central role in the context of *social investment* policies. It is a critical part of the mechanisms used to contain the reproduction of existing social inequalities (Morel et al. 2012). That is to say, it is a sub-division of the policies combating the reproduction of inequality, since those policies support the development of knowledge and skills for the benefit of the entire population, and even more so for members of vulnerable social groups. In other words, it provides a foundation for open and unhindered access to education of a high standard, to knowledge and skills for these groups. In this manner, the shortcomings of education, which are tied to the economic and social position of the family, are not allowed to spill over to the next generations. Furthermore, though education *per se* is not at the fore of the discussion, a new approach develops that seeks to confront *new social needs*. From this particular perspective, the development of care structures for preschoolers is intended to support the parents' right to work, women in particular. In other words, it strives to address care needs during the working hours (Esping-Andersen, 1999). In addition, the development of local social protection facilities is supported by the broadened role local of government agencies. Interventions at the municipal level proliferate in a context of decentralization of social protection (Andreotti, 2012, Del Pino, 2015).

The aim of this paper is to outline and analyze the role of local government authorities in care for preschoolers in today's recession-ridden Greece. We establish that the provision of such services increases dramatically during the Greek crisis years; however, this development is not sufficient to address the ever-increasing demand. This intervention is still residual, while the role of local government authorities is in essence peripheral, and the future of the services in question is dependent upon uncertain sources of funding, giving rise to questions about its future.

We analyze the expanding context of social protection in local government authorities, and attribute this growth to a broader tendency of re-scaling of social protection. Simultaneously, we highlight the frail foundation on which the intervention of local government is executed. In addition, in combining quantitative data from different sources for the 2008-2015 period, we shed light on the impact of the crisis on the demand for services, but also on the simultaneous and remarkable growth in this specific public provision. In combining theoretical responses and quantitative data, we manage to shed light on a fundamental aspect of local interventions at the level of social protection, and we have delimited the role that corresponds to local government authorities in Greece today.

## 2. The Dual Approach to Childcare and the Re-scaling of Social Policy

**T**he general goals of the dominant paradigm of social policy are also inscribed in the mechanisms of care (Daly and Lewis, 2000). Greece presents a significant under-development in social policy, and in relation to Europe the services on offer are residual (Matsagganis, 1999). In particular, in the context of the rapid economic recession in the economy and dramatic fiscal adjustment, the entire spectrum of interventions has diminished and continues, seven years on, to undergo limitations and cuts. Either through a clear limitation of resources, or under the rubric of "rationalization" (OECD, 2013), public spending is reduced. The cuts in social protection per capita are reduced by 72% for 2010, to 60% in 2014 with respect to the corresponding mean

for Eurozone states, according to Eurostat. Meanwhile, the lasting recession has dramatically exacerbated social conditions and the demand for social services.

The development of childcare facilities in local government authorities is supported by two parallel forces that share the same origin. The first concerns the upgrading of the role of local government agencies. The second relates to the re-scaling of social policy.

With respect to the first, through a series of changes in the operation of the state and the long-term commitment to decentralize their operation, local government authorities assume an ever-growing role in the spatial field of their remit. Local government authorities in particular assume the implementation of policies that are designed centrally, seeking to specialize local needs. Less frequently, they design and implement locally-scaled interventions, usually in areas of minor importance (Kazepov, 2010).

The process of decentralization has made for a slow but steady reform for the strengthening of local government agencies. Without the absence of step backs, the core policy of consecutive Greek governments has been to upgrade local government agencies with a wide array of new powers. Despite the waves of reforms –three from the 1980s to the present day– the system remains centralized, the result being that both the control of the design, as well as resources, is preserved in the central mechanisms (Hlepas and Getimis, 2011). Despite the strengthening and the enrichment of local policy, local government agencies remain dependent on the center, and the decisions of the state and its central mechanisms (Dexia-CERM, 2012).

Especially in the Greek case, the local government map changes and the totality of the institutions that constitute local government and its functions are codified in a new regulatory framework<sup>1</sup>. The new reality that is ushered in transforms local government authorities into key agents in the implementation of policy in the spatial context of their remit, while embodying needs that emerge from broader economic and social conditions (Hlepas, 2011).

With respect to the second in particular, the *Kallikratis Plan* continues with the endeavour to strengthen local authority bodies, while creating the necessary framework for municipalities to play an important role in the field of social protection, though as we speak municipal policies are still anemic (Chardas and Skamnakis, 2015). More specifically, the content of social protection policy, local social policy, is promoted mostly as a response to the challenge posed by an increasing ‘singling out’ of interventions, the personification of services and provisions, as well as the reinforcement of practices seeking to mobilize (Heidenreich and Rice, 2016). Gradually, a portion of these interventions is implemented by local government agencies, while attempting to cater to special needs as these are found at the local level, and as these assume features that may be spatially identified (Garcia, 2006). The expansion of social policy among Greek local government authorities is determined by a context that presents a *dual weakness*: we have a centralized system of organization of the state and the lack of space for local autonomy on the one hand, and the underdevelopment of social protection policy in the country on the other (Skamnakis and Pantazopoulos, 2015). That weakness is ever more burdened by the austerity policies implemented in Greece over the past five years. Indicatively, the budget of local government agencies allocated toward social protection has suffered a severe strain: whereas in 2005 it made up 7% of the total budget of local authorities, in 2015 it is at 4.5% (Interior Ministry, Local Government Authority Finance Division).

More specifically, childcare is a terrain for the proliferation of targeted interventions along two axes that function in tandem and in a complementary fashion. The first axis is that of a broader policy of social investment, as the latter is specialized in the space of education; here

the imperative to remove mechanisms that reproduce inequality is at the core (Esping-Andersen, et al., 2001). The second axis concerns interventions that seek to remedy "*new social needs*", and here all the interventions that address needs borne of contemporary social and economic conditions are addressed, in particular with respect to the means of work and daily needs (Taylor-Gooby, 2004, Bonoli, 2005).

With respect to the first axis, the broader framework of social policy cannot demonstrate significant interventions and mechanisms that combat inequalities and the mode of its reproduction (Petmesidou 1992, Dafermos and Papatheodorou, 2012). In the context of the residual paradigm of social policy in Greece, very little has been done to make education functional as a means of addressing inequality (Mouzelis, 2012), and even less so in the model of social investment. This 'anemic' form of social protection does not succeed in addressing, in a dynamic manner, existing social formation. What is more, it is not oriented toward preventing social inequalities or containing the mechanisms of their reproduction.

In specializing in care and education for preschoolers, its importance is highlighted with respect to the thereafter development of people, especially those who come from groups that face obstacles in accessing satisfactory services (Gregg and Machin, 2000). The ground on which personal and collective prospects of development will evolve is cultivated to a great extent during the first years of the child's education (Waldfoegel, 2013). The ensuing inequality is confronted or reproduced to a great extent during the first years of childhood through the educational system and its corresponding structures of care (Bradbury et. Al., 2012).

The degree of success of social investment policies is also determined by parameters in the broader environment. The conditions that the system of social protection shapes, decidedly determine the measure of their success (Heckman, and Lochner, 2000). The policies addressing preschoolers cannot be confined to the infrastructure and their mode of operation. On the contrary, they require a complex spectrum of policies related to and defined by the character and orientation of the social protection system (Esping-Andersen, 2002).

Meanwhile, with respect to the second axis, the care of preschoolers is part of the spectrum of broader adjustments to social policy, with the intention of responding to new social needs. The new conditions in economic and social organization differentiate social needs and create new issues for provisions in social care. They do not lead to the complete reformulation of systems of social protection, despite their adaptation to new facts (Bonoli, 2007, Pfau-Effinger and Geissler, 2005, Gerhard, Trudie and Weckwert, 2005). Provisions and services develop and proliferate in order to respond to needs, in the domain of care in particular. In order to reduce unpaid working time, among women in particular, new facilities are set up under a program titled "Reconciliation of work, family and private life", and are supported by both state and transnational institutions. The greatest support comes from the EU (EIGE, 2015). This axis is part of a more individual approach that makes everyone responsible for their position in the job market and in social stratification in a broader sense (Dawson, 2012. Daguerre and Taylor-Gooby, 2004).

The two axes that lead to the field of care for preschoolers do not necessarily serve the same goals. They emanate from different starting points with respect to the role and operations of the system of social protection. However, they also support the development of structures at least at the first stage of their intervention. The ultimate character that they adopt is judged according to the broader framework in which they are integrated and the objectives of the social protection system that they serve.

### 3. The Perpetual Growth that Fails to Meet Persistent Needs

The demand for childcare services responds to a long-term need. It is a rooted social need which, like others, is addressed by the Greek social care system in an inadequate manner. This need, in and of itself, does differentiate itself dramatically from a quantitative perspective with regards to the period being studied. The changes that are observed relate to qualitative characteristics that correspond to the recession and its impact on family income. The services that proliferate at the local level, to this day, do not succeed in fully covering the needs, whereas the financial background of their operation poses questions as to their near future.

The data presented below is drawn from the *EU SILC*, as it is published on the *Eurostat* web page. In addition, we should also refer to the data that is published by *EETAA*<sup>2</sup> which is also a public institution and publishes aggregated data as coordinator of the project titled "Harmonization of Family and Professional Life", of the operational program "Development of Human Resources", from which significant support is drawn in favor of social care structures. Moreover, the data of national accounts are used, and so are the data published by the Europe-wide network *Eurydice*.<sup>3</sup>

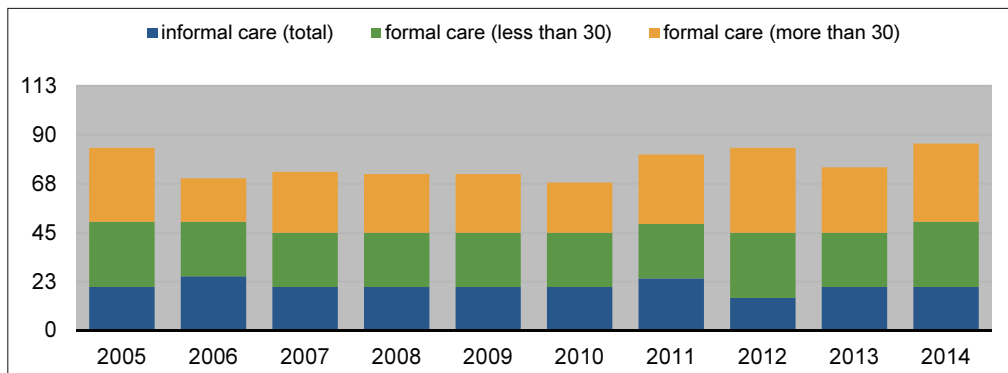
Our goal is to demonstrate the non-elastic character of the needs that the structures of pre-school care are called upon to address. The structures form a network that functions through the responsibility of local authorities. However, the support and operation of this network prove to be dependent upon the state and central mechanisms. Moreover, in the current environment of austerity and restrictive policies, the funding of this system depends upon European Community funds that also have a determining impact on the orientation and broader contribution of this network to social protection.

The quantitative dimension of care elucidates the boundaries and content of the role of local government authorities. It supports the analysis with respect to local action of social protection policies by local government, but also their relationship to broader strategic targets in the country, and more broadly in the European Union. Yet a particular interest stems from the environment shaped by austerity policies and their impact on social policy. Therefore, we initially highlight the features of the need for care and its long-term development. We then describe the breadth of the intervention as the latter develops in the current period. For this reason we discuss the total number of children that these facilities may serve, as well as the resources that support them. Finally, we reach a conclusion with respect to the contribution of local government authorities and the prospects for their function in the near future.

Childcare facilities for preschoolers are within the remit of local government authorities from the previous decade, through the form of public entities (Law no. 2880/01). This is the entirety of services that formerly operated under the administrative and fiscal aegis of central social protection agencies. The above provision is part of a broad policy of de-centralization, that occurs through the allocation of significant infrastructure to local government authorities, so that they may organize their policies in their spatial operational framework and constitute the central axes of intervention at the local level. The transfer of power entails corresponding resources, as laid out in the Charter (article,102,\$5), without, however, this being entirely guaranteed every time. This follows on a voluntary transition of facilities (through Law no.2503/97), whereby the formal process is provided for, whereas the pursuant decisions described the context and the intents of the operation of the facilities.<sup>4</sup>

Initiating from the delimitation of the need for the growth of facilities and services, diagram 1 (below) displays the relative stability of time that households require in order to care for preschoolers. As the study shows for households in Greece, the need follows a stable trajectory that remains uninfluenced by changes in the external environment. Both the formal structures, as well as the informal sector, preserve their share in the distribution of time. It is worth emphasizing here that the stability of this amalgam, given that it determines in a quantitative manner the demand that emerges, is in general terms irrespective of the economic situation of the household or other parameters, irrespective of the economic situation of the household or other parameters relative to the occupation of adults, the decline in income, etc., irrespective to problems that were greatly exacerbated in Greece during the period being studied<sup>5</sup>. From our observation of quantitative data it appears that childcare by service providers outside of the household is a feature of everyday life. In particular, with respect to care provided for by formal institutions, we discern a strong preference that confirms the centrality of the relevant services.

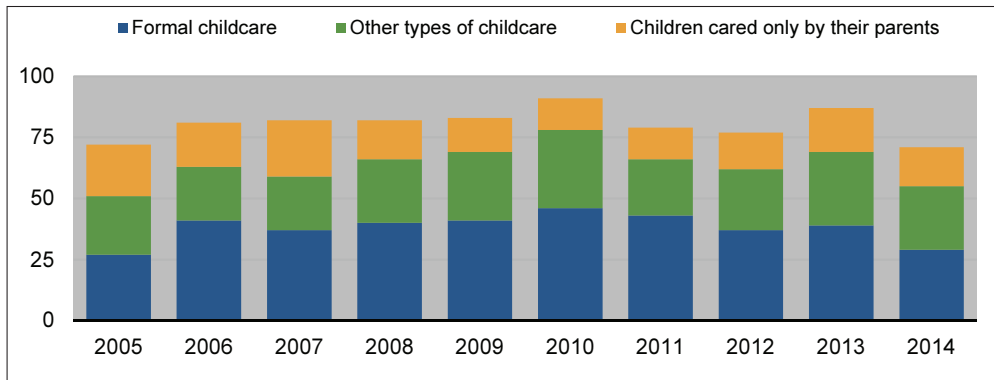
**Diagram 1: Percentages of care and the distribution of time**



Source: Eurostat, EU-SILC, 2016

Households with children are steadily supported by formal institutions, whereas they also accept informal forms of assistance, whether these are offered by the family environment, or by facilities with no formal license to practice. The preference for care within the household by parents is high in comparison to the 19 countries in the EU, but also significantly high with respect to Southern Europe, with which the country shares significant similarities, in particular shortcomings in services provided by the formal sector (Petmesidou & Guillen, 2015).

**Diagram 2: Distribution by type of care in Greece and the countries of the European South, Cyprus included**



Source: Eurostat

The key features of the need do not greatly diverge during the recent period. As with the study among households, the need for care is addressed through an amalgam of formal and informal mechanisms. That is, the needs for every household remain relative to a standard that is not easily altered and stays relatively unaffected by external factors, such as unemployment, the loss of one's income or precariousness in general. Potential minor shifts in the type of demand are not reflected in the study and so a different approach is required. However, it is important to highlight the stability in the distribution of time and choices that households with preschoolers will make with respect to care. We should note here that other European countries correspondingly present stability in needs for hours of care, but also with respect to the distribution between the different categories of services.

Public childcare services for preschoolers develop in the context of the powers of local government institutions, especially following their assignment to local government authorities through the Kallikratis Plan in 2010). With the exception of certain minor central structures –see for instance the agency for Unemployment Benefit and Allowances, with 25 facilities in total in the country. Reliable aggregated data is not available, as the dynamic aspect of the structures is different every year<sup>6</sup>. The most comprehensive survey of the staff in the facilities is that which took place in the context of the funding of the stations through the ESIF 2010-2015 funding cycle.<sup>7</sup>

Table 1 presents the places being funded by Community resources –and thus provided at no cost– and which are increasing in numbers every year. The growth of facilities that function under the aegis of municipalities, and in which participation is free and granted according to priority for households with two employed persons, following an audit in the means of subsistence. This development demonstrates the clear orientation of social policy towards care and family support.

Meanwhile, it also demonstrates another parameter that is tied to the crisis and its consequences. It is a demand for services without alimony, since demand is, as one may observe, on the rise. The ratio of applications to available places is very close to the unit at the start of the program and is quickly exacerbated (on average by 40%) until 2015. It must be noted here that public facilities lag far behind the population of potential beneficiaries. Even after the growth of the facilities and the increase in places, less than half of potential users may be served; that is, children older than three years of age, until the start of compulsory education (ELSTAT, 2011 census).



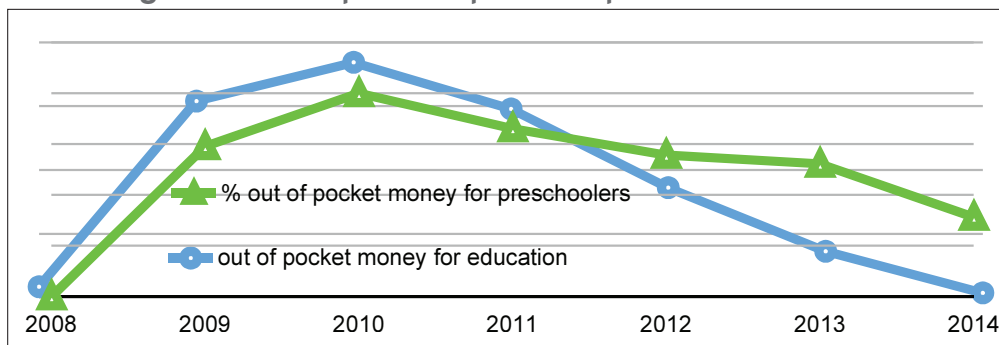
**Table 1: Development of number of available places/applications**

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
<b>Availability</b>	26.727	48.360	57.534	68.526	80.341	81.003
<b>Applications</b>	30.846	67.311	96.130	98.253	112.282	121.250
<b>Ratio</b>	<b>1,15</b>	<b>1,39</b>	<b>1,67</b>	<b>1,43</b>	<b>1,39</b>	<b>1,5</b>

Πηγή: EETAA

The public provision does not cover demand and confirms its residual character. The expansion of the program is not enough to address the rapidly growing demand. The correspondence between available places and demand is not unlike what is happening in other EU states, with the exception of the Scandinavian countries, in which despite the broader performance of the social protection system, a rather premature initiation of compulsory education is implemented (EC, 2014:59).

The discrepancy between the services at hand and demand itself is bridged through out-of-pocket expenditure. However, in the current environment of the long-drawn recession and the pressures weighing down on individual income, this element grows in importance. This also happens because private expenditure for education is reduced, as shown in diagram 3. Relative expenditure presents a dramatic and steady increase for five consecutive years, until 2005, a pivotal year (EU SILC). This trend is also replicated with care expenditure. What the following diagram demonstrates is the resilience, and, ultimately, the non-elasticity of childcare expenditure, a reminder that the character of this particular service is multi-dimensional.

**Diagram 3: Development in private expenditure on education**

Source: EU SILC, 2016

This expense shows the smallest elasticity, confirming the conclusions of diagrams 1 & 2. To an extent, it explains the demand for services with no immediate cost for those users who will turn *en masse* to the facilities of local government authorities. However, as mentioned previously, they are not services of institutional or open character; on the contrary, access is dependent upon specific criteria. More specifically, the service is meant for dual income households (single parent households exempted), while income-related criteria are used to prioritize between applicants.



Social policy at the local level is mostly supported by resources to which local government authorities do not have great opportunities of access and control. Although the regulatory framework explicitly ties powers to resources, there is no possibility of designing and managing local policy, if the latter is autonomous from central policy. Local government institutions do not organize local interventions in a framework of autonomy; on the contrary, their interventions are organized on the basis of central decisions and prescriptions. Correspondingly, resources that are directed toward local government authorities for the operation of social protection facilities are under the control of central services and essentially control the interventions of social protection at the local level (Skamnakis and Pantazopoulos, op.).

The expansion of care for preschoolers reflects the contribution of local government authorities in the organization of mechanisms of social protection at the local level, but also reveals the central directions of social policy in general. During the years of restrictive austerity policies, the total expenditure for education was restricted not only as a percentage of the GDP but also in real numbers. However, expenses for pre-school education do not follow the same trajectory. On the contrary, they are reinforced and confirm the central decision to support the strategy of promoting care for preschoolers (table 2). The orientation of the system is not entirely clear, but, as has been highlighted above, the data on the social care system provides us with a hint as to the choice of childcare, as a means of support for new family needs among dual income households.

During the years of implementation of restrictive policies, the state's expenditures for education are on the decline. Either as a percentage of GDP, or in numbers, the resources towards education are declining. The operation of pre-school education facilities are not, however, subject to cuts that are proportional to the overall cuts in expenditure. This observation is tied on the one hand to what we observed earlier and concerns the non-elasticity of demand for preschoolers. On the other hand, it corroborates the strategy of selecting central mechanisms for the preservation of care as a priority of social policy.

The total level of expenditure for education is at 3,42% of the GDP for 2010 (likewise for 2005) and it is limited to 3,2% in 2013 and drops to 2,8% in 2015, whereas in different approaches and for the decade 2005-2014 we once again observe a mixed image that includes an increase in relative expenses until 2009, when the dramatic decline begins [KANEP/GSEE, 2016:57]. Clearly, the 25% decrease in the GDP within the 2008-2015 period restricts funding further ; it now becomes crucial that resources for the first levels of education are increased (in the years for which we have aggregated data). As observed from the data in [table 2](#), expenditure concerning the mixed category ISCED\_0&1<sup>8</sup> increases both in real numbers, and also as a percentage of total expenditure. It appears that care for preschoolers in public facilities continues to play a central role at a time when restrictive policies leave their imprint on the domain of social protection (Kallinikaki, 2015).

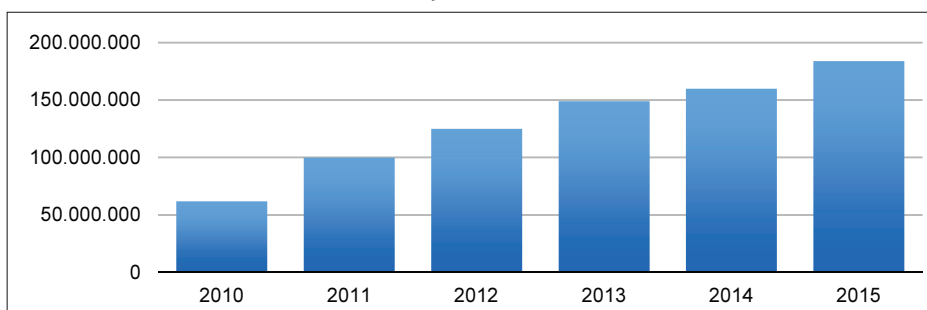
**Table 2: Expenses for education in total and in particular for primary and pre-school education**

	2013	2014	2015
<b>Educational system expenditure</b>	5.916.112.723	5.710.025.285	5.269.852.453
<b>ISCED_0&amp;1</b>	1.580.173.747	1.614.041.532	1.855.561.084

Source: Eurydice 2016

The strategic choices of the social protection system are reflected in the resources that it directs toward particular fields of intervention. In particular, with respect to the NSIF resources that are directed exclusively toward daycare stations, what is evident is the year-by-year increase until the completion of the program. As diagram 4 shows, the flow of resources increases during the period of reference of the study, suggesting a clear choice to strengthen the operation in question. The resources that support this function aim toward the support of the family and are part of the axis of *integration between professional and family life*. The element that we demonstrate through the diagram is the constant increase of resources, which, in any case demonstrates the great degree of hierarchy in addressing the need in question. Community funding serves the broader strategic targets of the Union, although (at present) their orientation is naturally in relative conformity with national targets and priorities (Sakellaropoulos and Oikonomou, 2006). In conformity with the above realization, it appears that during timeframe that we are studying and despite the implementation of broadened restrictive policies, programs are geared in favor of care facilities.

**Diagram 4: National Strategic Reference Framework (NSRF)  
funds for the operation of nurseries**



Source: Ministry for Development and Competitiveness

The growth of the program takes place during the long period of growth and the restrictive austerity policies that accompany it. The two observations from the development of resources toward the structures of pre-school care are first, that they are supported and reinforced as to their function. Second, the decision to reinforce facilities operating under the aegis of local authority institutions is highlighted.

However, given that the main source of funding originates from the Structural Funds, they emphasize that facilities under the division of the available transnational funding. It reveals the absolute dependency of the system upon its own character. The actions implemented undeniably serve real and urgent needs. The interventions for confronting them must forcibly be, both in terms of the method of implementation, as well as with respect to the content, compatible or even integrated in the directions of the EU, thus potentially overtaking local needs.

In conclusion, the inflexible needs for care, during the long period of recession, feed the demand for public services. The role of local authorities is upgraded since it now hosts the central state intervention in the field. Despite the fact that facilities are increasing in number, they do not meet the demand, and the result is that a significant portion of this demand remains unaddressed, perpetuating the deficient character of the broader system. Even more decisive is the aspect of dependency upon external resources, and the uncertainty that this entails.

## 4. Conclusions

**I**n conclusion, the provision of care services for preschoolers is a field whose character is symbolic and substantial vis-à-vis systems of social protection. The aims of the system as a whole determine the content of the particular aspect, which proves critical, as has been shown above. The breadth and the operation of structures of care are features of the intervention and determine the importance of social policy for social formations.

The sub-national parameter is of key importance for the development of care facilities for preschoolers. In the context of policies restricting social protection, the intervention is expanded, leading to an upgrade in the services of the system. Nevertheless, the detailed presentation of basic facts that make up the operation of the system demonstrated the persistently residual character of this operation.

The particular need for childcare presents a long-term stability, and so do household preferences regarding the type of provider. The economic crisis has a manifold impact on the system of social protection. One such impact is an increased demand for social provisions. The reaction (paradoxical, given the circumstances) through the rapid expansion of the intervention, which ultimately accounts for a four-fold increase in the total capacity of facilities, does not in the end succeed in centrally altering the features of the system. Initiating from the case that we examined, we observe that during the current period needs are multiplied and –paradoxically– despite the increase in resources, the system remains deficient and unable to effectively address need.

What is more, unstable funding may indeed compel us to conclude that the future is uncertain. The breadth of the intervention is under negotiation; the outcome of this negotiation is determined by a series of factors that lie beyond the system of social protection. The dependency of the facilities upon community funding, in tandem with the established inability of the central state to produce guarantees, means that the next steps of these facilities are precarious.

Finally, in evaluating the role of local government authorities, we realized that their contribution remains trapped in what is essentially a centralized system. Both the design and the resources of the system remain within the remit of the state, whereas only certain sections of the current management are local. The scaling down of social policy remains within the realm of distribution, without entrenchment, or the adoption of a local character, a situation to which local government itself contributes.

In sum, the study outlined the character of re-scaling of social protection. In the context of broader changes in the operation of the state and its central mechanisms, local government authorities are taking on seemingly crucial responsibilities and execute central functions.

The role of local government authorities remains dependent upon the central state, especially at the level of powers. In the Greek case we observe that their contribution also remains tied to funding. As a consequence, they are not capable of organizing locally geared services.

Consequently, the possibilities and weaknesses of local government agencies toward society stem from two central factors. The first concerns the system of social protection itself, which develops centrally. Its support and orientation reflect central preferences that originate beyond local government institutions. The second concerns the degree of autonomy that local governance enjoys, in order to organize local interventions.

Nevertheless, the importance of local government authorities is upgraded with relation to the past. The study now turns to the prospect of development of multifactorial formations in the provision of social services. The involvement of NGOs as well as companies in the provision of

services, signals a shift in social protection. The governance of social policy includes the active involvement of its formal agencies.

## Notes

1. The *Kallikratis Plan* presents the most recent reform that radically altered the terrain of local government in Greece. It is the implementation of a new map in local government that is determined as a first degree of local government, the second being the administrative districts. The first degree of local government counts 325 entities (as opposed to 1034 previously) and the second 13 administrative districts (according to the previous provision the second degree was the prefectures, which were redubbed as 'administrative districts' without a change in their spatial boundaries). See Law no 3852/2010.
2. EETAA aims to provide scientific and technical support to local government agencies, but also to public and social sector bodies.
3. The EURYDICE network is the European Information Network for education and provides data and analysis for European educational systems and policies.
4. *"Daily guardianship, care, daily nutrition, education and recreation of babies and infants of working parents, the multifaceted mental, emotional, social, psychosomatic development of children, their preparation for a physical transition from family life to the school environment (KYA Π28/2827/1997).*
5. For the sharp decline in income in Greece see Matsaganis and Leventi, 2014.
6. Aside from the data presented here, another point of reference is a survey carried out by the Union of Municipalities and Communities, completed in 2003, which refers to a radically different terrain and to local governance in particular, prior to the implementation of the Kallikratis Plan (Union of Municipalities and Communities, 2006). However, the data to which we refer covers the largest section of the terrain and clearly record the tendencies, allowing us to draw conclusions on the outlook and prospects of local care facilities for preschoolers.
7. National participation in the program is not stable in time: on the contrary, it shows a significant shift, touching on the entirety of the program.
8. ISCED 0: pre-primary education ISCED 1: primary education or first stage of basic education.

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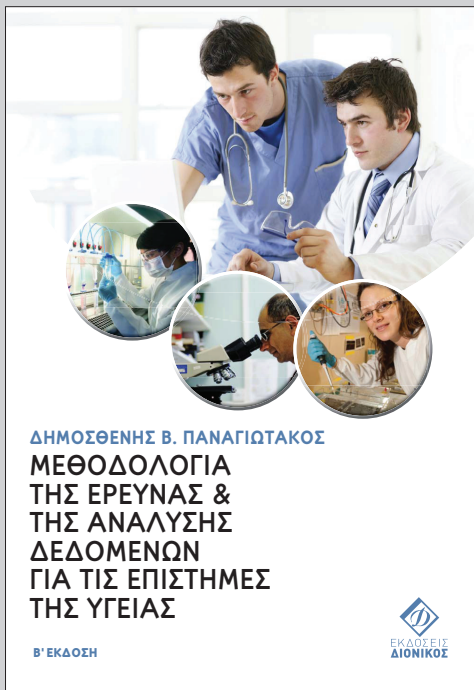
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**Β' ΕΚΔΟΣΗ**

ISBN : 978-960-6619-64-9

**ΣΕΛΙΔΕΣ** 560

**ΔΙΑΣΤΑΣΗ** 17 x 24

**ΤΙΜΗ** 44 €

Ο σωστός σχεδιασμός μιας έρευνας αποτελεί πλέον μια αναγκαιότητα παρά μια πολυτέλεια για τους επιστήμονες που ασχολούνται στο χώρο της Υγείας. Συγκεκριμένα, αποτελεί την σπονδυλική στήλη της σύγχρονης ιατρο-βιολογικής επιστήμης. Η μεθοδολογία της έρευνας υποστηρίζει την πρακτική εφαρμογή και προσφέρει νέες κατευθύνσεις, διευρύνοντας τους επιστημονικούς ορίζοντες και τη γνώση στο επιστημονικό πεδίο μια και επιτρέπει αντικειμενικές μετρήσεις από πολύπλοκα επιστημονικά πεδία και ποσοτικές εκτιμήσεις από τα αποτελέσματα των ερευνητικών διαδικασιών. Μέσω μιας μεθοδολογικά σχεδιασμένης έρευνας μπορούν να ελεγχθούν κλινικές και βιολογικές υποθέσεις, αλλά και να αξιολογηθούν τα προγράμματα της δημόσιας υγείας. Ο μεθοδολόγος της έρευνας μπορεί να χρησιμοποιηθεί για να τεκμηριώσει την πρακτική εφαρμογή, να καταγράψει τις ερευνητικές δραστηριότητες, να εγγυηθεί για την ποιότητα της έρευνας, καθώς και να μειώσει το οικονομικό της κόστος.



# NGOs as Learning Organizations: Investigating the Means and the Potential

Panagiota Vathis, *Technological Institute of Western Greece*

## Οι ΜΚΟ ως Οργανισμοί Μάθησης: Διερευνώντας τα Μέσα και τις Δυνατότητες

Παναγιώτα Βάθη, *ΤΕΙ Δυτικής Ελλάδας*

### ABSTRACT

The work of NGOs, especially in the present times, faces growing competition and shrinking budgets. They have to demonstrate that they make good use of the resources, while being obliged to learn from their actions and experiences and try new methods and practices, in order to be competitive and effective.

This article, explores the role of NGOs in providing incentives, means and opportunities for organizational learning. Our main aim is to present basic methods and good practices for their efficient function.

### ΠΕΡΙΛΗΨΗ

Το έργο των ΜΚΟ χαρακτηρίζεται από ένα απαιτητικό περιβάλλον με αυξανόμενο ανταγωνισμό και συρρικνούμενο προϋπολογισμό. Πρέπει συνεχώς να αποδεικνύουν ότι αξιοποιούν τα χρήματα που εισπράττουν και να επιδεικνύουν έργο με άμεσα ορατά αποτελέσματα ως μέτρο επιτυχίας ενώ ταυτόχρονα πρέπει να μαθαίνουν από την εμπειρία τους, να επικαιροποιούν τις μεθόδους και πρακτικές τους στο πεδίο, ώστε να παραμένουν αποτελεσματικές.

Στην παρούσα εργασία μελετάμε το ρόλο των ΜΚΟ στην παροχή κινήτρων, μέσων και ευκαιριών για οργανωσιακή μάθηση, επιδιώκουμε να παρουσιάσουμε βασικές μεθόδους και καλές πρακτικές και να προτείνουμε τρόπους επιτυχημένης εφαρμογής τους.

**KEY WORDS:** NGOs, organizational learning, tools for learning, evaluation of organizational learning

**ΛΕΞΕΙΣ-ΚΛΕΙΔΙΑ:** ΜΚΟ, οργανωσιακή μάθηση, εργαλεία μάθησης, αξιολόγηση οργανωσιακής μάθησης

## 1. Introduction

While NGOs are undoubtedly forces of social change, their educative potential should also not be ignored. What NGOs seek to achieve through their actions and the tools they employ is important for learning and potentially for educational reasons. Moreover, organizational learning can co-exist with commitment to each NGO's objective but it needs to thrive in the context of openness and the ability to find out how knowledge is retained for future use (Britton:2005: 7). Since organizational learning is a site of adult learning, NGOs are "schools of learning" (Kane:2001) which involve an educative process of politicization, through

their actions, debate, explanations and justifications for socio-economic or environmental risks. In that sense NGOs can be seen as “vehicles of learning” and sites of educational engagement (Sutherland et al: 2006:172).

The root of the issue is the openness of NGOs to learn from their cognitive and political praxis (i.e. the knowledge they create and the action they pursue) and their intention to improve their organizational memory (Britton:2005: 7).

There are several tools and techniques promoting organizational learning in NGOs reflecting conceptual models for learning and knowledge, most of which are simple and trying them only requires the desire to try something new and appropriate motivation levels.

Moreover, there are tools for assessing learning capacity, such as The Learning NGO Questionnaire, which is a good starting point for developing a customized tool to assess the NGOs strengths and weaknesses (Britton:1998:22).

## 2. Methodology and Definitions

**D**rawing on a body of literature that has been written mostly with implementation of adult education in business organizations in mind, tools and learning processes are explored keeping in mind that NGOs have to overcome several barriers to learning.

However, in order to strengthen their skill for effective organizational learning at all levels-individual, sector, organization- NGOs should systematically assess their current learning capacity. Using an assessment tool like The Learning NGO Questionnaire can be rather helpful in this process.

In the present article, Habermasian theoretical terms are used to provide a theoretical grounding to organizational learning.

Organizational learning is perceived as the processes or activities that an organization involves to develop insights, knowledge, and lessons from past experiences so as to improve current and future performance (Britton:2005:5). It refers to a learning process within organizations that involves the interaction of individual and collective (group, organizational, and inter-organizational) levels of analysis and leads to achieving the goals of organizations (Popova-Nowak and Cseh:2010:299). Organizational learning indicates how individuals, teams, and organizations learn and transform through actions, experiences and cooperation.

## 3. Organizational Learning Through Habermasian Lens

**H**abermas has developed an interdisciplinary theory of communicative action based on the following two motifs: the increasing dominance of purposive rationality in society and the need to develop a communicatively-based rational challenge to this (Habermas:1991). According to Habermas, as society has evolved and become increasingly complex, economic and political-administrative institutions split off from the lifeworld to form a more purposive- rationally oriented systems world. These institutions are no longer primarily steered by communicative considerations but by instrumental considerations of money and power (Holford et al:1998:93).

Habermas' approach of the communicative potential of the institutions and traditions of the lifeworld provides theorists of organizational learning and of adult education in general with

descriptive and normative interpretations of the role of adult education (Holford et al:1998:95). These particularly concern the necessity and value of organizational knowledge especially in NGOs.

Organizational learning can be seen as a form of social learning since both involve participation in communities of practice through which people acquire experience, knowledge and identities by coming together in a variety of enterprises (Sutherland et al: 2006:172). In this view, organizational learning is more than an intellectual activity as it involves the negotiation of competences and cooperation amongst participants in a community of practice, such as NGOs. Furthermore, organizational learning as a form of social learning also contributes to the exploration and redefinition of the organizational responsibility of the stakeholders involved (Wildemeersch and Jansen:1997:465). However, NGOs are distinct "communities of practice" in which actors involved learn to enhance their collective agency, through action and reaction, collaborative and cooperative patterns of interaction. In organizational learning, as in the learning process in general, unlearning is a starting point of change.

Habermas suggests the connection between civil society, democracy and adult education while he defines civil society as "...composed of more or less spontaneously emergent associations, organizations and movements that, attuned to how societal problems resonate in the private public sphere, distil and transmit such reactions in amplified form to the public" (Habermas:1996:367). Key to Habermas' definition of civil society is the role of NGOs. NGOs in civil society are comprised of citizens who seek acceptable interpretations for their social interests and experiences. NGOs, by actively sustaining a public sphere discourse, can "insert moments" of democratic accountability into system world.

Adult education can foster the creation of spaces where citizens have the opportunity to debate publicly and critical learning can take place. NGOs are such prime locations for learning that is free from dependence on the state or economy.

According to Welton (1995), in order for the field of adult education to fulfill such a role in civil society, adult learning must involve both social reproduction (enculturation) and social revolutionary learning (system-bursting and socially critical learning). As the world of power and money is a constant threat to civil society, the forces of technical control must be made subject to the consensus of acting citizens who redeem the power of reflection (Sutherland et al:2006:52). NGOs are important pedagogical sites for democratic learning, where democracy as a social movement is embedded in an ongoing effort of individuals to produce a social discourse and to ponder the implications of such discourse for social or political action.

Organizational learning at organizational level depends on the NGO's identity (its self-definition), the adversary it seeks to challenge (that is its principal "enemy") and its vision (what goals it seeks) since defining what an organization stands for and what it stands against are clearly educational activities (Sutherland et al:2006:174). However, as an organization consists of sectors, groups and individuals, organizational learning at oorganizational level reflects the knowledge and human interests according to Habermas analysis as seen in Table 1:

**Table 1: Knowledge and human interests**

Type of human Interest	Kind of knowledge	Process	Research methods
Technical (prediction)	Instrumental (casual explanation)	Empirical-analytic methods	Positivistic sciences
Practical (interpretation and understanding)	Practical (understanding)	Hermeneutic methods	Interpretive research
Emancipatory (criticism and liberation)	Emancipation (reflection)	Critical theory methods	Critical Social Sciences

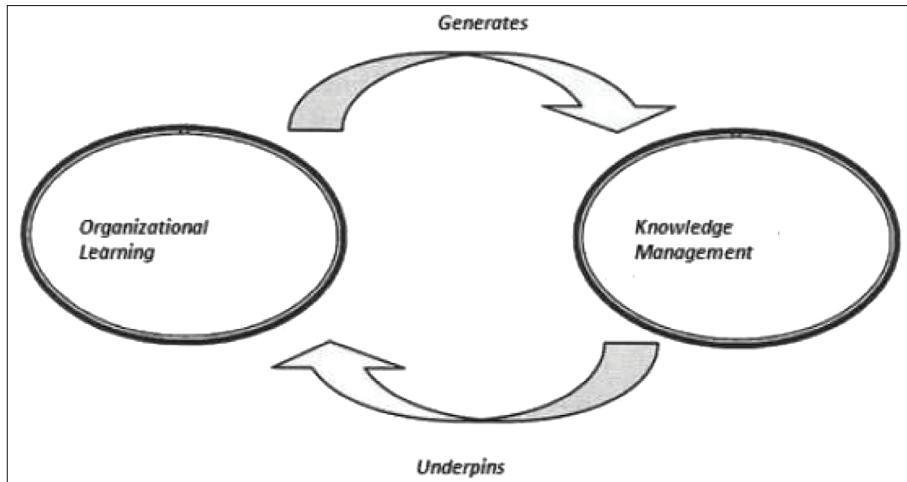
Source: E. Karatzia-Stavlioti et al., 2011

Undoubtedly, Habermas provides the theoretical support for organizational learning in NGOs who hope and work for a more rational and democratic society.

## 4. Knowledge and Learning in NGOs Context

Since the mid 1990s the NGO world became aware of the fact that NGOs have to invest in their most valuable resources i.e. knowledge and learning and adopt the practical framework from the corporate world (Britton:2005: 7). So, NGOs adopted the fields of organizational learning and learning organization realizing that these have not just theoretical significance but they also provide advantages which are necessary for responding to the evolving role of NGOs. Unfortunately, many NGOs suffer from lack of organizational memory, that is their information systems are difficult to access and incomplete which makes knowledge difficult to be retained for future use (Britton:2005:7). However, using the advances in technology and communications, organizational leadership no longer needs multiple layers of intermediaries to pass information up and down the organizational structure. This leveling of the organization pushes responsibility and control lower in the organization, which, in turn requires a particular kind of membership: those who are willing to learn, adapt quickly, communicate and cooperate effectively.

By the end of the 1990s, NGOs turned to another idea from the corporate world: "knowledge management", i.e. the process of organizing and managing information and recovering the collective memory (see Figure 1 and Table 2). NGOs managers hoped that the promising power of ICT would help them turn information into manageable knowledge and wisdom. Unfortunately, reality did not live up to expectations.

**Figure 1: Linking organizational learning and knowledge management**

Source: Britton (2005). p. 8

**Table 2: Linking organizational learning and knowledge management**

Organizational Learning	Knowledge Management
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It is the intentional use of collective and individual learning in order to transform organizational behavior according to its target</li> <li>• Provides purposes for the utilization of knowledge</li> <li>• It is context-specific i.e. knowledge is selected in order to address specific challenges</li> <li>• It is usually demand led</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It refers to the systematic processes by which the individual or collective knowledge is acquired, distilled, shared, stored, retrieved and used</li> <li>• It enables organizational learning</li> <li>• Can be context-independent</li> <li>• It is usually supply driven i.e. the process is adapted to the offered information</li> </ul>

Source: Britton (2005). p. 8

Knowledge management has made an important contribution as far as organizational learning is concerned because it has helped NGOs to take a "second generation" approach taking into account not only the technology but also the human resources in order to achieve its aim. Perfection becomes the standard and change is the normal way of organizational life (Gee et al.:1996).

## 5. The Learning Organization

**T**he concept of Learning Organization first appeared in MIT, mainly due to P. Senge and it seems that it influenced organizations in almost every country in western world.

In that sense, a learning organization is an organization that acquires knowledge and innovates quickly enough to survive and thrive in a rapidly changing environment. Learning

organizations create a culture that encourages and supports continuous employee learning, critical thinking and risk taking that involves new ideas, allowing mistakes and valuing employee contribution, learning from experience and experiment, and disseminating new knowledge throughout the organization for incorporation into its plan of action (Britton:1998, Popova-Nowalk and Cseh: 2015).

In a NGO,-as in any organization-, there are learning needs that may not be observable or apparent to the other parts of the organization or to the managers. For this reason it is important that learning needs,-as well as other needs-, are regularly investigated and gaps are addressed on a collective basis. Identification of learning needs is helped by answering specific questions like "is the provision of learning activities determined from a consideration of organizational objectives?", "does the group/department/organization operate effectively as a team or just as a collection of individuals?", "is there a clear induction process for members of the organization?". Data may be collected from a number of internal or external sources and may provide different insights depending on what is gathered. Therefore, it is rather important to investigate the most appropriate information that will guide the learning needs analysis (e.g.: sufficient data is collected, information of data are recognized, opinions are carefully investigated to see if they are justified). Collecting information for the purpose of identifying learning needs can be conducted in a number of ways (i.e. internal sources, external sources) and the type of data gathered influences the manner in which it can be applied.

The learning organization literature,-even when referring to NGOs,- includes references to intuition and telling-a- story, the need to understand connecting patterns and relationships as well as system archetypes, the involvement of staff at all levels as active producers of knowledge, the collective nature of thought, which generates learning, creative tension and critical reflection (Watkins and Marsick:1993).

Corporate discourse on learning organization places great emphasis on the role of the individual in the learning process ( Schied et al.in Holford et al.:1998:281). Given the turmoil and constant change experienced by organizations, learning purportedly supports incrementally improved performance and seeks to shape NGOs at every level (individual, group, sector, organization) so that it is flexible and adaptable in response to uncertainty. A central assumption undergirding the conceptual basis of learning NGOs includes viewing learning as a means to improve future organizational performance. Another key assumption is seeing learning as a way to keep organizations in alignment with their environment as a mechanism for survival, growth and success. Dilworth (1995) takes this one step further when he compares the learning organization to DNA: much like a genetic code, learning is not an external activity but is rather embedded in everyday work activity through the internalized values and beliefs that govern team and individual behaviour.

Brooks (1992) points out that the nature of the relationship between individual learning and organizational transformation is unknown. He concludes that individuals, not teams, work to transform organizations. Similarly, he sees positive response to change as an advantage and a way to exploit a situation and, thus, transform oneself in order to face the new demands. In this way, opportunity -oriented NGOs tend to be focused, pliable, self-assured, and risk-taking, proactively delving into change and developing structures to manage ambiguity.

## 6. Conceptual Models and Methods for Organizational Learning

Conceptual models for organizational learning help the stakeholders understand the way in which individual and collective learning works in the context of an organization. A particularly interesting point of organizational learning is that conceptual frameworks can be found almost in every scientific field, based, mainly in the western cultural perspective. The most commonly used models comes from Behavioural Psychology (experiential learning cycle, single-double and triple loop learning) - (Kolb:1984, Argyris and Schon:1996, Britton:2005), Organizational Learning and Organizational Development (Senge's Five Disciplines, Levels of Learning, The Learning Organization, Eight Function Model)- (Watkins and Marsick:1993), Strategy Development (Planned and Emergent Strategies)- (Rose and Murphy:2014:181, Knowledge Management (The Knowledge Hierarchy, Tacit and Explicit Knowledge, People-Process and Technology Model, Three Generations of Knowledge Management, Gartner's Enterprise Matrix, Knowledge Creation Spiral) - (Hicks, Dattero and Galup:2006:19-31, Prusak:2000, Shenk, Gartner and Fichtner:1999, Nonaka, Ikujiro, Toyama and Ryoko:2003:2-10).

Since the mid 1990s, in order to bridge the gap between theoretical models and practice, many NGOs have experimented with several methods of organizational learning, adopting, once again, concepts from the corporate world (see **Table 3**).

**Table 3: Methods of organizational learning**

Method	Approach
Learning Before, During and After (LBDA) (Carrillo:2005:236-250)	The LBDA method aims at avoiding the reinvention of existing knowledge by creating knowledge "assets" that can be assessed by everyone in the NGO. Learning <i>before</i> refers to learning which benefits people who are experienced or knowledgeable. Learning <i>during</i> refers to learning that takes place after action reviews. Learning <i>after</i> is captured by learning reviews leading to specific recommendations for future actions. The LBDA model suggests a process which focuses on interpersonal relationships supported with ICT.
Learning workshops(Enfield et al.:2007))	The method is based on the "Learning after" part of the LBDA method and is used as an alternative to formal lessons. This includes video interviews with the individuals and groups concerned with the goal to capture learning from cross-functional teams.
Communities of Practice (Wegner:2009)	Communities of practice refer to groups of individuals (either within organizations or across several organizations) who share know-how, improve their competence, share and develop good practices, foster creativity, and collaborate towards achieving a common objective. These networks may meet face-to-face but they usually keep in regular contact virtually using ICT methods.
Action Learning(Marsick and O'Neil:2003)	The method refers to action learning approach. Action learning sets are small groups who discuss emerging issues or problems that each member experiences at work. At their meetings, they share perceptions about such issues/problems, they support each other, they question and review progress whereas they are discouraged from giving advice.

## 7. Tools for Organizational Learning

A common practice among NGOs is to search for tools that will contribute to embracing methods or work-related approaches and translating innovative, extraordinary concepts into practical organizational reality. When choosing or developing such tools, NGOs have to maintain a balance between oversimplifying learning and the need to revolutionise it. There is also a need to develop the capacity to adapt the tools that better fit the NGO's objectives and culture. In Table 4 a range of more often used tools are introduced:

**Table 4: Tools for organizational learning**

Tool	Application
Advice Network Maps (Informal networks: the company behind the chart (Krackhardt and Hanson:1993:104-111)	Advice Network Maps identify the members whom staff turn to most often for help or advice despite the fact that their expertise may be unrecognized but who play a crucial role in the organization's memory. It is what we call: "the company behind the chart".
Case studies (Wynn-Williams et al:2008:113-128)	The process involves selecting a situation from the NGO's experience that illustrates a series of issues for further discussion. A case study describes events in the form of a story enabling readers to reflect on the dilemmas or problems faced by the persons in the story.
Individual Performance Indicators (Braskamp and Ory:1994)	Individual Performance Indicators are used to establish an individual's performance concerning knowledge management. These link organizational learning with individual job responsibilities. They are often used as part of the organization's individual performance appraisal system.
Organizational Performance Indicators (Popova and Sharpanskykh:2010)	Such indicators measure progress in knowledge management and organizational learning in relation to NGOs' strategic plan.
Learning Maps (Britton:2005)	Learning maps enable organizations to visually represent the internal creation and flow of knowledge and learning. Mapping learning involves brainstorming and recording onto cards every single stage of the process and thus creating a flowchart. The flow of information and lessons learned is added to the diagram by using connecting lines. Such maps can be used to identify potential connections and mechanisms for ensuring that the NGO can benefit more from its own knowledge and experience.
Information and Communication Technology (ICT) (Robey, Boudreau and Rose:2000:125-155)	Many NGOs use a wide range of ICT tools to identify "who knows what" in the organization, as well as try to improve organizational memory, making use of searchable databases, documents management systems, partners databases etc

## 8. Developing a Strategy for Organizational Learning

Having discussed the importance of organizational learning in NGOs it is clear that developing a strategic approach to learning is the key for encouraging learning-both collective and individual- in an organization. However, an instrumental approach where learning is seen just as



a means to organizational effectiveness does not stimulate creativity nor generate new insights and innovative practices. On the other hand, a more speculative, opportunistic approach that focuses more on the values, vision and culture of the organization develops staff learning skills, creates opportunities for sharing experiences and develops a culture of learning (Britton:2005:36).

Planned and emergent approaches to organizational learning are not mutually exclusive and the challenge for each NGO is to develop and implement its own strategy which finds a workable balance between the two approaches and provides its members with the necessary motive, means, and opportunities creating therefore a learning environment. Table 5 summarises motives, means and opportunities NGOs can provide to their staff in order either to develop a planned learning strategy or create conditions for emergent learning (Britton:2005:37)

**Table 5: Developing strategy for organizational learning**

Develop a planned learning	Create conditions for emergent learning
Motive	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clear out NGO's objectives and the contribution of organizational learning to achieving them</li> <li>• Identify barriers to learning and suggest ways of overcoming them</li> <li>• Create learning goals and strategic at individual, group, section and organizational level</li> <li>• Monitor and evaluate the outcomes and impact of organizational learning initiatives</li> <li>• Encourage and reward learning</li> <li>• Establish collective responsibility</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Share individual/team experiences and knowledge</li> <li>• Share and celebrate successful initiatives</li> <li>• Develop mechanisms for familiarizing members with useful conceptual models</li> <li>• Point out the importance even of small scale learning</li> </ul>
Means	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use Advice Network Maps to find out where expertise lies in the organization</li> <li>• Encourage team working</li> <li>• Introduce learning methods such as mentoring, coaching, action learning and communities of practice</li> <li>• Create a knowledge management infrastructure</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop individual skills</li> <li>• Take into account cultural context when developing methods and tools</li> <li>• Strengthen interpersonal and interorganizational relationships</li> </ul>
Opportunity	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create the space for learning</li> <li>• Make use of existing systems and procedures</li> <li>• Consider evaluation as part of learning</li> <li>• Make use of evaluations in order to improve learning</li> <li>• Build time and resources for reflection and learning</li> <li>• Involve staff in review and evaluation teams</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage networking and the development of communities of practice within each NGO as well as between NGOs</li> <li>• Create the space for learning</li> </ul>

As a matter of fact, organizational learning is both deeply personal and strongly influenced by certain socio-cultural factors. In addition, globalisation has lead to widespread interaction

between agents from different cultures and contexts. Cultural differences impact on the design and operation of performance measurement systems. In addition, the choice of performance measures will be determined by a range of cultural and contextual factors. Not only is there a need for greater understanding of the impact of different cultures on the choice and use of performance measures, but we need to recognize how cultural values impact on the application of different assessment processes. It is easily assumed that western conceptual models are universally applicable. However, a number of recent studies

(Jackson:2003, Alvarado:2004, Guoquan Chen : 2008) demonstrate the need to challenge the assumption that western models of management and organization are equally applicable to NGOs no matter where they are located culturally or geographically, seeing as even neighbouring European countries seem to have differing approaches (Sorgenfrei:2004). Cultural and contextual differences may also limit our ability to compare the performance of similar organisations working in different cultures and settings, and hence undermine any comparative analysis .

The potential for organizational learning to have an equal effect on organizational transformation has yet to be fully explored and there is a need for translating theory into practice. Moreover, models and practices must be transformed in order to meet the needs of learning in different cultures and contexts. On the other hand, much of the success of such systems is determined by the human factor. The successful application of organizational learning and knowledge management systems depends on the intentions of those who commission it, as well as the resources, commitment and approach of those who design and operate it. The principal reasons why learning initiatives fail are poor design of the strategies themselves and difficulties related to the way the overall system is implemented.

## 9. Evaluating Organizational Learning

**W**ithout an evaluation of learning programmes it is impossible to identify the successful or unsuccessful elements and therefore improve future provision. Questions about evaluating organizational learning involve how NGOs are developed, how they are managed and how they can be measured. For example, has the metamorphosis into a learning organization taken place once individuals at all levels have been transformed? Does learning among individuals, teams, processes and the total system occur concurrently? How does this learning occur? Is it based on experiential or adaptive learning or is it anticipatory and innovative? If the process is concurrent, how is work distinguished from learning?- when does one end and the other begin? And how is learning measured? Is it measured by quantitative methods? Does a learning NGO exist-in its learning capacity- if the whole organization has not mastered team learning, shared visions, mental models, personal mastery and systems thinking? (Shied et al., in Holford et al.: 1998:283).

Evaluation can be conducted at a number of levels (see Table 6, below) (Phillips:2003):

**Table 6: Levels of the Learning NGOs evaluation**

Level of evaluation	Method	Tools	Impact of evaluation
Reaction	Find out the initial response to the action-learning program	Feedback sheets, reports	Find out what the participants think about the learning interventions, what the stakeholders think about the training interventions, what their thoughts are about the venues facilities
Learning	Find out what was actually learned from the action-learning program	Reports of new knowledge and experience	Find out the main areas of new knowledge and experience
Behavior	Find out the changes in the participants behavior in the desired manner	Observation of the way they use ICT	Find out which elements of new knowledge and experience have been applied in the workplace and why the participants apply some of the elements and not others
Outcomes	Find out if there is any improvement in achieving their targets	Reports of the strengthens and weaknesses of the organization compared with actions before the learning interventions	Find out the level of improvement in achieving their targets
Return of investment	Find out how the investment in learning compare to the results	Comparing reports of actions before and after the learning interventions	Find out the level of improvement in achieving their targets

In order to strengthen their capacity for effective learning, NGOs should first systematically and honestly assess their current learning capacity. An assessment tool such as The Learning NGO Questionnaire (Britton:1998:22) can be helpful in this process, particularly if it can be adapted to reflect the specific circumstances of the organization and its working environment. The Learning NGO Questionnaire consists of forty questions and uses the eight functions of a learning organization (gathering internal experience, accessing external learning, integrating learning into strategy and policy, apply the learning, developing organizational memory, communication systems, drawing conclusions, creating a supportive culture: all of them correlate to each other) as a basis for assessing the NGOs strengths and weaknesses. It can be used at individual, group, sector or organization level.

Interpreting the responses requires the organization to examine not only the overall scores of each of the functions but also each individual's assessment of specific questions. The following questions may help clarify the significance of the responses:

- What functions can the NGO acknowledge as its strengths?
- What functions require most attention? What needs to be done to strengthen the organization's capacity in those areas?
- Is there a wide disagreement between individuals' scores for a particular function? What is the significance of this?

- What are the main barriers to strengthening the learning capacity of the organization? How can these barriers be overcome? (Britton:1998:25).

Exposing the NGO to the scrutiny of evaluation may be a rather risky activity as examining areas of the organization's practice will inevitably lead to discussions about how the organization operates in general and how individuals, teams and sections work together for achieving their goals. However, this must not be threatening as it can turn out to be a chance even in NGOs where there are internal tensions. Indeed, discussing about a neutral topic such as organizational learning, knowledge management or organizational memory, may act as an unthreatening way to identify underlying organizational problems which may require attention. For this process to succeed, the organization has to set up basic rules for the discussion and perhaps involve "the right" facilitator, that is an interested person who is familiar with the issues (Ford:2001).

With the increased intensity of humanitarian and environmental action since the late 1980s, it became clear that monitoring and evaluation approaches which were created for development purposes needed some adjustment in order to be applied in relief and emergency situations. As most emergency situations are characterised by extreme urgency and a multitude of actors, many of the operational challenges mentioned previously are accentuated. For instance, circumstances tend to change rapidly, and this creates a need for continuous monitoring which is often difficult to satisfy, as most field practitioners are tied up in operations and do not perceive monitoring as a priority. Many evaluations are conducted after the interventions have taken place, such as After Action Review (AAR). AAR focuses on a few key questions in order to obtain a quick picture of the process and outcome of the intervention (Guoquan Chen:2008).

Managers tend to make fundamental mistakes when choosing what to measure, and selecting performance indicators. Some performance measures are inappropriate and impractical in an organizational setting, especially as far as organizational learning is concerned. Furthermore, the way measures are implemented often alienates staff and volunteers who feel threatened by the indicators used or the processes initiated. In addition, the overall process is time consuming, frustrating, and deflects staff from their primary tasks. Consequently, it is understandable that staff and volunteers often do their best to derail and subvert such effects (Hailey and Sorgenfrei:2004).

## 10. Learning Organizations in a Learning Society

**M**any metaphors have been employed to describe contemporary society as the "information society", "knowledge society", "learning society". One of the fundamental issues in the concept of the learning society is the concept of "learning" which is often confused with the issue of "education". Yet the idea of a society undertaking an individual to "educate" them is rather strange since society is more than the sum of its individual members. It is quite necessary to make a clear distinction between the concepts of "education" and "learning": by education we mean a public situation that provides learning through certain structures established by the state. Learning, however, is broader than education and it is in fact private. It is the process by which individuals transform their experiences into knowledge, skills, values, attitude, emotions, beliefs, senses etc. It is universal and to some extent lifelong. In other words, learning is a human ability possessed by everybody but it is a private activity (Holford et al.:1998:59). However, in the modern reflexive society the knowledge that people acquire is no longer certain and established for ever- its value lies in that it enables people to adapt to the ever-changing social requirements.

In one sense, learning society is about creating a pseudo-public sphere from a private process. Learning remains the driving force of human beings, something that is individual and individuating and it can only be applied to society because society is fragmenting and individuating, it is, by its nature, undergoing change (Jarvis in Holford: 1998:67).

As each organization reflects society, a learning organization is a model of the learning society and a reflection of it, it is "nothing more than an island of relatively stabilized relational orders in a sea of ceaseless change, the society" (Chia:2003:131). In modern times, alike society, NGOs are increasingly affected by the "knowledge-thick" global environment characterized by growing complexity, uncertainty, non-linearity and rapid change. They are becoming "more fluid, ever shifting in size, shape and arrangements" and are promoting the removal of hierarchies and de-centering of knowledge creation (Popova-Nowak and Cheh:2010 :299).

However, sometimes it seems that knowledge is frightening. In fact, as learning is a process of transformation and, therefore of freedom, freedom is frightening (Jarvis in Holford: 1998: 55). In other words, the fear of freedom is a fear of learning. Consequently, there may be a reaction to the organizational learning- as there may be a social reaction to the learning society- a non-learning society. Some people are seeking to recreate structures, to re-enact traditions and to create "safe" social milieus for every day life as to them the learning society is a risky place.

## 11. Conclusion

**T**his article has offered an overview of some of the issues in the area of organizational learning and its evaluation based on Habermas' ground theory.

Currently, there is an artificial division between formal learning viewed as knowledge acquisition and informal learning viewed as a social process (Elkjaer: 1999:419-434). Although current research recognizes that organizational learning is more than a cumulative result of individual learning, NGOs' most common approaches include planned learning through formal training programs hoping that individual learning will aggregate at the organizational level (Eddie Blass: 2005). A growing number of NGOs realize the limitations of individual learning and recognize the power of employee interaction in learning within the NGO or between members of other organizations, thus fostering viable and dynamic environments, while valuing creativity and diversity (Popova-Nowak and Cheh:2010:320).

As far as evaluating of organizational learning is concerned, there are a number of operational challenges and crucial issues that need to be addressed to ensure the successful application of measurement systems, notably around how best to promote learning and performance improvement while preserving a degree of accountability and transparency. In addition, issues related to how best to factor in power and control, culture and context, as well as complexity and change, must be considered. There is ongoing concern about the cost of implementing such systems; whether or not they are cost-effective and deliver what they purport to. Many of these issues can be addressed through greater stakeholder participation in the development of objectives and performance indicators; in their analysis as well as the dissemination of findings. While such participation is time-consuming and expensive, stakeholder involvement is crucial, if the ultimate purpose of performance measurement, namely performance improvement, is to be achieved. It is therefore apparent that dedicated resources in terms of time and money are needed to make such stakeholder involvement possible (Tsoukas and Chia:2002).

Organizational learning in NGOs, as a dimension of adult education, is influenced by Habermasian theory on communicative action and on civil society.

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## Biographical Note

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# Η Σημασία και ο Ρόλος των Οργανώσεων της Κοινωνικής Οικονομίας και των Κοινωνικών Συνεταιριστικών Επιχειρήσεων στην Ελλάδα. Μια Μελέτη Περίπτωσης στην Περιφερειακή Ενότητα Καβάλας

**Ταυτότητα Έρευνας:** Η εκπόνηση της έρευνας πραγματοποιήθηκε από τον Αντώνιο Κώστα (έρευνα - συγγραφή), Δρ. Κοινωνιολογίας και τη Στεφανία Μαστοράκη (βοηθός έρευνας), Κοινωνιολόγο, κατά το διάστημα του Αυγούστου 2013 - Ιουλίου 2015, στο πλαίσιο του ερευνητικού έργου της εταιρείας «ΔΟΜΗ ΚΟΙΝΕΠ - Δομή Στήριξης Φορέων Κοινωνικής Οικονομίας και Επιχειρηματικότητας» και για λογαριασμό της Γενικής Γραμματείας Έρευνας και Τεχνολογίας του Υπουργείου Παιδείας. Η έρευνα έχει συγχρηματοδοτηθεί από την Ελλάδα και την Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση (Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινωνικό Ταμείο) μέσω του Επιχειρησιακού Προγράμματος “Ανάπτυξη Ανθρώπινου Δυναμικού” του Εθνικού Στρατηγικού Πλαισίου Αναφοράς (ΕΣΠΑ) 2007-2013 - Δράση: «Ενίσχυση της απασχόλησης ερευνητών σε επιχειρήσεις».

Σκοπός της έρευνας ήταν η διερεύνηση, η εξέταση, η περιγραφή και η παρουσίαση της εμπειρίας, των εμποδίων, των δυνατοτήτων, της συμβολής, της σημασίας, του ρόλου, των προκλήσεων και των προοπτικών ανάπτυξης των Οργανώσεων της Κοινωνικής Οικονομίας και των Κοινωνικών Συνεταιριστικών Επιχειρήσεων (στο εξής: ΚοινΣΕπ) στην Περιφερειακή Ενότητα Καβάλας (στο εξής Π.Ε. Καβάλας), ώστε να απαντηθεί το βασικό ερώτημά της (υπόθεση εργασίας), το κατά πόσο και πώς οι Φορείς αυτοί μπορούν να συμβάλλουν θετικά στην ενίσχυση της απασχόλησης, την καταπολέμηση της ανεργίας και του κοινωνικού αποκλεισμού, την τόνωση της επιχειρηματικότητας καθώς και την ανάπτυξη της τοπικής οικονομίας.

Επιμέρους στόχοι της ήταν τόσο η σύντομη όσο και η περιεκτική παρουσίαση των χαρακτηριστικών, των κριτηρίων ταξινόμησης, των προσδιορισμών, των δεδομένων, των στοιχείων, των στρατηγικών, του νομικού πλαισίου κ.ά. των ΚοινΣΕπ και των Οργανώσεων της Κοινωνικής Οικονομίας στην Ελλάδα, σύμφωνα με την επισκόπηση της πρόσφατης βιβλιογραφίας, με τις νέες έρευνες-μελέτες και με το σχετικό ελληνικό θεσμικό/νομικό πλαίσιο και τις τροποποιήσεις του.

Η εν λόγω έρευνα, παρ' όλο που αφορούσε σε όλες τις νομικές μορφές των Οργανώσεων της Κοινωνικής Οικονομίας, επικεντρώθηκε κυρίως στην εξέταση των πρακτικών, των έργων, των δραστηριοτήτων, της λειτουργίας, των δυσκολιών, των προβλημάτων, του ρόλου, της συμβολής και των ευκαιριών ανάπτυξης των ΚοινΣΕπ του Ν. 4019/2011 του Υπουργείου Εργασίας αλλά και των Κοινωνικών Συνεταιρισμών Περιορισμένης Ευθύνης (στο εξής: ΚοιΣΠΕ) του Ν. 2716/1999 του Υπουργείου Υγείας.

Ειδικότερα, πραγματοποιήθηκαν δύο έρευνες πεδίου. Η πρώτη ήταν ποιοτική και πραγματοποιήθηκε σε δείγμα 22 εκπροσώπων και αρμόδιων στελεχών ΚοινΣΕπ (στο εξής όπου ΚοινΣΕπ νοούνται και οι ΚοιΣΠΕ), Δημόσιων και Μη Κυβερνητικών Φορέων της Π.Ε. Καβάλας. Η δεύτερη ήταν ποσοτική και διεξήχθη σε τυχαίο δείγμα 260 ανέργων όλων των ηλικιών της Π.Ε. Καβάλας που συμμετείχαν σε προγράμματα και δράσεις προώθησης του τομέα της Κοινωνικής Οικονο-

μίας. Ο συνδυασμός της ποιοτικής και της ποσοτικής έρευνας ήταν στοχευμένος για την κάλυψη συγκεκριμένων ζητημάτων που εξετάζουν και περιγράφουν εμπειρικά τις δράσεις, τις αδυναμίες, τα εμπόδια, την προσφορά και την προοπτική των ΚοινΣΕπ κυρίως, στην ενίσχυση της απασχόλησης και την ανάπτυξη της επιχειρηματικότητας σε τοπικό επίπεδο (κάλυψη κενού παρόμοιων ερευνητικών εγχειρημάτων).

Στόχοι της ποιοτικής έρευνας ήταν να διερευνηθούν, να ερμηνευτούν, να σχολιαστούν και να παρουσιαστούν (μέσα από προσωπικές συνεντεύξεις με τη χρήση οδηγού συνέντευξης καθώς και με τη χρήση πληροφοριακού υλικού): α) η κατάσταση της απασχόλησης στην Π.Ε. Καβάλας, β) ο ρόλος, η συμβολή και η επάρκεια των Δημόσιων Φορέων, των Οργανώσεων της Κοινωνικής Οικονομίας και κυρίως των ΚοινΣΕπ της συγκεκριμένης περιοχής για την καταπολέμηση της ανεργίας και την κάλυψη ειδικών αναγκών των κατοίκων, γ) οι σκοποί, τα βασικά χαρακτηριστικά και τα ιδιαίτερα στοιχεία (διαδικασίες σύστασης, επιχειρηματική λειτουργία, παραγωγή/παροχή προϊόντων/υπηρεσιών, συνεργασία μελών, διοίκηση, διαχείριση, αποδοτικότητα, αποτελεσματικότητα, καλές πρακτικές, οφέλη, κοινωνικός αντίκτυπος, προβλήματα, αδυναμίες, εμπόδια, δυσκολίες κ.ά.) των ΚοινΣΕπ που λειτουργούν και δραστηριοποιούνται στην ίδια περιοχή για την εργασιακή (επαν)ένταξη και την ενίσχυση της επιχειρηματικότητας ανέργων, δ) οι δομές, οι παρεμβάσεις, τα έργα και οι δράσεις των Δημόσιων, των Μη Κυβερνητικών Φορέων και των ΚοινΣΕπ της Π.Ε. Καβάλας για την ενίσχυση της απασχόλησης και την ανάπτυξη της επιχειρηματικότητας, ε) οι ευκαιρίες και οι δυνατότητες για την ανάπτυξη του τομέα της Κοινωνικής Επιχειρηματικότητας στην υπό εξέταση περιοχή, στ) οι δράσεις ενημέρωσης, κατάρτισης, πληροφόρησης και συμβουλευτικής για τον τομέα της Κοινωνικής Οικονομίας μέσα από συγκεκριμένα τοπικά προγράμματα και ζ) οι δραστηριότητες, οι μορφές και οι στόχοι που πρέπει να έχουν οι νέες ΚοινΣΕπ στην εν λόγω περιοχή.

Στόχοι της ποσοτικής έρευνας ήταν να εξεταστούν, να κωδικοποιηθούν, να αποτυπωθούν και να περιγραφούν (μέσω συνεντεύξεων με την ταυτόχρονη συμπλήρωση δομημένου ερωτηματολογίου): α) το προφίλ, β) τα άμεσα και τα έμμεσα χαρακτηριστικά, γ) οι γνώσεις, δ) η εμπειρία, ε) οι ανάγκες, στ) ο προσανατολισμός και ζ) οι επιθυμίες των ανέργων της ομάδας στόχου για την ανάπτυξη πρωτοβουλιών Κοινωνικής Επιχειρηματικότητας και δράσεων (επαν)ένταξής τους στην αγορά εργασίας στην εξεταζόμενη περιοχή.

Στο σημείο αυτό παρουσιάζεται πολύ συνοπτικά και συνδυαστικά μέρος των συμπερασμάτων της έρευνας που αφορούσε στην εξέταση των προβλημάτων, των εμποδίων και των δυσκολιών της λειτουργίας των ΚοινΣΕπ αλλά και των ευκαιριών και των προοπτικών ανάπτυξής τους.

Τα προβλήματα που αναδείχθηκαν (σύμφωνα με την ανάλυση των συνεντεύξεων των ερωτώμενων) ήταν: α) η έλλειψη νομοθεσία για τη θεσμική προστασία και υποστήριξη τους καθώς και την παροχή φορολογικών κινήτρων, β) η αδυναμία εύρεσης πόρων για την ανάπτυξή τους λόγω της έλλειψης χρηματοδοτικών εργαλείων και επιδοτούμενων προγραμμάτων, γ) η αδυναμία απόκτησης τεχνικού εξοπλισμού, υποδομών και άλλων εργαλείων (π.χ. αδειών) για την ομαλή λειτουργία τους, δ) η προβληματική συνεργασία των ΚοινΣΕπ με άλλους Φορείς, είτε Δημόσιους, είτε Ιδιωτικούς, εξαιτίας κυρίως της μειωμένης ενημέρωσης για τον τομέα της Κοινωνικής Οικονομίας, ε) η απουσία εργαλείων αξιολόγησης της λειτουργίας τους και μέτρησης του κοινωνικού τους αντίκτυπου, στ) η αυξημένη γραφειοκρατία των αρμόδιων συνεργαζόμενων Δημόσιων Φορέων, ζ) η έλλειψη καταρτισμένου / (εξειδικευμένου προσωπικού στη διοίκηση και τη διαχείριση τους, η) ο μικρός αριθμός των εθελοντών λόγω της φύσης της λειτουργίας τους και της ευαισθητοποίησης της τοπικής κοινωνίας, θ) η αδυναμία παραγωγής, μεταποίησης και πώλησης καινοτόμων προϊόντων και υπηρεσιών λόγω της αδύναμης οικονομικής τους κατάστασης, ι) η απουσία δυναμικής συνεργασίας και δικτύωσης μεταξύ των ΚοινΣΕπ με τις υπόλοιπες Οργανώσεις της Κοινωνικής Οικονομίας αλλά

και με τις άλλες ιδιωτικές επιχειρήσεις της περιοχής, 1α) ο «δύσκολος» ανταγωνισμός των αγαθών και υπηρεσιών που παράγουν και προσφέρουν με τις άλλες επιχειρήσεις του ιδιωτικού τομέα κ.ά.

Από την άλλη μεριά, οι συμμετέχοντες στην έρευνα επισήμαναν ότι οι δυνατότητες για την ανάπτυξη των ΚοινΣΕπ συνδέονται με την επίτευξη χαμηλότερου κόστους στην παραγωγή αγαθών ή/και την παροχή υπηρεσιών λόγω των ειδικών χαρακτηριστικών και της συνεταιριστικής σχέσης των κοινωνικών επιχειρηματιών, καθιστώντας τα προϊόντα και τις υπηρεσίες τους ανταγωνιστικά/-ές και ως εκ τούτου ελκυστικά/-ές για το αγοραστικό κοινό και την τοπική κοινωνία γενικότερα. Οι ίδιοι σημείωσαν, ότι θεωρούν τα προϊόντα τους καινοτόμα, γιατί καλύπτουν ανάγκες που μέχρι τώρα δεν καλύπτονταν, γεγονός που αναμένεται να μην περιορίσει την σε βάθος χρόνου ανάπτυξη της οικονομικής δραστηριότητάς τους. Επιπρόσθετα, οι ευκαιρίες ανάπτυξης της Κοινωνικής Επιχειρηματικότητας στην Π.Ε. Καβάλας, σύμφωνα με τους ερωτώμενους, διαφαίνονται στους τομείς της αγροτικής παραγωγής, της αλιείας, της κτηνοτροφίας, της αξιοποίησης των φυσικών πόρων, της μεταποίησης και της τυποποίησης, των εναλλακτικών μορφών ενέργειας και αξιοποίησης της βιομάζας, του εμπορίου και των εξαγωγών, του τουρισμού και του πολιτισμού, της κοινωνικής πρόνοιας και της υγείας καθώς και των υπηρεσιών γενικότερα.

Διαπιστωτικά λοιπόν, το συγκεκριμένο πεδίο είναι ιδιαίτερα δυναμικό, με μεταβολές σε επιμέρους χαρακτηριστικά που είτε ενισχύουν είτε ζημιώνουν την ανάπτυξη των ΚοινΣΕπ και σε κάθε περίπτωση μεταβάλουν τη δυναμική και τη βούληση των κοινωνικών επιχειρηματιών.

Σύμφωνα με τα συμπεράσματα και τις προτάσεις της έρευνας, για να επιτευχθεί η ενίσχυση της απασχόλησης με τη συμβολή της ανάπτυξης της Κοινωνικής Επιχειρηματικότητας στην Π.Ε. Καβάλας και σε σχέση με τις τοπικές ανάγκες/ιδιαιτερότητες και τις ανάγκες των ανέργων, πρέπει πρώτα να συσταθούν και να αναπτυχθούν δομές και μηχανισμοί από θεσμικούς, κρατικούς, τοπικούς αλλά και ιδιωτικούς Φορείς που θα ενημερώνουν τους πολίτες για το ρόλο και τη συμβολή του τομέα της Κοινωνικής Οικονομίας, θα υποστηρίζουν τις ΚοινΣΕπ να διασυνδεθούν μεταξύ τους, θα παρέχουν εξειδικευμένες συμβουλές για τις πηγές χρηματοδότησης, θα δικτυώνουν τις ΚοινΣΕπ με τις άλλες Οργανώσεις της Κοινωνικής Οικονομίας, θα μεταδίδουν τις καλές πρακτικές που έχουν ήδη αναπτυχθεί στην Ευρώπη, θα επιλύουν εμπόδια που σχετίζονται με την απασχόληση ατόμων από ευάλωτες κοινωνικές ομάδες, θα προσφέρουν πρακτικές συμβουλές για τα απαιτούμενα βήματα για την ίδρυση, την κατάρτιση επιχειρηματικού σχεδίου, τα φορολογικά και ασφαλιστικά θέματα κ.λπ., θα αναπτύσσουν προγράμματα εκπαίδευσης και κατάρτισης για την Κοινωνική Οικονομία, θα διασυνδέουν τους νέους επιστήμονες με αντίστοιχα ερευνητικά κέντρα και ακαδημαϊκά ιδρύματα, θα διευκολύνουν τη δικτύωση των ΚοινΣΕπ με δίκτυα Κοινωνικών Επιχειρήσεων στην Ευρώπη, θα προβάλλουν τα προϊόντα και τις υπηρεσίες των ΚοινΣΕπ, θα εκπαιδεύουν τους πολίτες για τη νομοθεσία και τις δημόσιες πολιτικές για την Κοινωνική Οικονομία στην Ελλάδα κ.ά.

Επιπρόσθετα, οι αναγκαίες παρεμβάσεις, μέτρα και πολιτικές για την ανάπτυξη του τομέα της Κοινωνικής Οικονομίας και της Κοινωνικής Επιχειρηματικότητας στην Π.Ε. Καβάλας είναι: α) η υποστήριξη της δημιουργίας, λειτουργίας και ανάπτυξης ΚοινΣΕπ σε τοπικό επίπεδο, β) η διάχυση της ιδέας της Κοινωνικής Οικονομίας, γ) η ενίσχυση της συνεργασίας των ΚοινΣΕπ με άλλες ΚοινΣΕπ, με άλλους Φορείς Κοινωνικής Οικονομίας αλλά και με Ιδιωτικούς και Δημόσιους Φορείς, δ) η αξιοποίηση των χρηματοδοτικών εργαλείων και των πλεονεκτημάτων που απορρέουν από την ισχύουσα νομοθεσία, ε) η ανάπτυξη ενός σχεδίου δράσης για τη δημιουργία ενός συλλογικού Φορέα συντονισμού της συνεργασίας μεταξύ των ΚοινΣΕπ με τους Φορείς της τοπικής αυτοδιοίκησης, στ) η λειτουργία θερμοκοιτίδων ΚοινΣΕπ και συμβουλευτικών υπηρεσιών για τα μέλη αυτών, ζ) η ώθηση στην κατανάλωση προϊόντων και υπηρεσιών των ΚοινΣΕπ κ.ά.

Τέλος, είναι απαραίτητος ο κατάλληλος σχεδιασμός της οικονομολογικής και κοινωνιολογικής στοχοθεσίας τους, η διαμόρφωση κατάλληλου και ολοκληρωμένου επιχειρηματικού και επιχειρησιακού σχεδίου και κανονισμού λειτουργίας τους ώστε να αυξήσουν την παραγωγικότητα των προϊόντων τους, να ενισχύσουν την αποτελεσματικότητα των υπηρεσιών τους, να επιτύχουν αύξηση των εσόδων και κερδοφορία της επιχείρησής τους, να ικανοποιήσουν τις τοπικές και συλλογικές ανάγκες και να εδραιωθούν γενικότερα ως θεσμός με σαφές κοινωνικό αποτύπωμα.

Επομένως, οι μεγάλες ανάγκες για την παροχή υπηρεσιών και αγαθών με κοινωνική διάσταση, σε συνδυασμό με τις δυνατότητες που δίνει το θεσμικό πλαίσιο αλλά και το σύνολο των τοπικών πόρων ανάπτυξης (στον τομέα του πολιτισμού, στον πρωτογενή και τον δευτερογενή παραγωγικό τομέα, στον τομέα των κοινωνικών υπηρεσιών, στις δράσεις συλλογικού χαρακτήρα κ.α.), οδήγησαν στην εκτίμηση ότι υπάρχει σημαντικό περιθώριο ανάπτυξης της Κοινωνικής Επιχειρηματικότητας στην Π.Ε. Καβάλας και κατ' επέκταση στη χώρα γενικότερα.

Τα αποτελέσματα της έρευνας μπορούν να συμβάλλουν: 1) στην κατανόηση των αναγκών και των ιδιαίτερων χαρακτηριστικών των ανέργων της Π.Ε. Καβάλας για την ανάπτυξη επιχειρηματικών πρωτοβουλιών, 2) στην αποσαφήνιση του ρόλου και της συμβολής των ΚοινΣΕπ για την υποστήριξη της επιχειρηματικότητας και την προώθηση της απασχόλησης, 3) στην ενθάρρυνση της συνεργασίας ώστε να λειτουργήσουν δομές υποστήριξης και διασύνδεσης του κράτους με την κοινωνία των πολιτών, 4) στην ενημέρωση/πληροφόρηση των εκπροσώπων και των στελεχών των αρμόδιων Φορέων και της τοπικής κοινωνίας για το ειδικό θεσμικό πλαίσιο των ΚοινΣΕπ, 5) στην αξιοποίηση των ευρωπαϊκών και εθνικών προγραμμάτων για την τόνωση της τοπικής οικονομίας και της τοπικής αγοράς εργασίας, 6) στην υλοποίηση κατάλληλων δράσεων ευαισθητοποίησης, ενημέρωσης, πληροφόρησης, εκπαίδευσης, κατάρτισης και συμβουλευτικής των ανέργων, των στελεχών των ΚοινΣΕπ και των αρμόδιων Φορέων της Π.Ε. Καβάλας για την Κοινωνική Οικονομία, 7) στη διάχυση των καλών πρακτικών Κοινωνικής Επιχειρηματικότητας και 8) στην ανάδειξη των οικονομικών τομέων παραγωγής και των μορφών/τύπων των ΚοινΣΕπ που ευνοούν την επιχειρηματική δραστηριοποίηση στη συγκεκριμένη περιοχή.

Συνολικά, η συνεισφορά της εν λόγω έρευνας εντοπίζεται στην υποστήριξη των κοινωνικών πολιτικών και των τοπικών παρεμβάσεων για την καταπολέμηση της ανεργίας και του κοινωνικού αποκλεισμού των ευπαθών και ευάλωτων κοινωνικών ομάδων της περιοχής, την προώθηση της κοινωνικής συνοχής και την ενθάρρυνση της τοπικής επιχειρηματικής ανάπτυξης της Π.Ε. Καβάλας.

**Αντώνιος Κώστας**

*Δρ. Κοινωνιολογίας Παντείου Πανεπιστημίου*

### Charalampos Economou

#### *Barriers and Facilitating Factors in Access to Health Services in Greece*

*World Health Organization, Regional office for Europe, Copenhagen, 2015*

**T**his extensive Paper of 174 pages, fills a significant gap in the international literature, regarding barriers and facilitating factors in access to services of vulnerable groups in Greece.

In its five chapters, apart from the relation of the results obtained by the qualitative research, is being made an extensive reference on the situation in the field of health in Greece the last years and also passes judgment in relevant surveys. The new elements that convey to the scientific community are a thorough analysis of the obstacles facing the Greek population in its access to health services, demonstrable by economic and statistical data, as well as the outcome of the joint research.

The report is structured in two parts. On the first takes place the desk review, which analyzes the findings of prior surveys and of relevant works, by category (Availability, Accessibility? Efficiency). On the second, which is the research part of the report, are presented the results of the qualitative research. Mr. Economou's study concludes that the reforms in the healthcare sector over the last five years are, mainly, financially orientated. However, this practice ignores the citizen-patient as an entity and focuses on management issues. According to the author, the only way that success is achieved in the Greek healthcare system is through the provision of high quality services in a fair and free context, while the State itself should intent to serve the patients and not sparing resources through financial reductions.

In fact, this study, like other recent studies, highlights the problems that the citizens confront when they seek for health care within the European Union. At the same time, constitutes a spark for further investigation on the context of how to overcome the problems found in this survey. The fact that this research is not simply limited to a short period of time but examines in depth of thirty years (through the desk review), gives the opportunity for comparison with the past and exportation of safer conclusions on the possible changes that arise. The present study, using quantitative methodological tools, contributes to the depiction of the general trends that exist in the healthcare sector in Greece today. However, the emergence of problems through qualitative methods is crucial in order to understand the social context of healthcare today and how realistic problems affect people's lives, especially in times of crises.

Stavros Pantazopoulos  
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## Σπύρος Ξένος

### *Η Απομυθοποίηση μιας Συλλογικής Αυταπάτης: Οι Οικονομικές Διαθέσεις και Πρακτικές των «Ωφελούμενων» Ανέργων του Προγράμματος ΤοπΕΚΟ Ζακύνθου,*

*Συνεταιριστική Αυτοδιοικητική Ζακύνθου Σ.Α.Ζ., 2015*

**Ο** Σπύρος Ξένος στη μελέτη του με τίτλο “Η απομυθοποίηση μιας συλλογικής αυταπάτης: οι οικονομικές διαθέσεις και πρακτικές των «ωφελούμενων» ανέργων του Προγράμματος ΤοπΕΚΟ Ζακύνθου” επιχειρεί να συγκροτήσει ένα πλαίσιο κατανόησης των στοιχείων που συντέλεσαν στην επιλογή του Προγράμματος κοινωνικής και εργασιακής επανένταξης από μέρους των ωφελούμενων ανέργων.

Μέσα από την μελέτη του ο συγγραφέας αναλύει τη διαδικασία κοινωνικού μετασχηματισμού της τοπικής κοινωνίας και ειδικότερα της κοινωνικο-επαγγελματικής δομής και του καταμερισμού εργασίας στην Περιφερειακή Ενότητα Ζακύνθου, καθώς και τον βασικό σκοπό σχεδιασμού και υλοποίησης του Προγράμματος που αφορούσε την τοποθέτηση στην αγορά εργασίας 100 ανέργων, οι οποίοι προέρχονταν από «ευάλωτες κοινωνικά ομάδες». Το πρόγραμμα περιελάμβανε μελέτη διάγνωσης των αναγκών της τοπικής αγοράς εργασίας, ενέργειες δικτύωσης, ενέργειες και δράσεις δημοσιότητας και ευαισθητοποίησης, επικοινωνιακό σχεδιασμό, ενέργειες συντονισμού και διαχείρισης του Προγράμματος, κατάρτιση, συμβουλευτική υποστήριξη κλπ.

Στο πρώτο μέρος της μελέτης, ερχόμαστε σε επαφή με τους βασικούς στόχους του ερευνητικού σχεδιασμού. Ο συγγραφέας θέτει με τρόπο σαφή και σφαιρικό, κριτικό και συγκριτικό ζητήματα που αφορούν τη νέα διαχειριστική πρακτική της κοινωνικής προστασίας (βλ. νέα «οικονομία των προστασιών», R. Castel) και την κατασκευή και οριοθέτηση νέων εννοιών όπως «ευαλωτότητα», «ευπάθεια», «αποκλεισμός», «επανάταξη» κ.α. Στη συνέχεια παρουσιάζεται ο ρόλος των Δομών και των οργανισμών της νέας «οικονομίας των προστασιών» στη διαχείριση και τον έλεγχο των προαναφερθεισών εννοιών με σκοπό την κοινωνική ειρήνη και την αποφυγή εκρηκτικών κοινωνικών συγκρούσεων αλλά και στην ανακατασκευή του χώρου άσκησης κοινωνικής πολιτικής.

Προκειμένου να γίνουν κατανοητοί οι κρυφοί μηχανισμοί του κοινωνικού αποκλεισμού και της κοινωνικής ευπάθειας, ο συγγραφέας στο δεύτερο μέρος εμφανίζει και αναλύει ερευνητικά στοιχεία μέσα από αφηγήσεις και βιώματα των ωφελούμενων του προγράμματος φέρνοντας στο προσκήνιο την έκταση και την ένταση του φαινομένου. Το δεύτερο μέρος της μελέτης απαρτίζεται από οκτώ ενότητες.

Η πρώτη θεματική ενότητα επικεντρώνεται στην καταγραφή και ανάλυση των ατομικών χαρακτηριστικών των ωφελούμενων του Προγράμματος. Η δεύτερη συνθέτει και περιγράφει τα κοινωνικά –ταξικά και οικονομικά στοιχεία του πληθυσμού της έρευνας προσφέροντάς μας μια αναπαράσταση της κοινωνικής θέσης των ωφελούμενων ανέργων στο τοπικό κοινωνικό περιβάλλον. Η τρίτη ερμηνεύει τα πολιτισμικά χαρακτηριστικά της «ιδεολογίας» του πληθυσμού της έρευνας, γύρω από μια σειρά κρίσιμων ζητημάτων όπως η εμπιστοσύνη στους θεσμούς, ο γάμος, ο κοινωνικός καταμερισμός της εργασίας ανάμεσα στα φύλα, η παρουσία των μεταναστών, τα προβλήματα της νεολαίας κ.α. Στην τέταρτη ενότητα στοιχειοθετεί την ταυτότητα των ανέργων, εντοπίζει τις μορφές, τους βαθμούς και τα χαρακτηριστικά της ανεργίας που διαμορφώνουν, ορίζουν και αναπαράγουν το ερευνώμενο εργατικό δυναμικό. Η πέμπτη ενότητα πραγματεύεται την κατάσταση και τις επιπτώσεις της ανεργίας («βίωμα της ανεργίας») των ωφελούμενων ανέργων,

και εστιάζει στον τρόπο με τον οποίο κατασκευάζουν και δομούν μια νέα ασαφή και συγκεκριμένη κοινωνική πραγματικότητα που έχει ως αποτέλεσμα τη δημιουργία μιας κατασκευής κοινωνικού αποκλεισμού. Η έκτη θεματική ενότητα αναδεικνύει και καταγράφει τις μορφές συνειδητοποίησης της ανεργίας και των επιπτώσεων απώλειας της εργασίας μέσα από την κατανόηση και αναλυτική επεξεργασία των αιτιών και εξηγήσεων της ανεργίας των ωφελούμενων ανέργων. Η έβδομη ενότητα αναλύει τις βασικές μεθόδους αναζήτησης εργασίας και καταδεικνύει τις βασικές μορφές συνειδητοποίησης και χρήσης των διαθέσιμων θεσμικών μέτρων διαχείρισης της ανεργίας και της «ευαλωτότητας» (βλ. στρατηγικές οικονομικής και κοινωνικής επιβίωσης) του πληθυσμού της έρευνας. Η όγδοη και τελευταία ενότητα περιγράφει τις διαδικασίες πληροφόρησης-ενημέρωσης σχετικά με τις εμπειρίες, τις κρίσεις και εντυπώσεις των ερωτώμενων του πληθυσμού της έρευνας.

Στο τρίτο και τελευταίο μέρος, η μελέτη αποκτά ακόμη μεγαλύτερο ενδιαφέρον όταν ο συγγραφέας υιοθετεί τις «αρχές της θεωρίας της πρακτικής» του γάλλου κοινωνιολόγου P. Bourdieu, επιτυγχάνοντας να ενισχύσει τους ερευνητικούς προβληματισμούς του καθώς και τα τελικά του συμπεράσματα. Καταυτόν τον τρόπο αναδεικνύονται οι ενσωματωμένες προδιαθέσεις με βάση τις οποίες προσανατολίστηκε η οικονομική πρακτική της συμμετοχής των ωφελούμενων ανέργων στο πρόγραμμα και ταυτόχρονα εκφράζεται η αγωνία του για τις αρνητικές επιδράσεις των επιλογών τους.

Με βάση τα παραπάνω δεδομένα και τη συνθετική τους αξιολόγηση, ο Σπύρος Ξένος καταλήγει σε δύο πολύ ενδιαφέροντα συμπεράσματα. Το πρώτο αφορά στην απόπειρα μετασχηματισμού των συστημάτων διαθέσεων και προδιαθέσεων καθώς και των ηθικών κοινωνικών ιδιοτήτων των «ωφελούμενων» με σκοπό την «εξατομίκευση της ευθύνης» για το καθεστώς ανεργίας τους, τη «σμίλευση της υποτέλειας» και τον εγκλωβισμό σε ένα χώρο «προνομιακής περιθωριακότητας». Το δεύτερο αρνούμενο το πρώτο, εισάγει στο πλαίσιο των αρχών της χριστιανικής «φιλανθρωπίας και εγκαρτέρησης», το καθήκον της ανιδιοτελούς προσφοράς, πίσω από μια «επιδοτούμενη» διαδικασία με υποτιθέμενο αντίκρισμα την κοινωνική εργασιακή (επαν) ένταξη των ανέργων.

Σε κάθε περίπτωση, η μελέτη του Σπύρου Ξένου καταφέρνει να αναδείξει στο σύνολό της το πρόβλημα των προγραμμάτων της νέας «οικονομίας των προστασιών». Επίσης, συμβάλει τόσο στη βιβλιογραφία της κρίσης όσο και σε αυτή για τις πολιτικές απασχόλησης παρέχοντας πολύτιμα εργαλεία στο σχεδιασμό πολιτικών ένταξης, ενώ η δομή της (αυτόνομα κεφάλαια, αλλά την ίδια στιγμή ενταγμένα σε συγκεκριμένες θεματικές) την καθιστά προσιτή ακόμα και στους μη ειδικούς.

Αντώνης Πύργος  
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Social Cohesion and Development is published twice a year (Spring/Autumn) by the **Society for Social Cohesion and Development**.

Printed and distributed by **Dionicos Publishers**, 10678, Athens, 42 Themistocleous str., Greece, tel. / fax: 003 210 3801777, e-mail: dionicos@otenet.gr.