



Adult education in Second Chance Schools: The case of Greece

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Abstract

This study describes the historical development of Lifelong Learning, from its beginnings to the present day, in Greece and Europe. The objectives and importance of Lifelong Learning are then presented, according to the bibliography and the Commissions of the European Communities. In addition, the most basic concepts of adult education, which belongs to Lifelong Learning, are recorded, and the special characteristics that we encounter are described. The terms Lifelong Learning and Adult Education are analyzed and their historical review is recorded. Then the characteristics of adult learners are described and the institution of Second Chance Schools is analyzed, whose structure and mode of operation are also described. Finally, the conditions that must be created in order to have effective learning in adults are mentioned, as well as what obstacles are presented during the educational programs.

Keywords: Adult education, life-long learning, motivation, obstacles, second chance schools

Introduction

The right to knowledge and education are among the basic and at the same time necessary human rights that characterize and integrate an individual into the society as a whole. This applies to all advanced countries. One of the basic components of the existence and development of man in society is undoubtedly learning. Man, in his constant effort to understand the things around him/her and to cope with the daily demands of life but also in his/her professional activities, participates intentionally or not for most of his/her life in organized or natural learning processes ^[1].

In adult education programs, an important fact is that not everyone starts from the same starting point. Because each adult has their own unique characteristics, the educational process is influenced and adapted accordingly. In order for an educational program to be as effective and successful as possible, educational needs must be investigated and the program must be appropriately designed for the target group, before it begins. Following this design and appropriate practices results in the creation of an educational program that is as compatible and adapted as possible to adult learners. The result of all this is the prospect of a successful adult educational program with maximum participation ^[2].

In the case of adult learners coming from vulnerable population groups, the program requires greater organization and more careful planning. As is understandable, these individuals have limited or no access to various social goods, compared to the rest of the population. For this reason, coordinated and organized efforts must be made to reach them.

According to Tsiakalos ^[3], socially vulnerable groups are those population groups that feel socially excluded in the society they live in. However, the term “social exclusion”, although very popular, has not yet been adequately defined. Socially vulnerable groups are directly related to the term “social exclusion”, since these individuals are considered to be more vulnerable to poverty and social exclusion. For Kontiadis and Katrougalos [4], the terms vulnerable or

vulnerable social groups had been characterized as vague and legally undefined concepts.

The above now include refugees and immigrants, who belong to vulnerable social groups, have diverse characteristics since they come from different places, with different experiences and habits, each of them, which is why they constitute a heterogeneous group. In addition to all this, various difficulties are added that they face daily, such as poverty, hunger and lack of social support (Burnett & Peel, 2016, in) ^[1]. These parameters further complicate the efforts of social actors to address them more effectively.

In order to design an educational program suitable for adult education and lifelong learning, an investigation of the educational needs and requirements of the target population must have been preceded. In the case of Greece, there is already an operating program of education for adults and vulnerable social groups, which is implemented in Second Chance Schools, which have been created precisely for this purpose. The program of these schools is flexible and can be adapted each time to the educational needs that arise, as will be presented below.

Historical Review of Adult Education

At the beginning of the twentieth century, the field of Lifelong Learning made its appearance in Greece and the European area through adult education programs and other activities. Its primary goal was mainly to combat illiteracy but also to train and improve the educational level of particularly vulnerable social groups (Vergidis *et al.*, 2015, in) ^[1]. This phenomenon subsequently appeared in various countries in various forms, such as technical and vocational education, adult education and training programs, as well as in thematic programs related to society, the environment and culture, and finally their education regarding the use of their free time ^[5].

Lifelong Learning has flourished in other countries since the mid-twentieth century, depending of course on the prevailing social context and the prevailing cultural and political conditions. The European Union, however, mainly through funding in the early eighties, supported and

contributed to the great increase, observed in adult education activities and programs.

In the last two decades, the competent educational bodies of the European Union began to perceive and realize the enormous need that has arisen for adult education and thus it was integrated into their political actions and activities, and this is evident from the large number of educational policy proposals in relation to Lifelong Learning^[6].

The term Lifelong Learning first appeared in the White Paper published by the European Union in 1994, which the European Community wanted to use as a strategy, aimed at monitoring socio-economic developments and at the same time introducing and using new technologies (Sipitanou, 2005, in)^[1]. As a result of these actions, the framework that promoted and organized specific strategies, mainly for vocational training, was defined.

In 1995, the second White Paper^[7] was published, further expanding the scope of Lifelong Learning in the perspective of creating a society with a higher level of knowledge, which in order to achieve it, formal and non-formal education as well as informal learning must be developed (Vergidis *et al.*, 2015, in [1]). Among the proposals that were discussed and further promoted was the establishment of Second Chance Schools, as the acquisition of knowledge and skills in the field of improving competitiveness and the possibility of finding a job easier for adults was considered a primary factor (Sipitanou, 2005, in)^[1].

The year 1996 was designated as the European Year of Lifelong Learning, with the main aim of informing and disseminating. One of the primary activities discussed for this year was how important Lifelong Learning is, the development of cooperation between training and education structures and the definition of a European training and education area. The same year also saw the OECD publishing a book, calling for Lifelong Learning to become a reality for all. Also, in 1999, UNESCO, in its report on education in the 20th century, highlighted the great importance of Lifelong Learning and Education, which it considers an important key for entering the 21st century.

Lifelong Learning after 2000 appeared at a pan-European level in a more organized form, through coordinated actions and political initiatives, aiming at a knowledge society and combating illiteracy. For this to happen, it would be crucial to focus on vulnerable social groups, with the aim of eliminating the phenomenon of marginalization as much as possible^[6]. Also, the importance of continuing education and training was particularly mentioned, for further improving employment and social cohesion through Lifelong Learning and the integration of all forms of education with the aim of a knowledge society (Griffin, 2006, in)^[1].

Internationally, the term Lifelong Learning did not prevail from the beginning but was gradually established in relation to the term Lifelong Education and Adult Education (Kapsalis & Papastamatis, 2002, in)^[1]. And later, the definition was given by the European Commission, which states that Lifelong Learning is any educational activity that occurs throughout life that aims to acquire or improve skills and abilities in relation to employment (Sipitanou, 2005, in)^[1].

In Greece, the first adult literacy classes began to operate in the late 19th century, mainly by private associations. Subsequently, in the 1950s, the field of adult education took the form of vocational training, carried out by public bodies

and large industries in the context of training technical personnel (Vergidis *et al.*, 2015, in)^[1].

Later, with the entry of Greece into the European Union, a significant change occurred, the institution of Popular Education, which was developed through funding^[5]. However, this institution was significantly limited from 1990 onwards and the reason was that the field of adult education gradually began to orient itself towards the economic field, since the needs there were in great demand. In recent decades, many different educational actions have been carried out in Greece in the field of Lifelong Learning with educational and social content, such as the institutionalization of Second Chance Schools in 1997, and the training and certification of continuing vocational training instructors^[6]. Today in Greece, the bodies that carry out adult education actions are:

1. The Institute for Continuing Adult Education (I.D.E.K.E.), which manages the following programs:
 - a. Adult Education Centers,
 - b. Second Chance Schools,
 - c. Parent Schools,
 - d. Adult Education programs that lead to the acquisition of basic skills in new technologies, etc.
2. The Hellenic Open University (HOU)^[9], which provides the possibility of providing studies to students who did not have the opportunity to access Higher Education or to those who wish to enrich their qualifications in specific thematic fields. The HOU can also organize and implement Lifelong Learning Programs, according to the provisions of Law 3369/2005^[10].
3. Within the framework of the organization of Lifelong Learning, the opportunity is provided to all Tertiary Educational Institutions to establish an Institute for Lifelong Learning, so that they are able to organize and operate Lifelong Learning programs^[10].
4. Also, all workers' organizations, trade unions in the public and private sectors, as well as any other organization, designated following a decision of the Hellenic Minister of Education, Lifelong Learning and Religious Affairs, have the right to establish educational organizations for lifelong learning^[11].

The field of Lifelong Learning and Adult Education is an important body of adult training and education with multiple actions, which, however, do not depend only on state subsidies but mainly on European Union funding (Vergidis *et al.*, 2015, in)^[1]. For this reason, in recent years and due to the economic crisis, many claim that many programs are characterized by low quality and ineffectiveness^[12, 13].

Terminology

The General Secretariat for Lifelong Learning^[14] of the Hellenic Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs of Greece (2013) defines lifelong learning as follows: "all forms of learning activities throughout a person's life, aimed at acquiring or developing knowledge, skills and abilities, which contribute to the formation of a complete personality, to the professional integration and development of the individual, to social cohesion, to the development of the ability to actively participate in public life and to social, economic and cultural development".

Kokkos ^[12, 13], regarding the term *lifelong learning*, stated that “it is considerably broader than that of Adult Education, encompassing formal and informal forms of learning that exist in a less organized and structured environment”. It is a dynamic concept that is not determined by space and time, it is mainly the process that follows us throughout our lives and leads us to learning and change through the experiences of everyday life and the influences we receive through the social environment.

Below, we present some definitions regarding lifelong learning ^[15]:

- **Formal education:** It is the education in the classical educational system that leads to the acquisition of recognized certificates and which also includes general formal Adult Education.
- **Formal education system:** It is the systems of primary, secondary and tertiary education.
- **Non-formal education:** It is the education that you undertake outside the formal educational system and can lead to the acquisition of certificates, recognized at a national level. This includes initial vocational training, continuing vocational training and general Adult Education.
- **General Adult Education:** It is all those organized learning activities that are addressed to adults and aim to enrich knowledge, develop and improve abilities and skills, develop the personality of the individual and the status of an active citizen, as well as to alleviate educational and social inequalities. It is provided by formal education institutions and non-formal education institutions ^[1].

Although there is no single definition of the term adult in the literature, there is a consensus of opinions regarding their common characteristics that differentiate them from minor learners. According to Themeli (2010, in) ^[1], “any adult who participates in a formal or informal activity, with the ultimate aim of acquiring knowledge and skills, or evaluating their personal attitudes, or attempting to master a new behavior, is called an Adult Learner”.

Adult Learner

The participation of an adult in an educational program is a key research area in the field of lifelong learning. The study of the characteristics, motivations and obstacles that push or repel adults from educational activities plays a major role in the effectiveness of an adult education program. In Greece, from the nineties onwards, participation rates, and in some cases motivations and obstacles, began to be recorded. These surveys were usually carried out by national agencies, but also by European ones (Eurostat) ^[16].

Characteristics of adult learners

Although there are many differences in a group of adults, there are also some common elements, according to Rogers ^[17], such as:

1. **The participants are adults:** Adulthood is the continuous path towards maturity and autonomy and we see this in the fact that they come voluntarily in the largest percentage of adult education programs. There are of course cases where in some groups there are

social restrictions that limit their autonomy, due to the gap between the impulse and the capacity for emancipation.

2. **They are in a process of development:** Adult educators must be prepared for the continuous changes that adult learners experience on many levels, such as physical, mental, emotional, and must show understanding and support.
3. **They already have a set of experiences and values:** Every adult has a set of experiences, knowledge and values that define them and through them they define themselves (Knowles, in) ^[17]. The educator must know this and evaluate it in order to build new knowledge on the pre-existing one. According to Rogers ^[17], we must first pursue unlearning, which is equally important as learning. New knowledge must be linked to the previous one and not negate it and, when necessary, this should be done with authoritarianism and rebuttal because “it will not be able to successfully cope with the weight of tradition combined with modern methods”.
4. **They come to education with formed intentions:** According to Houle, there are three basic categories of learners (Jarvis *et al.*, 2003, in) ^[1], those who are interested in a specific subject of learning, those who get satisfaction from the process and those who are oriented towards a goal. The adult learner participates in an educational program because of the needs and intentions he/she has.
5. **They come to education with specific expectations:** Due to their previous experiences at school or other educational programs that they have attended, learners have different attitudes towards education. That is, some expect to be taught using the traditional school method, while others desire a more flexible and less formal form of education. For this reason, learners are easily disappointed when they feel that the educational program is predetermined by the instructor and their own opinion is not taken into account, and then they stop participating (Freire & Shor, 2011, in) ^[1]. Therefore, the instructor must discover these differences and strengthen the low self-esteem of some and, on the other hand, give greater freedom to the more self-reliant, with the sole aim of improving the program and the progress of the department.
6. **They have competing interests:** The adult learner, due to the many and different situations he/she faces in his/her daily life in relation to his/her family, professional and social environment, sees the educational activity as something secondary and not so important. For this reason, the adult educator contributes to the settlement of these situations through the connection of the cognitive subjects with his/her reality ^[18]. Therefore, the dominant role is played by the learner and his/her needs and not the educator and the cognitive subject. Of course, there are problems of everyday life to which the learners pay more attention and which act competitively towards learning, but on the other hand there are also supporting factors, which

we must discover and exploit for the good of the educational process ^[17].

- 7. They have formed learning models:** Adults usually have chosen the way they consider to suit them best and learn best. That is, there are those who like writing, others are auditory types, others feel better in a group while others prefer to work individually. An important difference between adults and minors is that when the learning object is related to pre-existing knowledge, then they respond better, while on the contrary, when they do not have previous experiences with the object (e.g., computer science), then they seem to worry more and learn more difficultly than younger people ^[17].

However, there are also some characteristics of adults, such as that if they feel like they are wasting their time, they give up, they want rewards and encouragement, they do not have time for homework and they do not reveal the real reasons that led them to these programs ^[19].

Motivation in adult education

The theories that have been developed about motivation are many and have many differences between them, but they are all connected to the study of human nature. Similarly, the theories that investigate motivation in adult education are based on the study of human behavior.

The reasons that lead an adult to return to school and participate in an educational program are complex, which is why it is a subject of ongoing study. According to Karalis ^[20], in today's liberal societies there is a tendency to transfer the responsibility for the education of citizens from the state and the state to the individual him/her-self. However, for this to happen, a necessary condition is first that there are sufficient and widespread educational opportunities and, secondly, the motivation and possibilities for education.

The first known study, investigating the motivations of adults to participate in education, was conducted in the 1960s by C.O. Houle, using a qualitative approach and interviews with 22 learners, participating in different education programs. The data from this study led to Houle's typology of adult learners ^[1]. From this study we distinguish three types, learning-oriented, action-oriented and goal-oriented.

Obstacles to adult education

According to researchers of adult education and their participation in educational programs, no comprehensive theory has emerged that explains exactly why an individual participates. Also, the factors that inhibit this participation of adults in educational programs have not been precisely interpreted. However, in some research that has been carried out, and in different social and economic contexts, it has been observed that some variables do indeed influence participation. Some of these variables are: the age of the participants, their gender, their previous education, their educational level, their work, their place of residence and their experiences in relation to their role in the society in which they are part of.

After studying the relevant bibliography and reviewing theoretical approaches, we conclude that essentially two different schools of thought can be distinguished:

- The first school, represented mainly by North American and then Australian theorists, where emphasis is placed

on the learner as an individual and the obstacles and motivations are explored, believed to determine or reflect their individual characteristics, and

- the second school, which is characterized as a European trend, since its representatives are active in the Scandinavian countries and Great Britain, where they try to highlight and reveal the social and political issues that contribute to the appearance of these characteristics ^[21].

According to Miller, the main reasons that act as a deterrent to the participation of an adult, especially those from vulnerable social groups, in adult education programs are the following (Tsiboukli, 2010, in) ^[1]:

- Organizational reasons that create obstacles to their participation.
- Programs often do not meet their specific needs and interests.
- There is no appropriate organization between the agencies that implement the programs and social services that would contribute to the integration of individuals into the programs.
- Previous unsuccessful experiences from educational programs.
- There is no optimism about finding a job after completing the program.
- There is no support from the wider family environment.

Based on the above information and in combination with the processing of data from many similar studies, Rubenson and Desjardins ^[21] concluded that the essence is not whether or not there are obstacles but how the State will shape the conditions, so that the individual can overcome these obstacles or not. In other words, the degree of development that characterizes a welfare state directly determines how much an obstacle will have an inhibitory effect on the desire of adults to attend educational programs.

For example, if there is a care service for preschool children, the intensity of family-related barriers is affected in working mothers or when there is an educational system that is based on the participation of learners, the barriers related to negative attitudes towards learning and education are affected. According to this position, the fact of the high rate of adult participation, observed in educational programs in countries that have long ago developed a welfare state (e.g., the Scandinavian countries), is also explained.

Consequently, the role of Second Chance Schools, among others, is to re-attract adults who, for various reasons had been out of school, into the educational process. However, when the adult returns to the educational environment, then teachers must apply techniques to achieve the learning objectives, taking into account the specificities of this group and especially if they belong to vulnerable population groups.

Second Chance Schools

The Phenomenon of school dropouts by children is widespread throughout Europe. Thus, many adults do not possess the required knowledge for today's era or the skills needed to claim better positions in the labor market and chances for more effective integration into society. Especially today, this gap between those who dropped out of school and those who completed it is enormous, due to the development of science and the large size of

information. This school dropout is not exclusively a phenomenon that has to do with failure in learning but also with various factors such as social, family, economic or health-related. And although school failure can occur in all social strata, it usually concerns specific social groups.

Το έτος 1995 συντάχθηκε για την Εκπαίδευση και την Κατάρτιση η Λευκή Βίβλος, που ουσιαστικά ήταν η αναδιατύπωση των εννοιών της μάθησης και της εκπαίδευσης. Ένα σημαντικό αποτέλεσμα αυτής ήταν η απόφαση για την ίδρυση των Σχολείων Δεύτερης Ευκαιρίας (EUROPEAN COMMISSION, 2001).

In 1995, the White Paper on Education and Training was drafted [7], which essentially reformulated the concepts of learning and education. An important result of this was the decision to establish Second Chance Schools [22].

The Second Chance Schools as a vehicle for combating social exclusion

The rapid development of technology worldwide, the development of societies and the flourishing of the economy with an unequal distribution of wealth have created the conditions for social discrimination and for some social groups to be excluded from various events and activities. These groups at risk of social exclusion are refugees and immigrants, the long-term unemployed, women, the elderly, the illiterate, people with disabilities, those released from prison and residents of remote areas. In order to eliminate this phenomenon, the European Commission has decided to place the promotion of lifelong learning among the immediate priorities.

At the conference held in Lisbon, and through a structured framework, the key concepts were discussed and defined in order to promote and effectively implement lifelong learning. In this way, the European Commission aims to offer all citizens the right to information and knowledge about educational programs and activities, with equal opportunities for access to education for all, investing in human resources and providing educational spaces easily accessible to all (Vergidis & Prokou, 2005, in) [1].

The European Union, in order to achieve these goals, implemented a series of measures and policies that were adopted by all Member States. Among these measures and policies was the creation and operation of Second Chance Schools, which aim to provide the opportunity for people who, for whatever reason, had not managed to complete basic education to do so now. In this way, learners experience the process, satisfaction and joy of education, gaining self-confidence by actively participating in the social, political and economic development of the country [7]. Thus, the historical moment of the decision to establish Second Chance Schools is November 1995, when the White Paper was presented by the Commission of the European Union.

Second Chance Schools in Greece

In Greece, Second Chance Schools were established in 1997 [23], with the main purpose of offering the possibility of completing the compulsory nine-year education for people over the age of 18, granting a qualification equivalent to a junior high-school diploma. The entire action is co-financed by the Greek State and the EU through the European Social Fund.

The first Second Chance School in Greece operated as a pilot one in the largest city of Attica region in 2000-2001

with 40 trainees. The choice of this particular municipality was not made arbitrarily but due to the fact that the unemployment rate in the area was high in combination with the general level of education being low, while the percentage of young people who had left school early was also significant [24]. The momentum of this new institution was quite strong and thus in the 2007-2008 school year, 48 Second Chance Schools operated throughout Greece with 3,378 trainees [25] and now they are hopefully reaching 67 ones in the 13 regions of the country.

Purpose– Objectives

The purpose of the Second Chance School is for the trainees, through this program, to be able to participate more effectively in the workplace, in social activities, and to be more active in the cultural and economic development of its city. The main objectives of the Second Chance School are [26]:

1. To enable citizens aged 18 and over to complete compulsory education.
2. To reconnect learners with the educational system.
3. To equip them with the appropriate knowledge and modern skills with which they will be able to integrate more easily into society.
4. To strengthen the self-esteem of learners.
5. To help them in their job search or improve their job position.

Basic principles-characteristics

In order for the Second Chance School to achieve its goals, three basic principles must be followed:

1. The educational program must be flexible to support each learner.
2. Learners must be supported in all areas inside and outside the school environment to succeed.
3. Educational staff must be skilled enough to meet their complex task.

To achieve all of the above, Second Chance Schools seek cooperation with all social actors, adapt to the needs of each individual, focus on the interests of the trainees, focus on the trainees acquiring basic knowledge and skills, support the trainees in developing positive attitudes towards society, shape the program flexibly so that other spaces are also used, and collaborate to develop joint actions.

Το εκπαιδευτικό πρόγραμμα στα Σχολεία Δεύτερης Ευκαιρίας διαρκεί δύο (2) σχολικά έτη, αρχίζοντας 15 Σεπτεμβρίου και λήγοντας 30 Ιουνίου με τις δεκαπέντε τελευταίες ημέρες του Ιουνίου να πραγματοποιούνται αν χρειάζεται αναπληρώσεις, παρουσιάσεις κάποιων projects και εργαστηρίων. Επίσης υιοθετείται στα ΣΔΕ και η αρχή των πολυγραμματισμών:

Duration and educational program

The educational program in Second Chance Schools lasts two (2) school years, starting on September 15th and ending on June 30th, with the last fifteen days of June being used for make-up classes, presentations of some projects and workshops, if necessary. The principle of multiliteracies is also adopted in the Second Chance School, namely:

1. the Linguistic one (Greek language),
2. the Arithmetic,
3. the Informatics,
4. the Linguistic (English language),

5. the Social,
6. the Scientific,
7. the Environmental, and
8. the Cultural-Aesthetic Education one.

During the school year, activities are held in the arts and sports that are related to the students' free time and aim at better quality management.

The design of the curriculum at the Second Chance School is different from other schools, with a significant innovation that their program is open and flexible and aims not only to provide knowledge but also to develop skills, in relation to language, numbers, technology, modern sciences, the environment and most of the things that they encounter in their everyday lives. The teaching hours are 25 per week, of which 20 hours are Literacy, 3 hours are projects and 2 hours are Counseling.

Οι λόγοι που απαιτούν την ίδρυση ενός Σχολείου Δεύτερης Ευκαιρίας είναι συχνά οι εξής:

Organization – Operation

The reasons that require the establishment of a Second Chance School are often the following ^[27]:

- There is a large number of people in the area of establishment who need to complete compulsory education.
- There is a large percentage of unemployed people, according to official data, without a high school diploma.
- There is also a large percentage of unemployment among women in the local community, who have not completed compulsory education, mainly due to traditional stereotypes and prejudices towards the weaker sex.
- There are prospects that its establishment cultivates for future employment of the unemployed, in sectors related to computers, foreign languages and the image/media.

The staff of a Second Chance School includes, in addition to the educational and administrative staff, the following advisors: Pedagogue, Career Counselor and Psychologist. The educational staff, depending on the educational needs of the Second Chance School, is also supported by hourly teachers who are selected during the school year, with the prescribed hourly and substitute procedures, as well as teachers who offer voluntary work to the school, especially in the Greek Language and Mathematics lessons. Each section of the Second Chance School can have from twelve (12) to twenty (20) students, and in order for the school unit to be considered to be able to last for both years of the program, it must have at least 2 sections of 24 students.

Για να εγγραφεί κάποιος στα Σ.Δ.Ε. πρέπει απαραίτητα μέχρι 31 Δεκεμβρίου του έτους που κάνει αίτηση να έχει συμπληρώσει το 18ο έτος της ηλικίας του ή να είναι μεγαλύτερος και να έχει και απολυτήριο από Πρωτοβάθμια εκπαίδευση. Μόλις ο εκπαιδευόμενος ολοκληρώσει με επιτυχία την διετή φοίτηση του, είναι σε θέση να λάβει απολυτήριο τίτλο αντίστοιχο του τυπικού Γυμνασίου. Η επιλογή των υποψήφιων εκπαιδευόμενων γίνεται από επιτροπή του Σ.Δ.Ε, την οποία καθορίζει ο Διευθυντής, μέσω συνέντευξης με βάση τα κριτήρια που έχει ορίσει η ΓΓΔΒΜ. Για να ολοκληρώσει με επιτυχία ένας εκπαιδευόμενος το πρόγραμμα του Σ.Δ.Ε. και να αποκτήσει

ισότιμο πτυχίο με το Γυμνάσιο, πρέπει ολοκληρώσει την εκπαίδευση του, μιας και τα εκπαιδευτικά έτη δεν αντιστοιχούν σε αυτά του Γυμνασίου.

In order to register for the Second Chance School, a person must be 18 years of age or older by December 31 of the year of application and have a primary school leaving certificate. Once the student has successfully completed the two-year course, he or she is able to receive a secondary school-leaving certificate equivalent to the standard junior high-school. The selection of candidate students is made by a committee, which is appointed by the Director, through an interview based on the criteria set by the General Directorate of Vocational Training. In order for a student to successfully complete the program and obtain a degree equivalent to the junior high-school, he or she must complete his or her education, since the years of education do not correspond to those of the formal junior high-school.

Conclusion

This study described the historical development of Lifelong Learning from its inception to the present day in Greece and Europe. The objectives and importance of lifelong learning were presented, based on the bibliography and the Commissions of the European Communities. In addition, the basic concepts of adult education, which belongs to Lifelong Learning, were recorded and the special characteristics of the adults we encounter were described. Some conditions that must be created in order to have effective learning in adults were also mentioned, as well as what obstacles are presented during the educational program. The White Paper was then mentioned, in which the term Second Chance School was described for the first time, and then their structure was analyzed, since their establishment in Greece, their operating regulations and their role as a body for eliminating social exclusion. The characteristics of the learners of the Second Chance Schools were also described, as well as the school's goal-target towards them.

In closing this study, it is necessary to emphasize the importance of the institution of the Second Chance School, which can be very useful in the effort to integrate people from vulnerable social groups into society. Furthermore, in order to properly address these vulnerable social groups, there should be systematic preparation of teachers, with the aim of acquiring intercultural skills, knowing how to properly motivate and teach more effectively in the classroom, so that they too do not lose the motivation for proper teaching and have greater self-confidence and knowledge of what they should do. For this reason, the cooperation of various social actors is needed.

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