

# **Roadmap to introduce a Hellenic quality assurance system for non-formal learning**

## **Output 5**

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# Acronyms

CVET	Continuing Vocational Education and Training
DYPA	Public Employment Service
EKDDA	National Centre for Public Administration and Local Government
EKEPIS	National Accreditation Centre for Vocational Training
EOPPEP	National Organization for Certification of Qualifications and Vocational Guidance
EQM	European Quality Mark
ESF	European Social Fund
GDPR	General Data Protection Regulation
GSVETLLY	General Secretariat for Vocational Education and Training, Lifelong Learning and Youth in the Ministry of Education, Religious Affairs and Sports
JMD	Joint Ministerial Decision
KDVM	Centres of Vocational Training
KEDIVIM	Institutes of Lifelong Learning
KSEEEK	Central Council for Vocational Education and Training
MD	Ministerial Decision
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
NCHRS	National Council of Human Resources Skills
QQI	Quality and Qualifications Ireland
VET	Vocational Education and Training

# Foreword

This report has been developed in the framework of the project 21EL28 "Support to the Design of a National Framework for Quality Assurance of Non-Formal Education and the Assessment and Validation of Prior Learning in Greece" under contract REFORM/IM2021/009 which is funded by the European Union via the Technical Support Instrument and implemented by the OECD, in cooperation with the European Commission's Directorate General for Structural Reform Support.

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- Mr. Konstantinos Kasaras (GSVETLLLY, General Secretariat of Vocational Education and Training, Lifelong Learning and Youth of the Ministry of Education, Religious Affairs and Sports)
- Mr. Paris Lintzeris (IME/GSEVEE)
- Mr. Konstantinos Papaefstathiou (EOPPEP)
- Ms. Anca Prisacariu (international expert)
- Ms. Athanasia (Nasia) Theodoridou (DYPA)

The indicators, their use, and their corresponding thresholds, presented in Decision 4 - Establish the terms, are the result of the collaborative work of the members of the expert group.

The rest of the document presents the OECD recommendations on the design and implementation of a new Hellenic quality assurance system for non-formal learning. Greek authorities will determine and agree on the final details of the system at the time of formally establishing the Hellenic quality assurance system for non-formal learning.

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# 1 Executive summary

Global and national developments, including the green and digital transitions, are affecting the skills needed in the Greek labour market and the way in which people work. For the country, firms and individuals to benefit from these developments, high quality Continuing Vocational Education and Training (CVET) is essential. However, despite recent progress, the Greek CVET system still presents large gaps in quality.

To upgrade the Greek CVET system, EOPPEP requested technical support to the European Commission and the OECD through the project 21EL28 “Support to the Design of a National Framework for Quality Assurance of Non-Formal Education and the Assessment and Validation of Prior Learning in Greece” under contract REFORM/IM2021/009. This project is funded by the European Union via the Technical Support Instrument and implemented by the OECD, in cooperation with the European Commission’s Directorate General for Structural Reform Support.

This document builds on all previous project activities – including an analysis of the Greek CVET system and its quality assurance practices, an analysis of European best practices on quality assurance of non-formal learning, on the results of consultations with relevant stakeholders and of meetings with an expert group on quality assurance of non-formal learning – to provide a roadmap, including key next steps and an indicative timeline, to implement the new quality assurance system.<sup>1</sup>

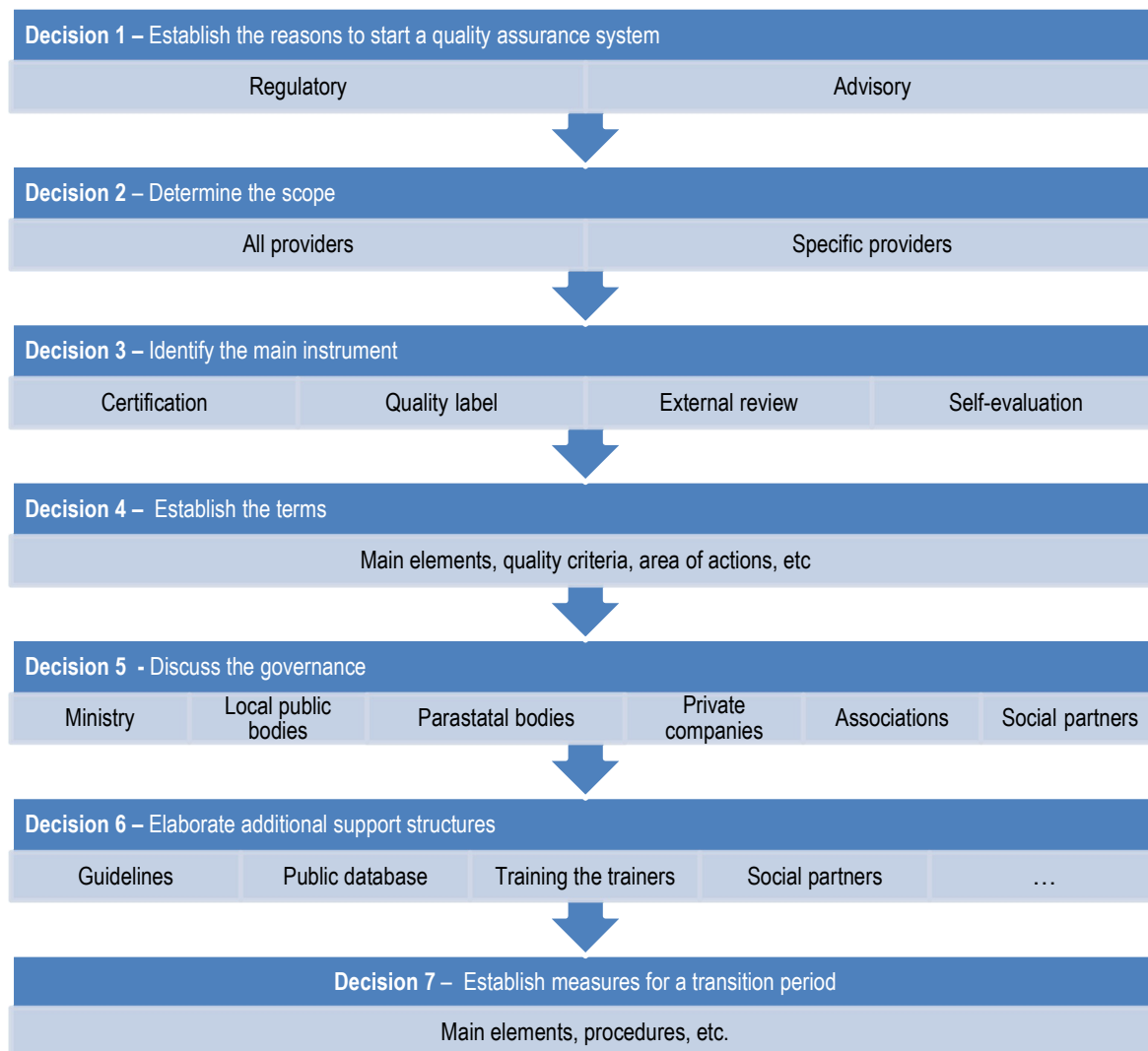
The document is structured around the quality assurance for adult learning decision tree presented in OECD (2021),<sup>2</sup> which outlines the 7 key steps that institutions developing quality assurance systems must follow (see Figure 1.1). Through these steps, this document provides recommendations regarding the instrument to use in the new Hellenic quality assurance system for non-formal learning, the indicators to include in the system and its application, the governance, the implementation and the funding of the system, the support structures that should be developed and the transition measures and next steps that should be followed.

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<sup>1</sup> Stakeholders that participated in the consultations include representatives from training providers (the Panhellenic Association for Lifelong Learning Centres), from social partners (GSEE, GSEVEE, SEV and SETE) and academics such as Mr. Alexis Kokkos from the Hellenic Association of Adult Education and Mr. Thanassis Karalis, Adult Learning and Lifelong Learning Professor at the Faculty of Education and Pedagogical Sciences in pre Primary Education at the University of Patras and Head of the Pedagogical Research and Training Laboratory.

<sup>2</sup> OECD (2021), *Improving the Quality of Non-Formal Adult Learning: Learning from European Best Practices on Quality Assurance*, Getting Skills Right, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://doi.org/10.1787/f1b450e1-en>. Accessible at: [https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/employment/improving-the-quality-of-non-formal-adult-learning\\_f1b450e1-en](https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/employment/improving-the-quality-of-non-formal-adult-learning_f1b450e1-en)

Figure 1.1. The Quality Assurance for Adult Learning Decision Tree



Source: OECD (2021)

Building on the decision tree in Figure 1.1, Chapter 2 presents specific recommendations for each of the key steps needed to establish a quality assurance system for non-formal learning. As discussed in Decision 1: Establish the reasons to start a quality assurance system, the goal of the system would be to assure a minimum level of quality while also providing support to training providers in improving their quality. This new quality assurance system would cover all adult training provided by Centres of Vocational Training (KDVMs), as presented in Decision 2 - Determine the scope, and would rely on a Quality Label requiring the implementation of annual self-assessments by training providers within the validity period (Decision 3 - Identify the main instrument). This quality label would include 29 indicators distributed in three quality areas: a) internal organisation, management and function of provider (7 indicators); b) quality of training (17 indicators) and c) counselling and employability (5 indicators). However, only compliance with a subset of these indicators would be required for the initial award of the quality label, with compliance with all indicators being required for all subsequent quality label renewals (Decision 4 - Establish the terms).

The quality label would be governed EOPPEP, under the supervision of the Ministry of Education, Religious Affairs and Sports, and implemented by EOPPEP through expert assessors from its VET and lifelong learning experts, assessors, auditors and supervisors registers (Decision 5 - Discuss the governance and implementation of the system). While additional funding (for example from the European Social Fund, ESF) should cover all initial implementation costs and, at a minimum, any running fixed costs, variable costs would be at least partly covered through fees paid by training providers that apply to the quality label.

Chapter 2 also provides information on the support structures and measures that would need to be implemented, such as the development of a new website and data collection, transfer and storage infrastructure, the creation of a peer-learning network of training providers and the organisation of an annual conference on the quality of non-formal learning (Decision 6 - Elaborate additional support structures). The last section of the Chapter outlines the transition measures that would need to be implemented, such as the development of guidelines, the implementation of capacity building activities and the possible piloting of the system (Decision 7 - Establish measures for a transition period).

Finally, Chapter 3 discusses how this quality assurance system could be implemented, outlining the activities that should be carried out to enact the system, and proposing a timeline for their execution.



# 2 Key steps to develop a quality assurance system for non-formal learning

## Decision 1: Establish the reasons to start a quality assurance system

Quality assurance systems can be classified as regulatory, which are established in law and require a minimum level of quality, and advisory, which are non-mandatory and support training providers who voluntarily want to participate in improving their quality.

During various consultations undertaken as part of this Project, stakeholders supported the introduction of a regulatory system for adult learning providers, requiring them to comply with some minimum criteria to be allowed to operate. However, implementing a regulatory system requires political strength and willingness, as well as a minimum level of maturity of the CVET system in terms of quality. Thus, given that the current Greek government was recently formed and that the Greek CVET system has not been exposed to quality requirements since the early 2000s, the implementation of a regulatory system might be complex.

For these reasons, the OECD recommended the creation of a voluntary system in the short run, in which participating providers would need to comply with some binding requirements. This voluntary system would signal good quality provision and could be linked to additional incentives, such as funding opportunities. For instance, the new quality label could be required by DYPA under Ministerial Decision (MD) 65809/2022<sup>3</sup> for training providers to be eligible to provide EU co-funded training.

**Once a quality culture was developed and the political will was strong enough, this optional quality assurance system could be converted into a regulatory system, taking the form of a compulsory accreditation system.**

## Decision 2 - Determine the scope

Quality assurance systems for non-formal learning can also apply to all providers or only to a subset of them, for example, to training providers accessing public funding or offering basic skills training (OECD, 2021).

In Greece, CVET is provided by four types of institutions: Lifelong Learning Centres (KDVMs); Institutes of Lifelong Learning (KEDIVIMs), which belong to higher education institutions; the National Centre for Public

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<sup>3</sup> MD 65809/2022 (FEK B' 3703/13.07.2022) on the 'Specification of the criteria for the eligibility of providers of subsidised continuing vocational training, determination of how they are fulfilled and preparation and implementation of the evaluation framework of eligible providers'.

Administration and Local Government (EKDDA), which provides training to civil servants; and enterprises, that can train their own employees.

Given that higher education institutions, and consequently KEDIVIMs, are already subject to stringent quality assurance requirements, the goal of the new quality assurance system is to upgrade the provision of KDVMs, which are the most numerous providers and train the largest proportion of CVET learners. Thus, the new quality assurance system should cover all adult learning offered by KDVMs, including publicly and privately funded training.

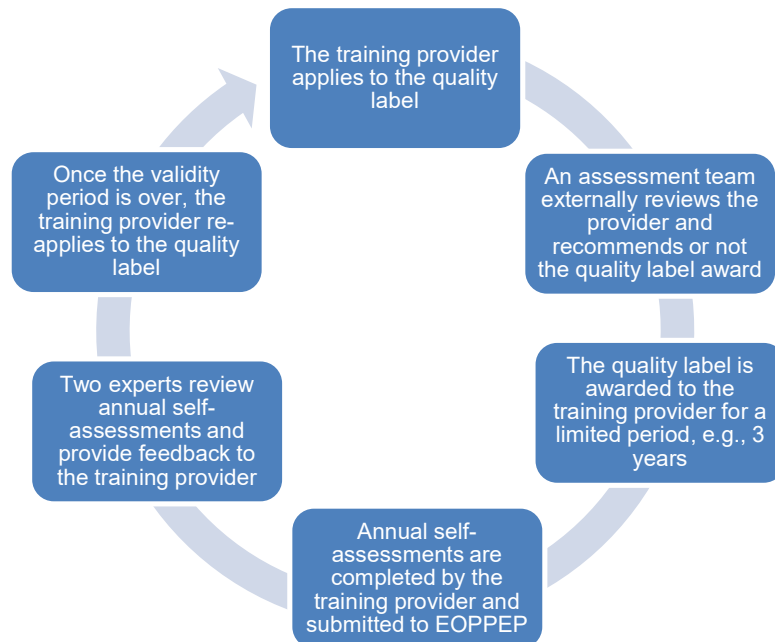
In addition, the system would focus on the quality of training providers, instead of individual CVET programmes, as law 4763/2020 already plans for CVET programme certification.<sup>4</sup>

### Decision 3 - Identify the main instrument

As highlighted by stakeholders during the consultations, there is a need to assure a minimum level of quality among training providers in Greece, but training providers should also be supported in improving their quality. Following this guidance, the quality assurance system suggested includes a combination of instruments.

The main instrument of the quality assurance system would be a **quality label with a predefined validity**, that is, a certification guaranteeing that a training provider complies with some binding quality criteria. The award of the quality label would guarantee a minimum level of quality in training provision. In addition, self-assessments would be used within the quality label validity period, with the aim to develop a quality culture among training providers. These two instruments would be implemented as pictured in Figure 2.1.

Figure 2.1. Quality label operation



<sup>4</sup> The CVET programme certification provisions in law 4763/2020 establishing a National System of Vocational Education and Training have not been applied yet, as further legislative development is needed.

After the training provider's application to the quality label, an **on-site external review carried out by an assessment team** would take place. This assessment team would be put together by EOPPEP, as the institution implementing the quality label (see Decision 5 - Discuss the governance and implementation of the system), and its main responsibilities would be to verify the training provider's compliance with the system's indicators, and, based on this review, to provide a recommendation to EOPPEP on the award of the quality label to the training provider. The assessment team may identify potential improvement areas during its review. If so, these could be shared with the training provider, but should have no impact on the assessment team's recommendation regarding the award of the quality label to the training provider.

Successful training providers would be awarded a quality label for a pre-defined period. Typically, quality labels have a duration of about 3 years (Cert NÖ, Austria; EduQua, Switzerland; EQM, Iceland; Qualiopi, France) as shorter validity periods could overwhelm the quality assurance system and impede that training providers develop their own quality culture, while longer validity periods increase the risk of non-compliance with the quality criteria. Once the quality label expired, training providers would need to renew the label, going through another external review.

Training providers that did not comply with the requirements for being awarded or renewing the quality label could re-apply again after 6 months. If they were unsuccessful again, they would need to wait a year from the last application date to re-apply to the quality label.

To support training providers in developing a quality culture, during the validity period, training providers would be in charge of reviewing and improving their own quality through the completion of **yearly self-assessments**, which would be submitted to EOPPEP (as in the Irish QQI system or in the Dutch QA system for formal VET). EOPPEP would then select two expert assessors with experience carrying out external reviews from its registers, who would review the self-assessment, provide feedback and suggest possible improvements to the training provider. This feedback would be discussed with individual training providers in an online or in-person meeting and be of advisory nature.

If, after reviewing a self-assessment, there was a suspicion that a training provider is not complying with the requirements of the quality label, an additional external review would take place. Training providers could be given one year to address any identified relevant issues before a second external review takes place. Training providers would still hold the quality label during this year. However, if the external review showed that the training provider is not complying with the requirements, then it would lose the quality label. As for unsuccessful training providers, the training provider could re-apply to the quality label after 6 months. On the other hand, after a set number of successful external reviews, the validity period of the quality label could be extended for individual training providers. This would reward individual training providers in good standing and create additional incentives to ensure continued compliance.

## Decision 4 - Establish the terms

For the quality label to be awarded to training providers, providers need to comply with some indicators, having to meet or surpass some thresholds in the case of quantifiable indicators. Consequently, in this decision, the details of the quality assurance system are further developed, including the quality assurance system indicators, and their related thresholds or weights, if used.

### **Quality label indicators**

Between October 2023 and January 2024, an expert group on the quality assurance of non-formal learning, formed by representatives from the GSVETLLLY, DYPA, EOPPEP as well as social partners and international experts, developed a set of potential indicators to be included in the proposed system. The final agreed number of indicators is 29, including indicators in three quality areas: a) internal organisation,

management and function of provider (7 indicators); b) quality of training (17 indicators) and c) counselling and employability (5 indicators). The larger number of indicators for the quality of training area reflects the results of consultations, in which stakeholders argued that the new quality assurance system should put a stronger emphasis on CVET programme development and implementation.

Indicators have been further classified between **licensing and quality indicators**. Licensing indicators verify that the training provider has the appropriate arrangements to provide high quality training, and include basic organisational requirements and requirements on infrastructure, equipment or services provided. Quality indicators mostly refer to trainees' perception and satisfaction levels and verify that training providers' implementation of CVET programmes is aligned with the expectations of the quality assurance system.

Since quality indicators require that the training provider is already operating, only compliance with licensing indicators would be verified for training providers applying for the first time to the quality label. This would allow new training providers to obtain the quality label and give them time to gather information on quality indicators. For any subsequent renewals of the quality label, compliance with both sets of indicators, licensing and quality, would be required. Training providers should prove continued compliance with licensing indicators and that, in the year before the evaluation, they met or exceeded the threshold level assigned to each of the quality indicators.

The full list of indicators, including, whether they are used for the initial award and renewal of the quality label (licensing indicator) or only for quality label renewals (quality indicator), the corresponding quality area, the threshold that training providers must meet or surpass, as well as the information sources and potential documentation to prove compliance are shown in Table 2.1.

**Table 2.1. List of indicators including corresponding thresholds and data sources**

Indicator type	Quality area	Indicator	Threshold	Data collection level	Data source	Comments
Licensing	Cluster A: Internal Organisation, Management and Function of Provider	1) The General Secretariat of VET and Lifelong Learning has licensed the training provider for the provision of non-formal learning based on the provisions in laws 4093/2012 and 4763/2020. The training provider holds an international certification relevant for adult learning providers which reviews organisation and management aspects, such as ISO 9001 or 21001.	N/A - Licensing	Provider and then collated at the National level	Training provider	Proof: official license and relevant certifications.
Licensing	Cluster A: Internal Organisation, Management and Function of Provider	2) The training provider actively participates or has the ability to engage with local, national and European networks related to CVET including, for example, scientific and research institutions or professional bodies such as employer associations, trade unions and local enterprises.	N/A - Licensing	Provider and then collated at the National level	Training provider	Proof: agreements with firms to provide training to their employees or for firms to accept training providers' trainees for traineeships; certificates of attendance to training/events by scientific, research institutions or professional bodies or agendas showing that a representative from the training provider has participated in an event.  Engagement with national and European networks would not need to be proven to comply with the indicator, but should be justified if this engagement exists. Potential proof includes, as above, certificates of attendance to training/events or agendas showing that a representative from the training provider has participated in an event.
Licensing	Cluster A: Internal Organisation, Management and Function of Provider	3) The training provider provides and makes use of state-of-the-art learning infrastructure such as: a) laboratories, b) equipment including hardware and software and fast internet access, c) other facilities to enhance trainees' competence development.	N/A - Licensing	Provider and then collated at the National level	Training provider	Proof: description of the premises, photos, plans.
Licensing	Cluster C: Counselling and employability	4) The training provider offers counselling services to trainees.	N/A - Licensing	Provider and then collated at the National level	Training provider	Proof: counsellor's contract and CV, number of individual sessions performed, tracking of sessions (minutes, brief reports).
Licensing	Cluster A: Internal Organisation, Management and Function of Provider	5) The training provider has a system in place for the self-assessment of the quality of provision and carries out an annual self-assessment.	N/A - Licensing	Provider	Training provider	Proof: last two self-assessments and a description of the self-assessment process, set up of an internal assessment committee, or appointment of internal self- assessment project manager.
Quality	Cluster B: Quality of training	6) The percentage of trainees who report they are satisfied with the resources, infrastructure and technology that are available during their programme.	75%	National	Trainee satisfaction survey	The survey would be implemented by DYPA in case of publicly funded programmes and by EOPPEP in case of privately funded programmes.
Quality	Cluster B: Quality of training	7) The percentage of programmes which have been: (1) certified by the relevant national authority according to legal provisions or; (2) based on the relevant occupational profiles or; (3) in case of non-certification of educational programs and/or undeveloped professional profiles,	75%	Provider	Training provider	Proof: certification of the programme; programme syllabus, list of intended learning outcomes and relevant occupational profile; or programme syllabus supported by a list of

Indicator type	Quality area	Indicator	Threshold	Data collection level	Data source	Comments
		using up-to-date valid information and documentation of the relevance of VET programmes to the needs of professions / specialities from the labour market.				intended learning outcomes and information used to decide on the relevance of the programme for the labour market.
Quality	Cluster B: Quality of training	<p>8) Based on a sufficient number of randomly selected training provider's CVET programmes, the design and implementation of CVET programmes meets the quality criteria stated below.</p> <p>CVET programmes fully developed by training providers were developed following the steps below (JMD 82759/2022, article 3.5.3/a):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) study the current labour market situation;</li> <li>b) analyse trainees' training needs;</li> <li>c) analyse labour market needs with respect to the group of beneficiaries;</li> <li>d) structure the programme around learning outcomes;</li> <li>e) identify the goal of the programme and its specific objectives;</li> <li>f) choose appropriate educational methods;</li> <li>g) select appropriate trainers;</li> <li>h) select trainees in a transparent and functional way;</li> <li>i) strengthen offering equal opportunities to trainees with different characteristics;</li> <li>j) select an appropriate practical training methodology, as long as it is documented, required and feasible;</li> <li>k) plan an appropriate evaluation of the programme; and</li> <li>l) use evaluation results of previously implemented programmes for quality improvement.</li> </ul> <p>CVET programmes are implemented considering the following points (JMD 82759/2022, article 3.5.3/b4):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) the combination of theory and practice,</li> <li>b) the connection of the learning object with the needs and interests of the trainees,</li> <li>c) the development of critical thinking,</li> <li>d) the two-way relationships of trainers- trainees and the use of active educational techniques,</li> <li>e) the use of active and participatory learning methods.</li> </ul>	No threshold	Provider	Training provider	<p>This indicator would be evaluated by external assessors appointed by EOPPEP. At least part of the information, such as programme content and curriculum, can be obtained through DYPA's database.</p> <p>Proof: Training providers would provide documentation on the programme development process and on the programme implementation (syllabus, activities, assessments). Additionally, external assessors may interview training provider professionals, trainers or trainees to obtain further information.</p>
Quality	Cluster B: Quality of training	9) The percentage of trainees that report that active and participatory learning methods were used during the implementation of their programme in a trainee questionnaire.	75%	National	Trainee satisfaction survey	The survey would be implemented by DYPA in case of publicly funded programmes and by EOPPEP in case of privately funded programmes.
Quality	Cluster B: Quality of training	<p>10) Based on a sufficient number of randomly selected training provider's CVET programmes implemented through e-learning and asynchronously, the provision meets the quality criteria for technology-based learning environments stated below.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) e-learning programmes make use of tools such as surveys/polls, quick questions, shared notes, forums, wikis, chats and other interaction mechanisms to boost active learning.</li> </ul>	No threshold	Provider	Training provider	<p>This indicator would be evaluated by external assessors appointed by EOPPEP.</p> <p>Proof: Training providers would provide documentation on the programme development process and on the programme implementation (syllabus, activities,</p>

Indicator type	Quality area	Indicator	Threshold	Data collection level	Data source	Comments
		<p>b) e-learning programmes allow the assessment and self-assessment of trainees through tests and exercises.</p> <p>c) trainers in e-learning programmes monitor trainees' individual performance providing support when needed.</p> <p>d) learning content/material in e-learning programmes is organised in self-contained learning units, related to the learning objectives of each unit and includes self-assessment questions for each learning unit.</p> <p>e) synchronous e-learning programmes allow and encourage the interaction of participants among themselves and with the trainer.</p> <p>f) in asynchronous programmes, the educational content is interactive, including at least one piece of interactive content per learning unit.</p> <p>g) in asynchronous programmes, each learning unit includes a variety of multimedia material, including, for example, text, images, recordings or video files. The use of other elements with further interactivity, such as role-playing games and self-assessments is also encouraged.</p>				assessments) . Additionally, external assessors may interview training provider professionals or trainees to obtain further information and/or access and examine asynchronous e-learning programmes.
Quality	Cluster B: Quality of training	11) The percentage of trainees who received credit or whose prior learning or experience was recognised or taken into account as part of their programme.	0%	National	Trainee satisfaction survey	The survey would be implemented by DYPA in case of publicly funded programmes and by EOPPEP in case of privately funded programmes.
Quality	Cluster B: Quality of training	12) The percentage of teaching staff with a nationally recognised certificate/qualification in adult education.	75%	Provider	Training provider	Proof: trainers' CVs and copy of the relevant certification/qualification.
Quality	Cluster B: Quality of training	13) The percentage of trainees who gave a positive assessment of their trainers after completing their CVET programme.	75%	National	Trainee satisfaction survey	The survey would be implemented by DYPA in case of publicly funded programmes and by EOPPEP in case of privately funded programmes.
Quality	Cluster B: Quality of training	14) The percentage of teaching staff who participated in actions to develop their competences during the previous year e.g. specialised training, receiving guidance or instruction, mentoring, instructions on teaching in digital environments, e-learning training opportunities etc.	50%	Provider	Training provider	Proof: trainers' CVs and relevant certifications.
Quality	Cluster A: Internal Organisation, Management and Function of Provider	15) The number of administrative staff per student.	No threshold	Provider	Training provider	Proof: list of the professionals that work at the training provider including CVs, titles, qualifications and basic responsibilities.
Quality	Cluster C: Counselling and employability	16) The percentage of trainees receiving individualised support and counselling before, during or after their completion of a CVET programme.	35%	National	Trainee satisfaction survey	The survey would be implemented by DYPA in case of publicly funded programmes and by EOPPEP in case of privately funded programmes.
Quality	Cluster C: Counselling and employability	17) The percentage of trainees satisfied with the individualised support and counselling they received before, during or after completion of a CVET programme.	75%	National	Trainee satisfaction survey	The survey would be implemented by DYPA in case of publicly funded programmes and by EOPPEP in case of privately funded programmes.
Quality	Cluster B: Quality of training	18) The percentage of trainees who gave a positive assessment of their programme after it was completed.	75%	National	Trainee satisfaction	The survey would be implemented by DYPA in case of publicly funded programmes and by EOPPEP in case of

Indicator type	Quality area	Indicator	Threshold	Data collection level	Data source	Comments
					survey	privately funded programmes.
Quality	Cluster B: Quality of training	19) The percentage of trainees who report they are satisfied with their e-learning programme.	75%	National	Trainee satisfaction survey	The survey would be implemented by DYPA in case of publicly funded programmes and by EOPPEP in case of privately funded programmes.
Quality	Cluster B: Quality of training	20) The percentage of trainees who report that their programmes responded to their individual needs.	50%	National	Trainee satisfaction survey	The survey would be implemented by DYPA in case of publicly funded programmes and by EOPPEP in case of privately funded programmes.
Quality	Cluster B: Quality of training	21) The percentage of trainees who, within two years, passed the certification exam associated with their programme.	60%	National	Trainee satisfaction survey	The survey would be implemented by DYPA in case of publicly funded programmes and by EOPPEP in case of privately funded programmes.
Quality	Cluster B: Quality of training	22) The percentage of trainees who did not complete or dropped-out of their programme.	Maximum of 20%	Provider	Training provider	Proof: records of trainees' attendance or participation in assessment activities.
Quality	Cluster B: Quality of training	<p>23) The percentage of trainees belonging to a vulnerable or a specific group who did not complete or dropped-out of their programme.</p> <p>As defined in Law 4430/2016 (GG A' 205/31.10.2016)</p> <p>"Vulnerable" are defined as those groups of the population whose integration into social and economic life is hindered by physical and mental causes or due to delinquent behaviour. These include:</p> <p>(a) individuals with disabilities of any kind (physical, mental, sensory),</p> <p>(b) persons with substance dependence issues or drug addicts.</p> <p>(c) juveniles with delinquent behaviour, prisoners and released prisoners.</p> <p>"Specific" are defined as those groups of the population which are disadvantaged in terms of their smooth integration into the labour market due to economic, social and cultural reasons. These include:</p> <p>(a) victims of domestic violence;</p> <p>(b) victims of trafficking;</p> <p>(c) the homeless;</p> <p>(d) persons living in poverty;</p> <p>(e) economic migrants;</p> <p>(f) refugees and asylum seekers,</p> <p>(g) heads of single-parent families;</p> <p>(h) people with cultural particularities;</p> <p>(i) the long-term unemployed up to twenty-five years of age and over fifty years of age.</p>	Maximum of 30%	Provider	Training provider	Proof: records of trainees' attendance or participation in assessment activities.
Quality	Cluster B: Quality of training	24) The percentage of trainees who report that the skills they developed in their programme are useful during employment or self-employment.	50%	National	Trainee satisfaction survey	The survey would be implemented by DYPA in case of publicly funded programmes and by EOPPEP in case of privately funded programmes.



Indicator type	Quality area	Indicator	Threshold	Data collection level	Data source	Comments
Quality	Cluster C: Counselling and employability	25) The percentage of trainees who were unemployed at the time of starting the training programme and became employed or self-employed within 12 months after finishing their programme.	25%	National	ERGANI and EFKA databases	
Quality	Cluster C: Counselling and employability	26) The percentage of trainees who were employed or self-employed at the time of starting the training programme and stayed employed or self-employed for a period of at least 12 months after the end of their programme.	75%	National	ERGANI and EFKA databases	
Quality	Cluster B: Quality of training	27) The percentage of employers working with the training provider who report they are satisfied with the quality of the training provision including any practical elements.	75%	Provider	Training provider	Proof: records of communications with employers regarding their satisfaction with the training provider's provision.
Quality	Cluster A: Internal Organisation, Management and Function of Provider	28) The percentage of programmes which have been included in the training provider's annual self-evaluation or self-assessment of quality.	75%	Provider	Training provider	Proof: latest training provider's self-assessment listing all programmes implemented by the training provider and the list of programmes considered for the self-assessment.
Quality	Cluster A: Internal Organisation, Management and Function of Provider	29) As part of the training provider's annual self-assessment, the quality improvement actions identified by the training provider using information from the previous year, have been considered.	No threshold	Provider	Training provider	Proof: latest self-assessment showing the quality improvement actions identified, follow up activities and a review of how the results of the self-assessment have been used.

Note: This list of indicators as well as the corresponding thresholds were developed and agreed by the quality assurance for non-formal learning expert group between October 2023 and January 2024.

Since quantitative information on the defined indicators did not exist in Greece at the time of defining indicators' thresholds, individual threshold levels should be regularly reviewed as data becomes available. The use of thresholds allows to assure a minimum level of quality while also placing a higher level of exigence to more important indicators for the goal of the system. Given that the relative importance of indicators can be reflected through the choice of thresholds, it was decided by the quality assurance expert group that there was no need to use other weighting mechanisms of the indicators.

### **Data sources**

Data and information to identify compliance with the quality assurance indicators would be collected through various channels including: (1) a trainee satisfaction survey; (2) external assessors' reviews; (3) training providers; and (4) the ERGANI and EFKA databases.<sup>5</sup>

DYPA currently implements a trainee satisfaction survey to trainees completing publicly funded CVET programmes. This survey could be reviewed and potentially extended so that information for quality label indicators related to trainees' perception or satisfaction levels could be collected. For DYPA to modify the trainee survey questionnaire and to transfer the corresponding individualised and identifiable data to EOPPEP, an agreement should be reached between the two organisations, which should be formalised in the form of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU).

Since trainees who complete privately funded adult learning programmes are not covered by DYPA's survey, EOPPEP would need to additionally implement its own trainee satisfaction survey to cover all CVET provision. This questionnaire should include the exact same questions relevant to gather information on quality label indicators from DYPA's trainee satisfaction survey but would be implemented to trainees in CVET programmes not covered by DYPA's survey. This would allow collecting information on trainee's perceptions and satisfaction from trainees of all CVET programmes implemented by a training provider, regardless of the funding source of the programme. The data could also be collected through the quality label web application, as discussed in Decision 6 - Elaborate additional support structures. Trainee satisfaction survey links could be shared with privately funded CVET programme trainees right before the end of their CVET programme.

Indicators referring to the quality of CVET programme development and implementation, both in person and online, would be assessed by external assessors during their training provider's external review. In addition, training providers would provide information and relevant documentation to prove compliance with a significant number of indicators, such as those referring to training provider's trainers and other staff. To ensure comparability of information between training providers, providers could be asked to generate data annually on a fixed date and share it with EOPPEP using the quality label web application. Training providers would use data from their most recent prior submission when applying to renew their quality label. These data would be checked for accuracy by experts during the external review. Collecting provider information at the same time every year would also provide a basis for consistent comparisons of national averages over time.

Finally, information from employment outcomes of CVET trainees would be obtained through the ERGANI and the EFKA databases. The ERGANI database contains information on employment relationships, as it records all new employees hired by a firm. Self-employed workers are instead registered in the EFKA database. Access to these databases would allow EOPPEP to verify whether unemployed CVET trainees at the time of the CVET programme did find a job or became self-employed and if employed and self-employed workers at the time of the CVET programme remained employed or self-employed (indicators 25 and 26). In the case that EOPPEP did not already have access to the individualised and identified

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<sup>5</sup> The ERGANI database gathers information on employment relationships, recording all new employees hired by a firm. Similarly, self-employed workers are registered in the EFKA database.

information of these databases, this access should be requested and granted before the implementation of the system, in accordance to General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

### ***Providing information to training providers on their own performance: the quality dashboard***

The collection of information in the context of the quality label also provides an opportunity for training providers to identify weak areas and define improvement actions. Thus, information comparing individual training provider results to the average results of the system should be shared with training providers. This information could be shared annually, before training provider self-assessments are due, so that it can be used during training providers' self-assessments.

A training provider dashboard could be used to present this information, as shown in Table 2.2. This dashboard should show the training provider's results, the system's thresholds and the national average values for each indicator for which its results are quantifiable. In addition, information on training provider results and system averages for the previous year could be also included. This would allow training providers to track if their improvement actions had an effect on individual indicator's value or identify if changes in indicators' values are aligned with national trends. The dashboard could be shared with training providers through their private space of the quality label website, as discussed in Decision 6 - Elaborate additional support structures.

To ensure that the dashboard can be produced and distributed to the training providers on an agreed date, training providers should submit the relevant information to EOPPEP at least three months before the dashboard distribution and publication date, so that EOPPEP has time to analyse the data and prepare the dashboards. Again, this information could be submitted through a form hosted in the private space of the quality label website.

**Table 2.2. Example of an individual training provider's dashboard**

Provider A - Results for the period 03/2023-03/2024

Indicator	Threshold	Training provider result	National average
6) The percentage of trainees who report they are satisfied with the resources, infrastructure and technology that are available during their programme.	75%	80%	78%
7) The percentage of programmes which have been: (1) certified by the relevant national authority according to legal provisions or; (2) based on the relevant occupational profiles or; (3) in case of non-certification of educational programs and/or undeveloped professional profiles, using up-to-date valid information and documentation of the relevance of VET programmes to the needs of professions / specialities from the labour market.	75%	80%	77%
9) The percentage of trainees that report that active and participatory learning methods were used during the implementation of their programme in a trainee questionnaire.	75%	70%	79%
11) The percentage of trainees who received credit or whose prior learning or experience was recognised or taken into account as part of their programme.	0%	5%	2%
12) The percentage of teaching staff with a nationally recognised certificate/qualification in adult education.	75%	70%	76%
13) The percentage of trainees who gave a positive assessment of their trainers after completing their CVET programme.	75%	77%	77%
14) The percentage of teaching staff who participated in actions to develop their competences during the previous year e.g. specialised training, receiving guidance or instruction, mentoring, instructions on teaching in digital environments, e-learning training opportunities etc.	50%	45%	52%

Indicator	Threshold	Training provider result	National average
15) The number of administrative staff per student.	No threshold	0.1	0.08
16) The percentage of trainees receiving individualised support and counselling before, during or after their completion of a CVET programme.	35%	40%	36%
17) The percentage of trainees satisfied with the individualised support and counselling they received before, during or after completion of a CVET programme.	75%	80%	77%
18) The percentage of trainees who gave a positive assessment of their programme after it was completed.	75%	85%	76%
19) The percentage of trainees who report they are satisfied with their e-learning programme.	75%	80%	77%
20) The percentage of trainees who report that their programmes responded to their individual needs.	50%	52%	51%
21) The percentage of trainees who, within two years, passed the certification exam associated with their programme.	60%	70%	65%
22) The percentage of trainees who did not complete or dropped-out of their programme.	Maximum of 20%	15%	18%
23) The percentage of trainees belonging to a vulnerable or a specific group who did not complete or dropped-out of their programme.  As defined in Law 4430/2016 (GG A' 205/31.10.2016)  "Vulnerable" are defined as those groups of the population whose integration into social and economic life is hindered by physical and mental causes or due to delinquent behaviour. These include: (a) individuals with disabilities of any kind (physical, mental, sensory), (b) persons with substance dependence issues or drug addicts. (c) juveniles with delinquent behaviour, prisoners and released prisoners.  "Specific" are defined as those groups of the population which are disadvantaged in terms of their smooth integration into the labour market due to economic, social and cultural reasons. These include: (a) victims of domestic violence; (b) victims of trafficking; (c) the homeless; (d) persons living in poverty; (e) economic migrants; (f) refugees and asylum seekers, (g) heads of single-parent families; (h) people with cultural particularities; (i) the long-term unemployed up to twenty-five years of age and over fifty years of age.	Maximum of 30%	25%	27%
24) The percentage of trainees who report that the skills they developed in their programme are useful during employment or self-employment.	50%	60%	55%
25) The percentage of trainees who were unemployed at the time of starting the training programme and became employed or self-employed within 12 months after finishing their programme.	25%	30%	26%
26) The percentage of trainees who were employed or self-employed at the time of starting the training programme and stayed employed or self-employed for a period of at least 12 months after the end of their programme.	75%	77%	77%
27) The percentage of employers working with the training provider who report they are satisfied with the quality of the training provision including any practical elements.	75%	80%	76%
28) The percentage of programmes which have been included in the training provider's annual self-evaluation or self-assessment of quality.	75%	60%	77%

## Decision 5 - Discuss the governance and implementation of the system

### **Decision 5a – Governance of the system**

According to law 4115/2013,<sup>6</sup> EOPPEP is institutionally mandated with the establishment of a national framework for quality assurance of non-formal and informal learning. Additionally, EOPPEP was identified during the stakeholder consultations as the most appropriate existing institution to manage and implement the new quality assurance system given its professionalism, experience in implementing quality assurance initiatives, and access to VET and lifelong learning experts, who could act as external assessors. Thus, EOPPEP should govern the new Hellenic quality assurance system for non-formal learning, under the supervision of the Ministry of Education, Religious Affairs and Sports.

As shown in Figure 2.2, **EOPPEP's Board of Directors would act as the steering committee** of the quality label, making any strategic decisions about the quality assurance system, such as changes in quality indicators or thresholds, changes in training provider fees or changes in the validity duration of the quality label. For EOPPEP's Board of Directors to be able to make such decisions, a provision should exist in the relevant legislative framework enabling the steering committee to initiate such changes. To support EOPPEP's Board of Directors in making these decisions, an **Advisory Group** would be created. This Advisory Group would gather all relevant adult learning stakeholders, including all CVET implementing and advisory bodies from the Ministry of Education, Religious Affairs and Sports and Ministry of Labour (EOPPEP, GSVETLLLY, KSEEK, DYPA and NCHRS) and training provider and social partner representatives. It would meet once or twice per year to discuss strategic decisions and take as inputs the latest available quality outcomes as well as the challenges and potential improvements raised by training providers during an annual conference on quality of non-formal learning (see Decision 6 - Elaborate additional support structures for more details).

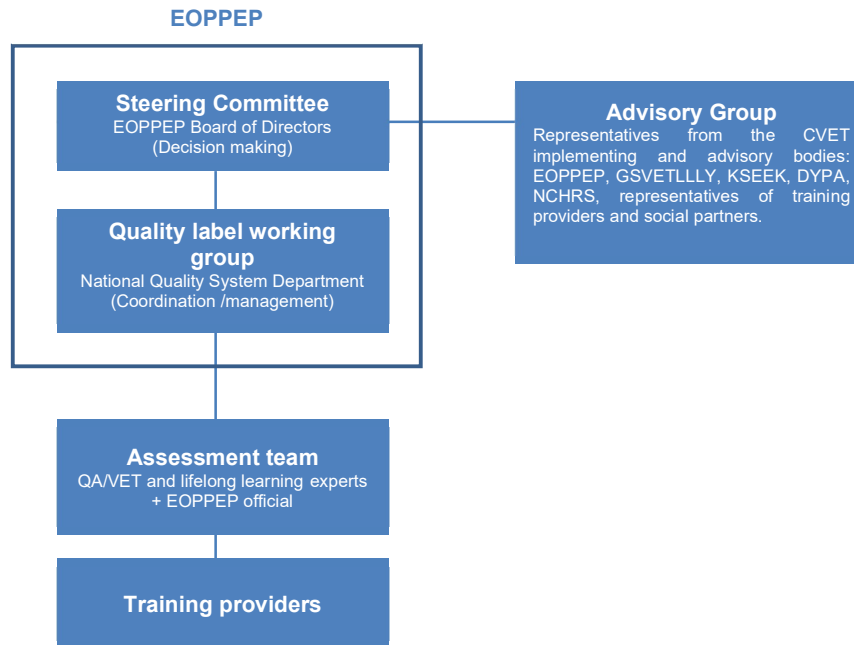
The day-to-day management and operation of the system would be carried out by a **working group within the National Quality System Department, which belongs to EOPPEP's Communication & Development Directorate**. This working group would be set up by EOPPEP's Board of Directors and its responsibilities would include receiving quality label applications; ensuring the completeness of the documentation submitted by training providers; selecting experts to participate in reviews; organising assessment teams; planning on-site external and self-evaluation reviews; planning feedback meetings of experts with training providers; answering training providers' questions; gathering information and analysing system results; certifying providers; keeping a public register of certified training providers; preparing and distributing training providers' dashboards (as described in Decision 4 - Establish the terms); managing the quality label's website; carrying out capacity building activities; and producing guidelines and other relevant inputs. Given the increased responsibilities of the National Quality System Department, additional human resources would be needed, so that the Department can fulfil its tasks timely.

Finally, on-site external reviews of training providers would be carried out by external assessors organised by the quality label working group within EOPPEP. At least two expert assessors and at least one EOPPEP official would form the assessment team. While external assessors would gather information and evaluate the training provider, the EOPPEP official would act as an observer, ensuring that the external review is properly and objectively carried out. Assessment teams would perform on-site external assessments and submit a brief report, comprising the results of the review and recommendations, to the quality label working group within EOPPEP on the award of the quality label to the training provider, who would make a final decision and award the quality label.

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<sup>6</sup> Article 14 of Law 4115/2013 (FEK A' 24/30.1.2013) on 'The organisation and operation of a youth and lifelong learning foundation and a national organisation for the certification of qualifications and vocational guidance and other provisions'.

Figure 2.2. Organisational structure of the recommended quality assurance system



Source: OECD's Recommendations to introduce a new quality assurance framework for non-formal adult learning in Greece.

During the validity period of the quality label, training providers would perform and submit yearly self-assessments to EOPPEP's quality label working group. This self-assessment would be reviewed by at least two experts with experience in carrying out on-site external reviews for the quality label, who would also meet with the training provider, either in person or online, to discuss their feedback.

Experts responsible for on-site external reviews and for reviewing training providers' self-assessments would be selected by EOPPEP's quality label working group and drawn from EOPPEP's registers of VET and lifelong learning experts, assessors, auditors and supervisors. Before participating in any review, they would need to declare any potential relationships with a given training provider (Conflict of Interest) and would be excluded of a particular review if a potential conflict of interest is identified. Experts that do not declare any potential conflict of interest would sign a document certifying their impartiality to review a particular training provider, as well as a privacy and GDPR agreement, as regards the handling of personal data. In addition, selected experts would participate in a mandatory capacity building process to better understand the quality assurance system requirements and their role during the reviews. To minimise system's fixed costs, it is recommended that these experts are engaged on a review basis and paid according to the national legislation in force for the relevant collective bodies.

### **Decision 5b – Discuss the funding of the system**

Ensuring sufficient and sustainable funding is crucial for the continuity of the quality assurance system over time. Additional funding (such as from the ESF+ in the framework of the new programming period 2021-2027) should be allocated to cover the system's initial implementation costs as well as system running costs but, the system should collect private resources through fees paid by the participating training provider (as in EduQua, Switzerland; QQI, Ireland; and Qualiopi, France). Resources collected through training provider fees could be used towards covering variable costs of the system, such as expert fees or

travel expenses, while additional funds should cover, at a minimum, the cost of relevant support and transition materials and initiatives, such as the quality label web application development, the development of guidelines and the development and implementation of capacity building, and fixed costs such as personnel working at the quality label working group and expenses related to infrastructure and materials, as website hosting and maintenance.

The training provider fee amount should be decided by EOPPEP's Board of Directors after an analysis of the operational costs of the system and in consultation with training providers and made effective through the relevant legislation. The operational costs of the system could be identified through the implementation of a pilot with a small number of training providers, as discussed in Decision 7 - Establish measures for a transition period.

## Decision 6 - Elaborate additional support structures

For the correct functioning of the new quality assurance system, a number of support structures need to be set up. These include: (1) a new website with user authentication where quality label information can be collected, stored, analysed and shared between the quality label working group and training providers, (2) a digital infrastructure to safely transfer, store and further analyse data and information collected through the new quality assurance system, and (3) a peer-learning network of training providers.

### **Quality label website**

Information on the quality label, guidelines for all involved actors, the list of quality label holders, and information on the average performance of system participants should be easily accessible on a dedicated microsite within EOPPEP's master website. This website could also include other announcements, webinar recordings, booklets or technical assistance documents that could support training providers in improving their quality, as well as information on the training providers' quality assurance peer-learning network and the annual conference on quality of non-formal learning, once they are set up.

In addition, this web application could be used as a data collection, storage and analysis system. To that end, the website could include user authentication, leading to a private space for registered training providers through which they could apply to the quality label and submit supporting documentation; communicate with EOPPEP's quality label working group; submit information required to produce the annual dashboards as well as their annual self-assessments; receive feedback on self-assessments; and access individual training providers' dashboards. Potentially, this web application could also be used to collect trainees' satisfaction responses for trainees participating in CVET programmes privately funded. Data and information submitted by training providers through the web application, and possibly by trainees, would be safely stored (in line with the most up-to-date privacy legislations) in the web application's database, where the quality label working group would also regularly upload data from CVET trainees' satisfaction surveys and from ERGANI and EFKA to track trainees' perceptions and satisfaction levels and former trainees' employment status. The web application's back-end could also analyse the information included in these datasets and automatically produce summaries of the average performance of participants, as well as individual training providers' dashboards.

Given the extensive functionality of the outlined web application, its development will be costly. Thus, these development costs need to be accounted for as part of the initial implementation costs and could potentially be financed in the framework of the contract for the digitalisation of EOPPEP, financed by the Recovery and Resilience Facility. In addition, hosting and maintenance costs of the web application should also be taken into account as recurrent fixed costs of the system. To minimise these costs, the quality label website could be hosted by EOPPEP, as the system implementing institution, and could potentially leverage from the ICT platform used for the quality assurance and monitoring system implemented in the early 2000s by

EKEPIS, EOPPEP's predecessor, in the context of Joint Ministerial Decision (JMD) 111384/2003,<sup>7</sup> to the extent possible.

### ***Data collection and analysis infrastructure***

In addition to the quality label web application described above, additional digital infrastructure to gather, transfer, store and further analyse data and information would be needed. In particular, EOPPEP may need to set up an online survey to gather information on trainees' satisfaction and perceptions for privately funded CVET programmes, if this survey was not included in the quality label website. Data transfer infrastructure should also be arranged, so that data from DYPA's trainee satisfaction survey as well as from ERGANI and EFKA can be transferred to EOPPEP. All these data and information should be securely stored.

In addition, even though the quality label web application would carry out some data analysis, EOPPEP's quality label working group may need to clean up and organise data transferred by DYPA or obtained through ERGANI and EFKA and may further analyse system results. Thus, statistical packages should be available to be used by the quality label working group. Through these analyses, EOPPEP could identify areas of improvement where system-wide policies are required and particular training providers face quality risks, so that timely support can be offered.

This digital infrastructure, particularly in relation to the processing of data, could be potentially leveraged from the quality assurance system of JMD 111384, once updated and adjusted, to the extent possible.

### ***Network of training providers***

Training providers could also support each other in developing a quality culture and adapting to the new quality assurance system. To that end, a peer-learning network of training providers could be set up, gathering training providers participating in the system and providing a platform to exchange best practices and ask questions. This network could also provide the opportunity for training providers to organise in smaller groups to review each other's self-assessment, obtaining external feedback in advance of the self-assessment expert review.

One example of a peer-learning network on quality assurance is the Slovenian network of quality counsellors.<sup>8</sup> This network was created in 2006 and offers support and guidance to training providers on how to assess and develop their quality. Among its activities, the network organises meetings biannually, shares information regarding quality training provision and carries out capacity building activities.

Following the Slovenian network example, the peer-learning network of training providers could organise an annual conference on the quality of non-formal learning. This conference would bring together all training providers and all CVET stakeholders, including all CVET implementing and advisory bodies, representatives of the social partners, and, potentially, learner representatives.

The aim of the conference would be to exchange best practices and foster in-depth dialogue including through thematic working groups. In addition, this conference could also serve as a platform to highlight challenges and improvement areas of the quality assurance system implementation. These challenges and improvement areas, as well as issues raised by individual training providers, should be further discussed by the quality label Advisory Group.

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<sup>7</sup> Joint Ministerial Decision 111384/2003 (Official Journal 616/B/ 19-05-2003) on a 'System for monitoring and assessment of KEK'.

<sup>8</sup> For more information, visit: <https://www.acs.si/en/projects/national/quality-counsellors/>.



## Decision 7 - Establish measures for a transition period

The last decision refers to the measures needed for all actors of the quality assurance system to be ready to implement the system and navigate it. This implies developing guidelines for different actors, carrying out capacity building activities as well as deciding how the system will be initially implemented and scaled up.

### **Guidelines**

All actors involved in the system, including training providers, assessors and EOPPEP officials acting as observers, should be clearly informed of their responsibilities in the framework of the quality label. To that end, guidelines should be developed for each one of these actors and shared with them directly and through the quality label website. In particular, guidelines should be developed for:

- **Training providers** on how to apply to the quality label, what to expect during the external assessment, and how to develop, implement and submit their self-assessments;
- **External assessors** on how to assess training providers and how to review and provide feedback to training providers' self-assessments; and
- **EOPPEP officials acting as observers** on how to assure the objectivity and comparability of the external review.

In addition, checklists or questionnaires could be developed to support training providers in developing and implementing self-assessments and assessors in charge of on-site external reviews or self-assessment reviews.

A starting point to develop these materials could be the guidelines developed during the implementation of the quality assurance system in JMD 111384/2003 in the early 2000s. These materials could be leveraged, updated and adapted to be aligned with the new quality assurance system.

### **Capacity Building**

Similarly, the same actors for whom guidelines are developed should benefit from capacity building activities. The goal of this capacity building would be:

- **For assessors conducting on-site external reviews and reviewing training providers' self-assessments**, to develop a good understanding of the quality label, its goals, and its requirements. Additionally, capacity building activities should focus on the procedures and activities required during external assessments with the aim to assure the objectivity of external assessors and the comparability of training providers' results.
- **For EOPPEP officials who participate as observers in on-site external reviews**, to provide them with a good understanding of the quality label, its goals, and its requirements, as well as of the procedures and activities undertaken during the external review. Capacity building activities in this case would be focused on identifying assessors' behaviours that could compromise the reliability and comparability of the results.
- **For training providers**, to familiarise with the new quality assurance system. In addition, capacity building would clarify the steps needed to apply to the quality label, as well as provide information on how to prepare for the first external review, including the information and documentation that should be submitted and made available. Capacity building activities would also prepare training providers to carry out self-assessments, providing information and guidance on how to design and implement their own self-assessment. Training providers could decide to appoint a quality counsellor, someone internal in charge of all quality-related activities, who would represent the training provider in these capacity building activities.

### ***Piloting the system***

Finally, it is recommended that the system is first piloted with a small number of training providers before becoming permanent. Piloting the system will allow to fine tune the details of the system, such as the definition of the indicators and their level of exigence (i.e., the thresholds), as well as provide more clarity about the costs of implementing the system and the human resources needed by EOPPEP to support it. It would also provide more time to develop the processes and supporting materials required for the correct system implementation.

This pilot should include a variety of training providers, representing different sizes and diverse regions. Thus, ideally, participating training providers should be randomly selected. Exposing the system to a variety of training providers would allow to identify potential improvements to make the system as robust and effective as possible, so that the results of the new quality assurance system accurately represented the quality of different types of training providers, allowing to compare the quality of their provision.

Participation in the pilot should be free for training providers, with all costs of the pilot being publicly funded. Thus, sufficient public resources should be allocated to the pilot design and implementation. Similarly, the coordination and implementation of the pilot would imply a significant time investment for EOPPEP officials involved in the pilot, particularly if the pilot is carried out before the quality label's website is fully developed. This additional workload should be taken into account, potentially bringing in additional human resources to work in EOPPEP's quality label working group.

This pilot could have a total duration of one year and a half, including the initial award of the quality label for a shortened duration of one year and one round of quality label renewals. This would allow to externally review training providers using the licensing indicators to initially award the quality label, to carry out an initial round of self-assessments at six months of the quality label award, to set up the data collection and analysis systems and to perform one quality label renewal, making use of the quality and licensing indicators.

**The results of the pilot should be evaluated, particularly with regard to the quality label processes, the system costs and the quality indicator average values for participating providers.** Based on this information, changes could be made to the quality assurance system, its indicators and its thresholds.

Once the quality assurance system is revised following the pilot's recommendations, the quality label could start being offered to all training providers as optional. This would allow a slower growth of the number of quality label participants, letting the system adjust progressively. To incentivise training providers to participate in the system, the quality label could be linked to financial incentives, for example, by being required by DYPA for training providers to be eligible to provide EU co-funded training. Finally, once the system is sufficiently established, it could be made mandatory for all CVET training providers.

# 3 Proposed timeline to implement the new quality assurance system

Once the quality assurance system for non-formal learning has been defined, multiple steps must be taken to implement it, such as establishing the relevant organs and units or developing supporting materials and infrastructure, among other. This chapter outlines the activities that should be carried out to implement the system, offering progress indicators, and proposes a timeline in Table 3.1.

**Table 3.1. Activities and proposed timeline for the implementation of the quality assurance system**

Activity	Months
1. <b>Consult training providers on the final indicators and the suggested thresholds:</b> Training provider representatives were consulted on the indicators of the system while they were still preliminary. Thus, it would be advisable to consult training providers again on the appropriateness and feasibility of the final list of indicators.	1
2. <b>Financial resources are identified to finance the quality assurance system:</b> A sufficient and sustainable funding source is identified by the Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs to finance the quality assurance system's initial and continuous implementation costs.	1 - 3
3. <b>EOPPEP's Board of Directors establishes the relevant working group to implement the system:</b> As discussed in Decision 5 - Discuss the governance and implementation of the system, EOPPEP's Board of Directors establishes a quality assurance system advisory group, formed by representatives of EOPPEP, GSVETLLLY, KSEEEK, DYPA and NCHRS, training providers and social partners to advice on strategic decisions. Additionally, it sets up a working group coordinated by the National Quality System Department, which belongs to EOPPEP's Communication & Development Directorate, to coordinate and implement the system.	1 - 3
4. <b>Set up internal processes:</b> All quality label processes, including receiving and processing training providers' quality label applications, selecting experts and observers to participate in reviews; organising assessment teams; planning on-site external and self-evaluation reviews; planning feedback meetings of experts with training providers; gathering information and analysing system results; certifying providers and updating the public register of certified training providers are carefully planned and described. In addition, a new quality assurance experts' sub-register is defined and established by EOPPEP.	3 - 9
5. <b>Additional human resources are brought in:</b> Given the increased workload that the deployment and implementation of the quality assurance system will imply and using the financial resources identified for the quality assurance system implementation, EOPPEP brings in additional human resources to support the implementation of the system and allow the completion of EOPPEP's tasks timely.	4 - 6
6. <b>A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) is concluded between EOPPEP and DYPA to establish their collaboration in the context of the new quality assurance system:</b> This MoU should tackle areas such as the transfer of raw, individualised and identifiable data obtained from the trainee satisfaction survey implemented by DYPA to EOPPEP, EOPPEP's possibility to include further questions in DYPA's trainee satisfaction survey, and DYPA's willingness to rely on the new quality label to consider training providers' eligibility to provide EU co-funded training.	4 - 6
7. <b>Access to CVET trainees' employment outcomes information is granted to EOPPEP:</b> The corresponding body within the Greek Ministry of Labour grants access to EOPPEP's quality label working group within the National Quality System Department to the ERGANI and EFKA databases, so that employment outcomes can be tracked for CVET trainees within the framework of the quality label.	4 - 6
8. <b>Design and develop the quality label microsite within EOPPEP's website, a web application with user authentication and data upload, submission, storage and analysis functionality:</b> This website would serve as the main channel of communication between EOPPEP's quality label working	4 - 12

Activity	Months
<p>group and CVET training providers. It would include information about the quality label and how to apply, the list of training providers that have been awarded the quality label, guidelines and examples of training providers' self-assessments, information about capacity building activities and, once a peer-learning network is created and an institution takes the lead in organising the annual conference on quality of non-formal learning, a link to the peer-learning network website and information about the annual conference. In addition, this website would include an area for training providers to create an account, submit an application to the quality label including supporting documentation, communicate with the quality label working group, submit information required to produce the training provider dashboards and annual self-assessments, receive feedback on self-assessments and access individual training providers' dashboards. In addition, this web application could also be used to collect trainees' satisfaction responses for trainees participating in CVET programmes privately funded.</p> <p>Data and information would be stored at the web application's database, where the quality label working group would also regularly upload data from CVET trainees' satisfaction surveys and from ERGANI and EFKA. The web application's backend would analyse the information included in these datasets and produce summaries of the average performance of participants, as well as individual training providers' dashboards.</p>	
<p><b>9. Guidelines:</b> As discussed in Decision 7 - Establish measures for a transition period, guidelines for: (1) training providers on how to apply to the quality label, what to expect during the external assessment, and how to develop, implement and submit their self-assessment; (2) experts on how to assess training providers and how to review and provide feedback to training providers' self-assessments; and (3) EOPPEP officials acting as observers on how to assure the objectivity and comparability of the review would be developed by the quality label working group. These guidelines could also include additional materials, such as checklists or questionnaires which could further support training providers in developing and implementing self-assessments and experts in charge of on-site external reviews or self-assessment reviews.</p>	5 - 10
<p><b>10. Capacity building:</b> Capacity building activities for training providers, experts and EOPPEP officials acting as observers should also be planned, developed and implemented for experts, observers and training providers participating in the pilot, as discussed in Decision 7 - Establish measures for a transition period.</p>	5 - 10
<p><b>11. Design the training provider's dashboard:</b> The training providers' dashboard, through which, as discussed in Decision 4 - Establish the terms, the quality label working group would share information with individual providers on their performance compared to the average system participants' performance, would be designed.</p>	6 - 9
<p><b>12. Data collection and storage is set up to gather information on CVET trainees' satisfaction and perceptions and on employment outcomes:</b> EOPPEP reviews and potentially modifies DYPA's trainee satisfaction survey to ensure that all relevant information for the quality label is collected. A data transfer process and infrastructure and a secure data storage system are identified and set up for DYPA to be able to securely transfer quality label-related raw data to EOPPEP as well as for ERGANI and EFKA to transfer relevant data. The data transfer and the secure data storage systems may need to be developed. In parallel, EOPPEP sets its own data collection system to gather trainee satisfaction and perceptions information for trainees from CVET programmes privately funded and not covered by DYPA's survey. The questions included in this survey should be the exact same questions as those included in DYPA's survey that relate to the quality label. This data collection could be carried out through the quality label web application. In addition, statistical packages for EOPPEP's quality label working group to clean, organise and analyse data are decided and licenses are purchased. The cost of this infrastructure must be considered when identifying financial resources.</p>	7 - 9
<p><b>13. Pilot the system:</b> Once the internal processes have been defined and in parallel to finalising all the details of the system, the system should be piloted, that means, tested with a small number of training providers (e.g., around 10% of CVET training providers). Before the pilot implementation, pilot participants as well as the details of the pilot implementation should be decided. Ideally, training providers should be randomly selected and represent providers with different characteristics, such as with different sizes and from diverse regions. Exposing the system to a variety of training providers would allow to identify potential improvements needed to make the system mandatory, so that the new quality assurance system is as robust and effective at measuring and improving quality as possible. The full costs of the pilot should be publicly covered, making participation in the system free for training providers.</p> <p>As discussed in Decision 7 - Establish measures for a transition period, the total duration of the pilot should be of one year and a half, covering the initial award of the quality label for a shortened duration of one year and one round of quality label renewals. This would allow to test all processes, including (1) the initial external review of training providers using the licensing indicators; (2) an initial round of self-assessments at six months of the quality label award; (3) the renewal external review, which makes use of all quality and licensing indicators; and (4) all data collection and analysis systems. Given the need</p>	4 - 28 (years 1 to 3)

Activity	Months
to plan the pilot, planning and implementing the pilot, including the renewal of the quality label, should take about 1 year and 9 months.	
<p><b>14. Analyse pilot results and adjust the system:</b> Following the pilot, its results regarding the correct functioning of processes and system, system costs and average values for participating providers should be evaluated by the quality label working group. Based on this information, the Advisory Group of the quality label may suggest changes to the quality label system to EOPPEP's Board of Directors, the Steering Committee of the quality label. These changes can refer, for example, to changes in thresholds for individual indicators based on the newly gathered data or changes to particular processes. In addition, changes to system resources, such as funding or the number of officials working at the quality label working unit, and to supporting materials, such as guidelines or the quality label website, could also be carried out.</p>	22 – 28 (years 2 to 3)
<p><b>15. Set training providers' quality label fee:</b> With a clearer picture of the costs of the system thanks to the pilot, the fee that training providers should pay to apply to the quality label must be decided. As discussed in Decision 5 - Discuss the governance and implementation of the system, the training provider fee amount should be decided by EOPPEP's Board of Directors after an analysis of the operational costs of the system and in consultation with training providers.</p>	26 – 28 (year 3)
<p><b>16. Establish the system through a JMD:</b> Once the system is fully defined, tested and updated as appropriate, the quality assurance system will be ready to be formally established through a Joint Ministerial Decision of the Ministry of Education, Religious Affairs and Sports and the Ministry of Labour and Social Security.</p> <p>This Joint Ministerial Decision could establish an optional quality label, which would allow for a smooth scaling up of the system. In addition, this legislative framework should include a provision allowing EOPPEP's Board of Directors, the quality label Steering Committee, to initiate quality assurance system changes, such as changes to the indicators, their thresholds or the training provider fee. To incentivise training providers to participate in the system, DYPAs should require training providers to hold the quality label to be eligible to provide EU co-funded training. This requires an amendment to Ministerial Decision 65809/2022 (article 1).</p> <p>Once the system is sufficiently established and a quality culture has been developed among training providers, the system could be made mandatory through amending this Joint Ministerial Decision.</p>	26 – 35 (year 3)
<p><b>17. Awareness raising and capacity building activities:</b> To ensure that the new quality label is well known among providers and trainees, awareness raising activities should be carried out. These can include direct targeting of training providers, marketing campaigns, social media campaigns or information sessions. In addition, capacity building activities to all interested training providers and additional experts and observers should be carried out.</p>	36 – 40 (years 3 to 4)
<p><b>18. Full implementation of the system:</b> The system is formally implemented.</p>	36 on (year 3 on)

As presented in Table 3.1, the full implementation of the new quality assurance system for non-formal learning would take up around 3 years, including a 1 year and a half pilot, that could be set up to run in about six months after the completion of this project. Preparations of the pilot, including the selection, information and capacity building of pilot participants would start in month 4. Table 3.2 below shows graphically the timing of the activities described in Table 3.1.

