TOWARDS A LIFE LONG LEARNING AND A KNOWLEDGE SOCIETY

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ABSTRACT: The program Learning for Community Action in the Sector of for Life Learning was for life enacted with the Decision of European Parliament and Council with fundamental objective to contribute in the growth of Community as a advanced society of knowledge, with sustainable economic growth, more and better places of work and bigger social cohesion, ensuring also the social and economic growth and the protection of environment for the future generations. More special objectives are the modernisation and the adaptation of systems of education and training of member states particularly in the line of strategic objectives of Lisbon. The particular article aims to analyze the subjects of education and life long learning in E.U. in the context of knowledge and learning society.

Keywords: Life Long Learning, Education, Training, Knowledge, Socio-Economic Development.

JEL Codes: D8

Distance learning activities are designed to fit the specific context for learning.

- Learning opportunities include a clear statement of intended learning outcomes, learning content that is appropriate to those outcomes, clear expectations of learner activities, flexible opportunities for interactions, and assessment methods appropriate to the activities and technologies.
- Elements of a learning event – the learning content, instructional methods, technologies, and context – complement each other.
- The selection and application of technologies for a specific learning opportunity are appropriate for the intended learning outcomes, subject matter content, relevant characteristics and circumstances of the learner, and cost range.
- Learning activities and modes of assessment are responsible to the learning needs of individual learners.
- The learning experience is organized to increase learner control over the time, place and pace of instruction.
- Learning outcomes address both content mastery and increased learning skills.
- Individuals with specialized skills in content, instructional methods, or technologies work collaboratively as a design team to create learning opportunities.
- The learning design is evaluated on a regular basis for effectiveness, with findings utilized as a basis for improvement.

In the decisions and in the conclusions of Council of Lisbon, the adoption of strategy for the Life Long Learning constitutes priority and basic element of European social model. The main axis that puts together around so much the various levels of educational system, including the space of work and enterprises, the local community, the family, as well as the means of mass communication, promoting new innovative methods and using the new technologies of information. Two are the main objectives of for Life Long Learning:

- the promotion of active attendance in social environment, and
- the increase of possibilities of employment and employability.

Table no.1

Lisbon Goals for Education 2010

	Average Rate (E.U.-25)	**Greece**	**Goal of E.U. for 2010**
Early School Leave (as % pupils)	14.9%	13%	10%
Secondary School Attainment (as % pupils)	77%	83%	85%
Basic Skills (as % pupils with low skills)	19.8%	25.2%	15.5%
Higher Education Attainment in Scientific and Technological Subjects (as % inhabitants 20-29 years)	12.5%	No available data	15%
Participation in Life Long Learning Programs (as % total population 25-64 years)	10.8%	1.8%	12.5%

Source: European Union, European Commission, Progress Report, 2006, SEC (2006)639, 16.5.2006.

Following this recommendation, the European Community Commission adopted an initiative entitled "*E-Learning – considering tomorrow's training*". All member states were asked to "persevere in efforts to integrate information and communication technologies in teaching and training" and to "take advantage of the potential of internet, multimedia and virtual learning systems to realize in as short a time as possible an improved and permanent education." Tables no. 1 and no. 2 illustrate the main Lisbon goals and the population in education and training in percentage rates.

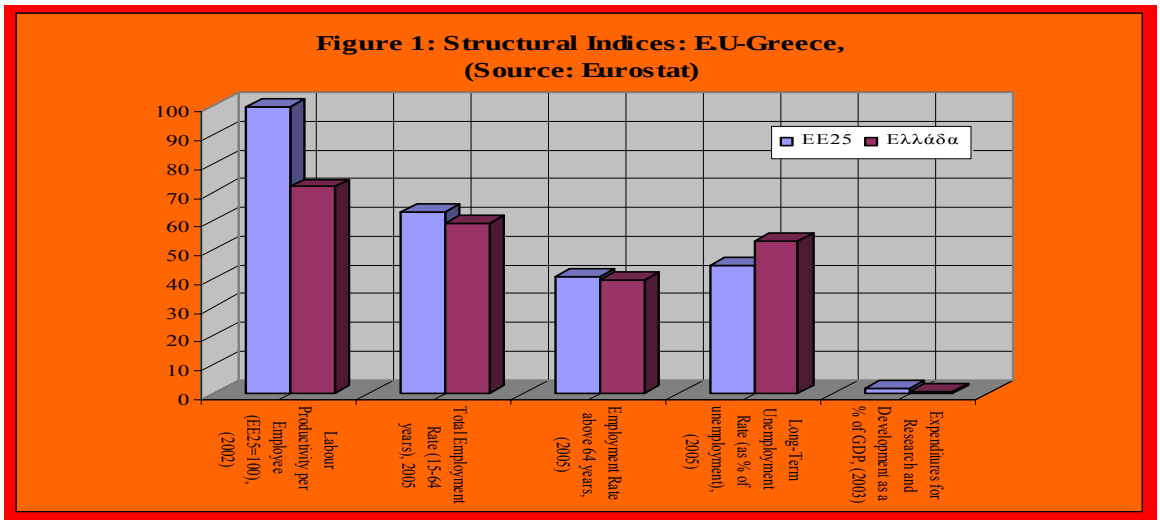
Table no. 2

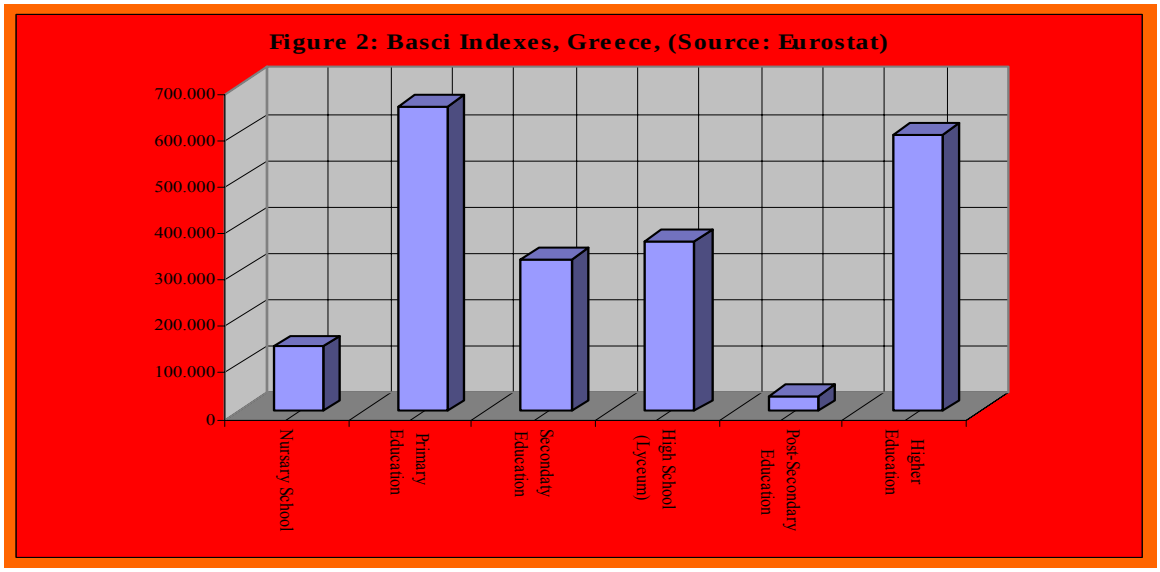
Population in Education &Training between 25-64 years (percentage rates)

	2000	**2005**		
		Total	**Male**	**Female**
EU-25	7.9	10.8	10.0	11.7
Greece	1.1	1.8	1.9	1.7

Source: Eurostat (Labour Force Survey)

The economic aid of education and training it is possible to lead to social profit, via the reduction of unemployment, the higher attendance to workforce of and increase of productivity. In all Europe exists augmentative tendency of investments in the education. Greece belongs in the countries with comparatively low levels of expenses for the education and the training. This low level of expenses is justified partly by the budgetary restrictions that limit the possibilities of Greek government in of placing in application the all required policies. Regarding the level of expenses per education-level, Greece falls short of the first degree and secondary education. On the contrary, the public investments in the tertiary education in 2002 amounted in the 1.28% GNP, percentage of bigger means of European percentage same period (1,14%). Figures no. 1 and 2 illustrate some certain basic indicators with regard to the education and the training both for Greece and for the E.U.





We can consider the life learning as "all the activity of learning that is realised at the duration of life of person, aiming at her increase, knowledge of dexterities and his faculties, via personal, cultural, social frame and with regard to his professional prospect constitutes integral piece of educational policy of E.U. Roughly the 10% of adults in the E.U. age of 25-64 years, participate in the for Life Long Learning. Greece belongs in that countries that recently have for life established legislative frame for the learning. The following Table 3 illustrates the various general-basic and individual objectives in the strategy for the aid of for life education.

Table no. 3

Objectives for Life Long Learning

Fundamental Objective:
• Encouragement of exchange, collaboration and mobility between the systems of education and training in the interior of Community so as to they are rendered world point of report of quality
Individual Objectives:
• Improvement of quality for Life Long Learning, and promotion of high output, innovation and European dimension. • Support of concretisation of European space for the Life Long Learning. • Improvement of quality, attractiveness and accessibility for the occasions for the Life Long Learning between the member states. • Aid of contribution of Life Long Learning in the social cohesion, in the active attendance of citizens, in the equality of sexes and in the personal completion. • Promotion of creativity, competitiveness, employability and growth of enterprising spirit. • Contribution in the increase of attendance of citizens of each age in the Life Long Learning included the persons with special needs and the social teams in unfavourable place, independent from their socio-economic background. • Support of growth of pioneering content, services, pedagogic approaches and proceeding that are based on the frame of Life Long Learning in new modern thematic units, as an example the subjects of health and providence • Promotion of collaboration for the guarantee of quality in the all sectors of programs of professional education and training in Europe.

The usual measures for Life Long Learning aimed solely at strengthening infrastructures and equipment, are increasingly directed towards other areas; teaching content, ensuring quality and standards, training the trainers themselves, organizational changes, the transformation of education and training processes and the training and re-skilling of public sector employees.
One of the basic formulas for the measurement of Life Long Learning us the calculation of ROI, as shown in Equation 1, is quite straightforward, the costs analyst has just to subtract costs from benefits, divide that difference by costs, and then multiply the results by 100:

$$ROI = \frac{\text{B}enefits - Costs}{Costs} \cdot 100 \qquad (1)$$

The term *Benefits minus Costs* represents the *Return on the project*. The investment is the costs of the project or at least the up-front costs. To complete this study and for a greater understanding of the concept of ROI, an index is provided below which makes an interesting comparison between traditional didactics and e-learning.

In many cases, there is a need for an instrument which can instantly indicate the feasibility and necessity of e-learning; events such as faculty meetings will often see a debate into the necessity and applicability of venturing into this area. Another interesting index is the *e-learning Yield Index*, or *e-lYI*, as shown in Equation 2, represents the rapport between the ROI of classic teaching programs (ROI_{cl}) and that of the same programs in e-learning mode ($ROI_{e\text{-}l}$):

$$e - IYI = \frac{ROI_{e-1}}{ROI_{CL}} \qquad (2)$$

The *Yield Index "e-lYI"* represents a valid tool of control and evaluation from the economic and qualitative point of view of the "e-learning project", because it is based on the study of the ROI, that is a factor for a long time used to these purposes but that does not succeed in being "absolutely" decisional for the "process transformation"; in fact ROI does not produce a quantitative comparison among the different methodologies we can use to build a learning project. The Yield Index "e-lYI" has been studied for doing this quantitative comparison.

3. Conclusions

The five elements of quality, specifically for the improvement of quality in distance, are:

- materials that are learner friendly, academically respectable, able to be used by the average student, interesting in content and layout, and relevant;
- learning materials and any peripheral media or equipment that are readily available;
- tutors and students that become familiar with distance learning methodology and practice;
- the whole system that is managed effectively; and
- monitoring, evaluation, and feedback that are viewed as important.

In Europe exists big fluctuation in the level of public investments in the education and the training as percentage of GNP. In Greece the public expenses constitute the 4,2% of GNP. Greece belongs in the countries with the bigger progress of proportion of students per PC. The proportion was 57,9 students per PC in 2000, while in 2003 it was limited in the 21,2 students per PC. Roughly the 10% of adults in the EU, age of 25-64 years, participation in the Life Long Learning. The rates of attendance in the Life Long Learning of individuals with low education are the much smaller in combination individuals high of education.

An open environment of learning, constitutes basic condition in the effort of Europe for quality and more efficient work via the aid of education and training. Importance does not have the for Life Long Learning of concrete teams of population, usually those that have bigger education, but the permanent attendance of all teams of population. In order to is achieved this it needs more essential briefing on the profits of for life learning and more concretely:

- (a). Creation of “Modern Society of Learning” through the encouragement and promotion of demand of occasions and issues with regard to via-life education and the training of adults.
- (b). Publication of Studies, Researches and Articles with regard to the education and training of adults
- (c). Training of Proposals and Inquiring Programs with regard to the activities for the education and training of adults.
- (d). Specialisation of Scientists and Creation of Executives with regard to via-life education and the training of adults
- (e). Creation of Networks between Public and Private (Government owned and Not-government owned) Organisms and Institutions with regard to the education and training of adults and
- (i). Growth of any activities, so much in Regional, National but also European level with regard to subjects that concern via-life education and the training of adults.

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