



As Olga, Markos, Irina say....

European Social Fund
in Greece 2000-2006





Countries and people with related cultures but different traditions and beliefs, work together for the economic and social cohesion of Europe. In this process, the European Social Fund has significantly invested in our country, supporting and strengthening our main asset, people.

We aspire to ensure that all Greeks, men and women, have productive employment in a quality environment. Preserve existing jobs and create new ones, especially for women, the young, older people and our fellow citizens who suffer the most from the economic crisis. To achieve these aims, we must invest in training human resources, be able to meet today's changing conditions and keep abreast with developments in technology and production.

In order to be effective, our policies on development and employment need to be accompanied by welfare state interventions. Equal opportunities means offering guarantees that all citizens participate equally, especially those who are subjected to discrimination, poverty or marginalization.

We are investing in a society where everyone will have the same opportunities in employment, health, education as well as in public administration while respecting and maintaining diversity.

The European Social Fund interventions, that are to be implemented by the Operational Programmes within the National Strategic Reference Framework, play a significant role in the national development strategy. Apart from central government, they further activate the potential of Local Government, Social Partners, the private sector and civil society.

We have the means to succeed. What lies ahead of us is the challenge to build a society of equal opportunities and jobs for all.

THEODORE N. TSEKOS
Secretary General
for the Management of European Funds

As Olga, Markos, Irimi say....

European Social Fund in Greece 2000-2006

MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND SOCIAL SECURITY
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FOREWORD

For more than 25 years, the European Social Fund and the Greek State are investing in Greek citizens with the aim to achieve progress and development, to improve people's lives, to strengthen the economy's competitiveness, to maximise social well being.

There have been many individual goals, all of them equally important: fighting unemployment; helping young people's professional integration; providing means for the improvement of the workforce's qualifications and skills; promoting gender equality and the social integration of persons with disability, mental retardation or mental illnesses; combating discriminations; integrating into the labour market migrants, refugees and other social groups, either threatened by exclusion or, living in the margins of society.

Actions or programmes that were planned and implemented cover a wide range of fields with a national or local dimension; actions on employment, education, health, research, public administration, tourism, industry; programmes addressed to unemployed, employed, young persons, women, minors, elderly people, scientists, researchers, entrepreneurs; programmes addressed to migrants, repatriates, refugees, persons with physical or mental disability, to single parents, detainees or discharged from prison, former drug users; programmes for people residing in distant mountainous or island regions or/and people whose cultural or religious views vary from the mainstream opinion and hence 'constitute' a minority.

In all areas of the country, central or decentralized government bodies, entrepreneurs or/and citizens offered their contribution, each from their own position, to this gigantic task. Executives and members of staff who undertook the responsibility to carry this through, have done their best to improve the lives of their co-citizens, sometimes by improvising, within the limits set by rules and procedures.

New systems have been established, fresh methodologies were proposed; new IT tools were created. Furthermore, new legislation and administrative provisions have been formulated as well as new organizations have been set up such as the Management Organization Unit, the Managing Authorities, Beneficiaries, and other bodies such as KPA, KIFI, KDAP, KEK, EKEPIS, PAEP and so on.

Negotiations, agreements, revisions of objectives and programmes, resource

management, actions for monitoring and control, evaluation of policies and actions, publicity and information campaigns, support to all through technical assistance. This has been a difficult and at times, cumbersome work to carry through. Nevertheless, it also brought along great challenges for the future of citizens.

New attitudes, different stereotypes, bureaucratic jargon entered our everyday life; conflicts between the old and the new, the fresh European dimension against the well established national one; success and failure, hidden expectations, wishes and feelings: how to bring a change into the life of every citizen, to improve their living conditions, to eliminate discrimination from society, to provide equal opportunities to all; and finally to make this investment pay off.

This publication does not aspire to present the final outcome of the huge venture Greece overtook and implemented, with the co-finance by the European Social Fund; that would have been a rather different project.

We are only presenting indicatively and to the extent that such a small publication allows, some innovative examples of the European Social Fund actions that have been implemented in 2000-2006 under the 3rd Community Support Framework and the Community Initiative "Equal".

Our aim is to highlight the potential these European Social Fund programmes have in changing the lives of people who participate in them, to offer something new in the area of implementation or in the sector they refer to.

All these years we learnt that personal experience has more value than a thousand words. So, browsing these pages the reader will have the opportunity to 'listen' to what Katerina, Constantinos, Argyro, Markos, Ali, Olga said on how their lives have changed.

Acknowledgments

We would like to extend our sincere thanks to the executives of the Managing Authorities and the ESF Actions Co-ordination and Monitoring Authority for the time they dedicated to this and the information they provided us with; the members of staff of the organizations that implement ESF actions, for the photographs and their contribution in facilitating our contact with citizens; the citizens themselves for contributing with their personal experience from ESF programmes.

ON THE EUROPEAN SOCIAL FUND

The European Social Fund, ESF, the oldest fund of the European Union aims for over 50 years at helping people to find a job and to improve their skills.

Ever since 1988, with the social orientation of EU established, ESF contributes as a Structural Fund to a wider strategic programme for the development of each member state. In Greece, a country with significant structural problems and low development levels, ESF has been investing considerably since 1981.

In the 1st Community Support Framework (1989-1993) it contributed, with some hesitant steps, to the fight against unemployment, while in the 2nd Community Support Framework (1994-1995), it supported the improvement of the workforce's skills and the socially vulnerable groups to enter the labour market.

In the 3rd Community Support Framework (2000-2006), ESF has taken a common course with the other EU Structural Funds in implementing the European strategy on development, employment and social cohesion, known as the Lisbon strategy.

In this period, ESF and the Greek State's strategic goals and policies have been aiming at combating inherent weaknesses in the development of human resources. All actions, amounting to €6,12 billion, have been materialized through 19 Operational Programmes of the Community Support Framework 2000-2006 and the Community Initiative Equal.

In the field of *employment*, 27,8% of the resources has been allocated to creating new jobs, to facilitating young persons to find a job, to support unemployed to re-enter the labour market.

Aiming to *equal opportunities for all*, 16,5% of resources has been allocated to individuals belonging to socially vulnerable groups, to integrate into society and become employable.

In the field of *improving skills of employees*, so as to meet the challenges of modern day conditions, 42,4% of resources has been allocated to programmes on education, vocational training, life long learning, as well as programmes reinforcing entrepreneurship and other sectors of economy.

The increase of *women's participation in the labour market* has been a particular objective for which 13,3% of resources has been allocated to actions addressed

either directly to women or to family members women take care of, so that they can seek employment.

Ever since 2007, ESF is co-financing programmes in Greece on employment, health, education and public administration through the Operational Programmes of the National Strategic Reference Framework (ESPA) 2007-2013 incorporating the EU shared vision for “A social Europe in the global economy: jobs and equal opportunities for all”.



More and better jobs for all





The goal to “fight unemployment” or to “create new jobs” is not just a strategic priority but it also constitutes a fundamental principle for the European Social Fund.

A few years ago, policies selected for its implementation were mainly passive actions directed to unemployment benefits.

In 2000-2006, the need to adapt a wider social perspective aiming at the prevention of unemployment was an urgent necessity. Active policies on employment were set, such as the individual approach to unemployed persons, motives to companies to create new jobs, etc.

Emphasis was placed to groups affected the most from unemployment, women and young people; furthermore, the programmes began to address long term unemployed, new entrants to the labour market and persons of older age.

Active employment policies were: subsidizing of Young Self Employed; subsidizing New Jobs in the private sector; creating internship working experience programmes; adopting the individual approach to the unemployed through the Employment Promotion Centres of the Greek Manpower Employment Organization; providing vocational training programmes for the unemployed, especially on Information and Communication Technologies. Individuals with limited employment opportunities were the major beneficiaries of these programmes.

Programmes of an integrated approach were implemented at local level. This was an important new experience as they contributed in embedding a culture of cooperation between local agents in the effort to fight unemployment. Such programmes were the Local Employment Initiatives, the Integrated Urban Development Initiatives and the Integrated Rural Development Programmes.

Available resources for these programmes amounted to €1,7 billion, 62% of which was allocated by the Operational Programme «Employment and Vocational Training 2000-2006» and the remaining by 13 «Regional Operational Programmes 2000-2006» and the OP «Information Society 2000-2006».

Today, within the economic crisis these policies are still as crucial as ever.

Young Self Employed Scientists

■ Since 2006, the programme Young Self Employed has offered grants for the promotion of self employment of scientists (lawyers, medical doctors, engineers, pharmacists etc) of up to 40 years of age, aiming at the establishment of small enterprises relevant to their profession.

This grant amounted to 12.000€ paid by the Greek Manpower Employment Organization within a year following their participation in the programme, and according to the progress made in the respective business plan.

Through this programme, all Young Self Employed scientists could acquire the necessary equipment, and organize or upgrade their businesses.

■ The outcome of this programme has been quite successful as self employment is an important lever for combating unemployment of young people in a difficult and competitive environment.

A total of 2.830 young scientists from all parts of Greece participated in this programme and hence acquired significant perspectives for a successful professional career. Based on a survey carried out by the Ministry of Labour for the previous programme Young Self Employed (2005), one year after their participation, the following outcomes were found:



■ One of the surgeries funded by the programme

- 74% of them were still self-employed,
- approximately 63% of the programme's beneficiaries stated that their turnover or profits were either stable or rising,
- in every new business an average of 0,5 additional jobs was created with a positive impact to employment.

*«Cardiograms are not enough for a cardiologist...
through this programme I got new devices
for ultrasound, stress-test...
I set up my surgery all over again...»*

SOCRATES K.
Medical doctor, cardiologist

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OPERATIONAL PROGRAMME Employment & Vocational Training 2000-2006 **MEASURE 4.1** Support to unemployed persons for self employment and establishment of new enterprises **IMPLEMENTATION AREA** Greece-nationwide **IMPLEMENTATION BODY** Greek Manpower Employment Organization **BUDGET** 32.920.465€ **DURATION** 2006-2009 **TARGET GROUP** Young unemployed graduates

ICT seminars for unemployed persons and in military service

■ This project included 100 hour training programmes for the acquisition of basic skills in Information and Communication Technology. These programmes were realized by the accredited Vocational Training Centres aiming at improving the participants' digital literacy.

Trainees had the opportunity to familiarize with the basic applications of computers such as text processing, data bases, spreadsheets, presentations, data and communication management over the Internet. Hence, their access both to information society and to the labour market was improved significantly.

An important aspect of this training programme was the compulsory sitting in the certification examination carried out by independent organizations on the basis of internationally recognized standards. In this way, participants acquired recognized and competitive qualifications towards sustainable employment.

■ A total of 18.000 unemployed elementary, secondary and post-secondary education graduates took part, 60% of whom were women. Also 2.000 men participated during their military service.

Of all trainees 62% participated successfully to the certification examination and were awarded the relevant certificate, while 14% entered the labour market.





«I knew nothing about information technology. While serving in the army, the commandant gave me the idea to attend one of those free of charge training seminars... Now, at work, I use a computer every day and I think it is a valuable tool for all».

CHRISTOS G.
Chalkida, Evia



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OPERATIONAL PROGRAMME Information Society 2000-2006 **MEASURE 3.4** Human resources skills upgrading **IMPLEMENTATION AREA** Greece-nationwide **IMPLEMENTATION BODY** ESF Actions Implementation Authority **BUDGET** 18.152.216€ **DURATION** June 2003 - December 2003 **TARGET GROUPS** Unemployed, Vulnerable social groups, Individuals in military service in mountainous or distant areas

Intervention on the old town of Xanthi

■ The project «Protection, Restoration and Development of the Old Town of Xanthi» aimed at improving the quality of every day life for the citizens of Xanthi's old town, a historical town centre. Due to high unemployment rates, especially for women, low educational level as well as the different cultural profiles of its population, the restoration of the old town was set as a priority. An additional aim was to encourage an extrovert attitude of its citizens, promote their socialization, as well as their integration in the labour market.

Programmes implemented included training on reconstruction techniques and promotion of traditional housing developments, use of new technologies as well as modern greek language courses. Many actions aimed at raising awareness of the residents and highlighting the role of the city as an historical hub.

The Network of Balkan Towns with historical centres was developed through the programme and is in operation ever since. Along with the historical archive of Xanthi they constitute actions that revitalized the city's financial activities, attracted new investors, improved frequency of visits, highlighted its cultural profile, invigorated employment and improved the citizens' cultural life.

«Through this programme we managed to present all the possibilities for creating and retaining jobs in an area with particular difficulties due to its historical character».

CHRISTINA TAVOULDZIDOU
ESF executive officer



■ View
of Xanthi's
Old Town

■ This project contributed in improving the extrovert attitude of Xanthi's old town by integrating it into international networks of touristic and cultural interest, by invigorating entrepreneurial activity and revitalizing the area. There has been an important impact on employment as 23 new viable work positions have been created; 85 persons participated in professional experience programmes while 8 persons set up their own businesses on touristic or cultural activities.

At the same time the Network of Balkan Towns, as a specialized agency of Balkan self government authorities in south eastern Europe for the protection and promotion of historical centres, supports inter-Balkan cooperation and economic development in the area.



■ View of Xanthi's Old Town

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REGIONAL OPERATIONAL PROGRAMME Eastern Macedonia -Thrace 2000-2006 **MEASURE 4.3** Integrated Interventions for Urban Development **IMPLEMENTATION AREA** Prefecture of Xanthi **IMPLEMENTATION BODY** Intermediate Managing Authority for the Region of Eastern Macedonia -Thrace **BUDGET** 2.427.710€ **DURATION** May 2004 - November 2008 **TARGET GROUPS** Unemployed, Self employed, Employed, Groups with cultural idiosyncrasies

Networking for promoting employment in Mainland Greece

■ The project «Horizontal actions for the support of Local Employment Initiatives in Mainland Greece» included an innovative network for training and upgrading the skills of individuals who participated in employment initiatives in the Region of Mainland Greece.

The training was based on the website www.sterea-tpa.gr which offered a number of services such as on-line teaching tool HR-learning, a training tool for business simulation v-business, an application for job search for the unemployed and businesses, a forum for the implementation organizations, where the involved actors had the opportunity to receive support for their work.

In addition, technical meetings took place as well as educational missions in Greece and abroad and one-day conferences that contributed in upgrading skills of executives from the Local Employment Initiatives (LEI). Through the implementation of LEI, cooperation between local actors and agents was further reinforced and significant ties with the local community were developed with the aim to combat unemployment in Mainland Greece.

*«Local Employment Initiatives should not be dealt
in a technocratic and impersonal way...*

*They are based on cooperation and human relations which
are developing among agencies, executives and beneficiaries!*

*In Mainland Greece we manage to establish the kind of
relations that will help us attain our common goal:
a small group of people that aspires to reduce
unemployment in our area!»*

VANA GIANNAKAKI
Publicity officer

“Local Employment Initiative-Fthiotida” Business Plan



■ This initiative has been an innovative idea for improving the quality of training. It has set new standards for people who are involved in implementing local actions for employment.



■ Executives from Local Employment Initiatives receiving training on consulting and other supportive services



■ From the one-day conference 'Best practices on networking in LEI' in Mainland Greece

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REGIONAL OPERATIONAL PROGRAMME Mainland Greece 2000-2006 **MEASURE 5.3** Local Employment Initiatives **IMPLEMENTATION AREA** Mainland Greece **IMPLEMENTATION BODY** Development Company of the Prefecture of Fthiotida SA **BUDGET** 198.435€ **DURATION** December 2006 - January 2009 **TARGET GROUPS** Unemployed, Employed, Vulnerable social groups, Employment consultants, Local government executives, Companies, Trade associations, Local authorities

Employment Process at Archanes, Crete

■ This project was implemented in the Prefecture of Heraklion in Crete, a region suffering from particular social and economic problems.

The project adopted a holistic approach in fighting unemployment at the local level. The objective was to place people of the relevant target groups in the labour market of the Prefecture of Heraklion. The first step was to identify the employment needs. Then, each unemployed person was offered consulting services in order to build up their professional profile and become employable. Unemployed individuals belonging to vulnerable groups were offered the opportunity to increase their skills and to face immediate social needs.

This experience reinforced employment policies for people having difficulties entering the labour market. Local Government's involvement facilitated the process to employment, as it is the institution which is closer to citizens.

■ Positive outputs were: the creation of new jobs, the development of new businesses and finally the improvement of the participants qualifications.

Specifically, out of 121 unemployed individuals who took part in the programme, 81 managed to find a job, and most importantly, 36 of them set up their own business.



■ A new business set up by the programme fund



■ A new business set up by the programme fund



«I've been unemployed for six years before setting up this car trading business... For years I had been thinking about setting up my own business, but I really don't know if I would have made it, if it hadn't been for this programme. We are in business 3 years now and we are doing fine».

KATERINA A.
Archanes, Crete



■ A new business set up by the programme fund

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REGIONAL OPERATIONAL PROGRAMME Crete 2000-2006 **MEASURE 6.3** Local Employment Initiatives **IMPLEMENTATION AREA** Municipality of Archanes **IMPLEMENTATION BODY** Municipality of Archanes **BUDGET** 1.111.465€ **DURATION** February 2004 - December 2008 **TARGET GROUPS** Young unemployed, Women in disadvantaged position, Migrants

**Towards a society
of equal opportunities**







Equal opportunities for all within the labour market, especially for those who are threatened by social exclusion; this is an objective and a precondition for the well being of all societies. What this entails is fighting discrimination on the grounds of gender, disability, origin, religious beliefs and sexual orientation, confronting marginalization and social exclusion, eliminating poverty.

In 2000-2006, efforts put forth reached the vulnerable population groups, the elderly, the mentally ill, and people with disability.

The implemented actions operated as a cohesive network for the social integration and protection of vulnerable groups. Intercultural schools were established, additional teaching support programmes were set up addressed to students who fail or drop out from education. At the same time, teachers were offered special seminars on teaching persons with disability.

Particular emphasis was given to migrants and refugees through the provision of greek language courses. This has helped them in entering the labour market and improving their social inclusion.

In the area of mental health, interventions have been significant. The creation of de-institutionalization units for the mentally ill has been a fresh breath to both beneficiaries and their families.

Special care has been given to greek roma's access to social services, education and health services through the operation of Socio-medical Centres in local communities.

These programmes have been financed with €1 billion, 67,6% allocated by the Operation Programmes «Education & Initial Vocational Training 2000-2006» and «Employment & Vocational Training 2000-2006». The OP «Health Welfare 2000-2006» had an important contribution amounting to 17,7%, while the Community Initiative Equal contributed another 14%. It should be noted that the OP «Information Society 2000-2006» has also been involved with a number of actions.

With these programmes, the standards were set at a high level, but there is still much to be done to change attitudes and stereotypes.

Greek Language Courses

■ The provision of modern greek language courses have been one of the most substantial interventions for the social inclusion of greek repatriates, migrants, refugees and unemployed persons facing the risk of social exclusion due to their inadequate knowledge of greek.

These programmes were implemented in accredited Vocational Training Centres all over the country, with an average duration of 300 hours, aiming at the improvement of linguistic and social skills.

An important innovation of this programme was the attainment of the certificate in greek (2nd level) provided by the Centre for the Greek Language of the Ministry of Education.

*«I am a Greek from the former Soviet Union and very proud of it!
I am glad I had the opportunity to learn greek
through this programme. I love greek; it is the oldest
known language in the world.
Learning greek helps my every day living in Greece,
communicating with my people and reading
the New Testament which was written in greek».*

CONSTANTINOS T.

■ This programme had an important contribution in fighting unemployment and social exclusion faced by vulnerable groups due to their limited linguistic skills in the greek language. Participants were able to improve:

- their written and oral expression,
- their ability to respond in communication situations requiring exchange of information (dealing with the public sector),
- their ability to attend vocational training courses,
- their integration in society and in the labour market.

In these programmes 12.719 persons participated all over Greece and 8.819 of them were awarded the Certificate of Attainment in Greek (2nd level).

Dear Director,

This has been a good seminar. We learnt a lot of things about the manners and the customs of Greece. For me it was particularly important because when I first came to the seminar I knew nothing, understood nothing and now I have made lots of progress. I can understand when others speak greek and I can even write in greek, although I still make some mistakes.

For all these, I thank you
Ariana



■ Course
on the greek
language

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OPERATIONAL PROGRAMME Employment & Vocational Training 2000-2006 **MEASURE 2.1** Supportive and preparatory (pre-training) as well as accompanying actions for the promotion of equal opportunities **IMPLEMENTATION AREA** Greece-nationwide **IMPLEMENTATION BODY** ESF Actions Implementation Authority **BUDGET** 38.658.935€ **DURATION** November 2002-December 2003 & September 2006-December 2007 **TARGET GROUPS** Unemployed repatriated greeks, migrants, refugees, Unemployed persons with inadequate knowledge of the greek language

Social Cooperatives of Limited Liability

■ Social Cooperatives of Limited Liability¹ constitute an innovative form of Social Entrepreneurship. It is a way to encourage the socialization of individuals who face mental and social problems while at the same time mental health professionals support them.

Social cooperatives are productive and trading units, at the same time they operate as Mental Health units supervised by the Directorate for Mental Health of the Ministry of Health.

The institution of Social Cooperatives of Limited Liability has been incorporated in everyday practice and procedures of Mental Hospitals under the framework of the reform carried out by the National Action Plan "Psychargos". Hence a new approach is being introduced that reinforces actions of social inclusion of vulnerable population groups. In this way, they have a therapeutic impact on participants' mental health as they link therapeutic process with employment.

■ Social Cooperative 'Car Wash', Chania



■ The Social Cooperative of Limited Liability in Chania Crete is a representative example of a successful cooperative with multiple activities where mental patients operate: car wash facilities in the premises of the Mental Hospital of Chania and the Chania General Hospital; a canteen in the premises of the Chania Mental Health Centre; a commercial shop with folk art and traditional cretan products in the Municipal Market and a warehouse-workshop for cretan diet products.

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■ Social Cooperative 'Cretan diet products workshop', Chania



1. Introduced by the Law 2716/1999, as public law institutions, with limited responsibility of their members.



7

Towards a society of equal opportunities

■ A total of 14 Social Cooperatives have been set up in seven Regions of Greece, and more than 200 individuals have benefited by participating in both the operation and the administration of each Cooperative.

Apart from the therapeutic impact on health and employment, the objectives of the "Psychargos" programme are actually achieved as mental patients are de-institutionalized and become productive members of society.

Through this new form of self-organization, where persons with mental health problems work along with professionals, the social economy sector in Greece was supported and social economic targets were achieved.



■ A former inmate of a psychiatric hospital shows to EU Commissioner Špidla the chains with which he was tied twenty years ago while confined (Chania, 2009)

«At first I refused to accept that I am sick and I need help. Later on, I got scared, I accepted medical help and I was saved... Now my job is satisfactory and my life has changed radically...»

GEORGIA CH.
Employee in Social Cooperative, Corfu



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OPERATIONAL PROGRAMME Health Welfare 2000-2006 **MEASURE 2.3** Preventive actions and actions to strengthen socio-economic integration **IMPLEMENTATION AREA** Regions of Central Macedonia, Ionian islands, Western Greece, Mainland Greece, Attica, Northern Aegean, Crete **IMPLEMENTATION BODIES** Mental health public law institutions, Non Governmental Organizations **BUDGET** 4.300.000€ **DURATION** 2006-2009 **TARGET GROUP** Individuals with mental health problems



Social Supportive Services Network

■ The Social Supportive Services Network is an innovative approach dealing with social integration needs of vulnerable groups. The basic strategy of the network was to decentralise welfare and social solidarity services of the Ministry of Health and assign them to Municipalities bringing them closer to citizens.

The network operates on the basis of Social Supportive Service Offices in elected Local Government Organizations in Greece. These offices provide specialized services to vulnerable groups, linking them with other local structures such as Employment Promotion Centres, social service units, Vocational Training Centres, health and welfare services.

One of the most innovative qualities has been the development and use of shared software (dkyy.gr) so as to monitor the network nationwide and per office.

■ This project has very satisfactory results. A total of 140 Social Supportive Services Offices have been set up in municipalities and they have served more than 80.000 persons.

More than 350 social scientists have been employed at these Offices, offering their services of more than 900.000 man-hours to persons who are threatened by or living in social exclusion.



■ ... at last,
here we go!!!



«I was working in a large company for more than 26 years and suddenly I got fired; I lost the earth under my feet... I knew that it would be very difficult to find another job because of my age... At the Social Supportive Services Office I met people with understanding, they offered me psychological support, they helped me find a job, stand on my own feet again... Now I feel happy. It is very important to be of use to society!»

CHRISTINA G., 54



■ Integrated intervention of the de-institutionalization and social integration of young people with disability, Thessaloniki

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OPERATIONAL PROGRAMME Health Welfare 2000-2006 **MEASURE 3.1** Actions for the support of persons threatened with exclusion or excluded from the labour market within the context of actions of the social supportive services network at a local level **IMPLEMENTATION AREA** Greece–nationwide **IMPLEMENTATION BODIES** Companies of Local Government Organizations, Local organizations of public and private law **BUDGET** 9.500.000€ **DURATION** 2002-2008 **TARGET GROUPS** Socially vulnerable individuals: People with disability, Single parent families, Abused women, Former prisoners, Former drug users, Groups with cultural and religious idiosyncrasies, Greek roma, Homeless, Greek repatriates, Foreigners, etc



Guide of Accessible Leisure Activities in Greece

■ The Guide of Accessible Leisure Activities in Greece was published in 10.000 copies and was inspired by the idea that disability and the use of a wheelchair does not always constitute an obstacle to travel.

This Guide aims to improve the quality of life of people with disability and to offer them the opportunity to participate in social activities. It includes useful practical information on the accessibility of sites of touristic and cultural interest as well as of leisure activities offered in Greece such as:

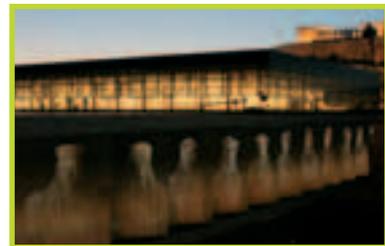
- hotels, restaurants, cafes
- museums, archaeological sites
- theatres, cinemas, shopping malls
- sports facilities
- health services such as hospitals, health centres.

The Guide covers 59 greek cities, namely the capitals of each prefecture and other cities of particular touristic interest.

Interested parties can find a printed copy of the Guide at the offices of the National Confederation of People with Disability in Athens and at its branches in Thessaloniki, Patras and Heraklion, while, its on-line version can be found at www.esaea.gr/odigos/.



■ Monastery of Panagia Vlahernon, Corfu



■ The Acropolis Museum

■ This publication constitutes a useful source of information for all people with disability and their families. It refers to the services and accessibility of many places of interest, either social, cultural or historical so that everyone, according to their specific needs, can decide whether services provided are satisfactory or not.

This Guide has attracted particular attention as even within the first six months of circulation more than 800 people had visited the relevant web page.

«This Guide is a useful tool for people with disability and their families who wish to travel and see Greece, assuring their right of personal choice with reliability and trustworthiness.

This initiative should be spread and it should be legally binding for Greeks as well as foreign visitors with disability. Our aim is to bring in the limelight the social and economic importance of accessible tourism in Greece».

I. VARDAKASTANIS

President, National Confederation of People with Disability



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OPERATIONAL PROGRAMME Health Welfare 2000-2006 **MEASURE 3.2** Inclusion of people with disability to the socio-economic life **IMPLEMENTATION AREA** Greece-nationwide **IMPLEMENTATION BODY** National Confederation of People with Disability **BUDGET** 274.010€ **DURATION** 2007-2008 **TARGET GROUP** People with disability

ESTIA, electronic network for asylum seekers

■ ESTIA¹ is an online network of organizations such as Non Governmental Organizations, local government and social partners which specialize in offering services addressed to refugees and asylum seekers in general. It was set up by National Youth Foundation.

Before the networking via ESTIA, each organization operated separately with the end result of the overlapping of responsibilities among them, as well as delays.

ESTIA network is not just a single data base but is also a tool that helps officers from the participating organizations to solve issues pertaining to refugees, as they can track the progress of each case. In addition, it is an important source of information for the evaluation of the needs and the efficiency of each participating organization as to the services they provide.

Via ESTIA, costs are eliminated for each organization since problems are solved based on the expertise of each one. This results in solving problems efficiently and each body developing the services of its specialty (one-stop-shop).

■ ESTIA network has been linked with 90% of the Non Governmental Organizations as well as the Reception Centres offering services to refugees and asylum seekers. Indicatively, participating organizations include local government authorities such as the Prefectures of Samos, Lesvos, Chios, Evros and Piraeus, local agencies such as the Heraklion Chamber of Commerce, Universities such as the Modern Greek Language Teaching Centre of the University of Athens. It should be noted that selective access has been granted to the Ministries of Citizen Protection and of Health and the High Commissioner of United Nations for Refugees in Greece.

As a result from the operation of this network, indicatively:

- 160 persons attended modern greek language courses,
- 110 women and 330 men received legal aid,
- 2.712 persons received individual consulting, psychological and medical services,
- 35 women and 187 men were promoted to employment.

1. ESTIA network has been ranked among the 3 best practices of Community Initiative Equal at european level following assessment by EU experts; it has been presented at the International Conference of the Directorate-General for Employment and Social Affairs on 1 April 2004 in Dublin, Ireland. The network has also been licensed by the Hellenic Data Protection Authority to keep personal data records (license number 671, 672, 673).

«The first time I visited an agency for help, they asked for my approval to record my case on the ESTIA data base... They asked me questions about my life, my job, where I live, what my problems are... Then they advised me which organizations I should visit, they arranged an appointment for me, they gave me a piece of paper from the computer, "reference" they call it. When I went to the second agency, I was not asked the same things again; they were actually expecting me and all they did was to try to find ways to help me with the problem I was facing...»

SERGE K.
from Kongo



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COMMUNITY INITIATIVE EQUAL MEASURE 5.1.2 Supporting the social and vocational integration of asylum seekers **IMPLEMENTATION AREA** Eastern Macedonia-Thrace, Central Macedonia, Attica, Peloponnesus, North Aegean, Crete **IMPLEMENTATION BODY** National Youth Foundation **BUDGET** 1.564.921€ **DURATION** 2002-2008 **TARGET GROUPS** Asylum seekers, refugees and migrants, Organizations offering services to these population groups

DREAM - Discrimination Racism Equality And Media

■ The «Discrimination Racism Equality And Media» network for the fight against racism and xenophobia in the media, aimed to inform the greek society of the fundamental principle «All different - All equal», in the effort to bring down the stereotypes that make it difficult for people facing racism to have access to the labour market.

The Network included the setting up of Antiracist Intervention Centres with the support of Local Government, which offered services to people subjected to racist behaviour as well as raising awareness of the wider public and the mass media.

An important action was the production of two methodological educational guides concerning multiculturalism and diversity in the Mass Media enterprises, as well as for the media employees.

The “Equality Audit in the Media” guide addresses journalists, cameramen, and reporters and presents the ways and rules for achieving objective, equal and fair representation for all social groups in the Media, while the “Code for the promotion of diversity in the Media” addresses owners of television channels, newspapers and radio broadcasters and gives advice on developing a project for the promotion of diversity in the Media business.

■ The Antiracist Intervention Centres offered consulting services and protection from discrimination to 4.200 persons and 47 greek roma communities subjected to racist behaviour.



■ Practice at the radio station 'Sport radio'



■ Practice at the radio station 'Ciao FM'

The guides have been applied in six greek media organizations of 700 employees, including the Macedonian Press Agency, Hellenic Radio Television 3 and regional television channels. Aiming at their best possible use, these guides have been sent to 50 newspapers, 35 television channels and 4 associations of media employees all over Greece.

«...Through Equal-Dream programme I had the opportunity to do my practice at ET3 television channel where I acquired the whole picture of television broadcasting, as well as documentaries and newscasts... Then I had the opportunity to work at ET3 and there I put all my efforts to contribute in providing valid information to my compatriots of greek origin».

MARIA P.
Repatriated from the former Soviet Union



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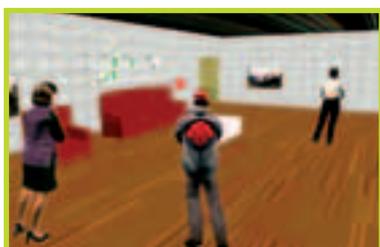
COMMUNITY INITIATIVE EQUAL MEASURE 1.2 Fighting against racism and xenophobia in the labour market **IMPLEMENTATION AREA** Central Macedonia, Thessaly, Attica **IMPLEMENTATION BODY** "DIMITRA" Institute of Training and Development SA **BUDGET** 1.703.008€ **DURATION** 2001-2005 **TARGET GROUPS** Persons subjected to racism, Employees and Owners of mass media

Resist

■ This project, an integrated intervention, focused on drug prevention and the consequences of drug abuse. This initiative addressed parents as well as young people, high school students in the Municipality of Kalamaria, Thessaloniki.

Printed material was produced, one day conferences were organized and parent, adolescent and post-adolescent groups were formed, in which specialized experts participated addressing the issues of; education, family relations, prevention of anti-social behavior and substance abuse.

A particularly innovative action was the development of an educational video game entitled Resist¹. This video game addresses young people aged 12-18, in greek and in english, and deals with concepts on prevention as well as offering valid information on the use of tobacco, alcohol, pills and excessive use of the internet and the computer. Individuals that participated in the project took also an active part in formulating the game. Resist does not intend to 'tie down' people involved in it as other video games do; instead, it offers options so that players can create their own versions.



■ 'RESIST'
video game

«I like it because each time I can give a different turn to the game and see new ways to react. Each reaction has consequences I had never thought of».

MARKOS L.

1. RESIST received the European Drug Prevention Prize in November 2008 in Warsaw, Poland. Moreover, RESIST has been certified by the Greek Organization Against Drugs (OKANA) as material for the prevention of drug abuse.

■ The results are the active participation of young people and their parents, and the raising awareness on the issue of drug abuse. To this effect, new technologies were employed and the videogame has its own web site at www.resist.transludic.net where visitors can interact giving their views and discussing issues formulated along with the blog administrators.



■ 'RESIST'
video game



■ 'RESIST'
video game

«Resist is an innovative way to talk about how to avoid the use of drugs without any boring lecturing».

VASSO T.

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REGIONAL OPERATIONAL PROGRAMME Central Macedonia 2000-2006 **MEASURE 3.9** Integrated Urban Development Interventions **IMPLEMENTATION AREA** Phinikas, Kalamaria **IMPLEMENTATION BODY** 'ELPIDA' Drug-Abuse Prevention Centre **BUDGET** 67.498€ **DURATION** January 2006 - June 2007 **TARGET GROUPS** Adolescents & post-adolescents, Young people, Parents, Groups threatened by drug abuse

Socio-medical Centres for Roma



■ Living in the margins of society, harassed and stigmatized even before they are born, greek roma struggle to survive. Socio-medical Centres offer them a full range of services contributing in this way to the effort to deal with the intense social exclusion roma face; that is, violation of their fundamental and basic rights, such as civil status, health, social welfare services, employment and education.

These Centres were established in areas with large roma populations offering necessary services and assuring humane living conditions such as information on issues of personal and group hygiene, access to health services, vaccinations, first aid training, support to children and their families for school enrollment and attendance, information on rights for social security benefits, access to employment and entrepreneurship.

■ The Socio-medical Centres constitute one of the most important interventions that were implemented for the improvement of the living conditions of greek roma and for promoting their social integration.



■ Roma children involved in creative activities with their educator



■ Roma children during creative activities

A total of 33 Socio-medical Centres have been established with a capacity to offer services approximately to more than 45.000 greek roma, 29,2% of whom are children. Until today, these Centres have catered for more than 39.060 incidents related to medical and social care services.

The cooperation of Socio-Medical Centres with state agencies and institutions -welfare, hospitals and employment- renders them intermediate and functional structures and enables them to offer local support to the roma population and to intervene in the local community.



■ Excursion to Makrynitsa of the Women's Club from the Socio-medical Centre of Magnesia



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REGIONAL OPERATIONAL PROGRAMMES 2000-2006, MEASURES Local Employment Initiatives & Urban Development Integrated Interventions **IMPLEMENTATION AREA** Eastern Macedonia-Thrace, Central Macedonia, Thessaly, Ionian islands, Western Greece, Mainland Greece, Attica, Crete **IMPLEMENTATION BODIES** Municipal Enterprises, Non Governmental Organizations **BUDGET** 10.207.351€ **DURATION** 2005 - 2008 **TARGET GROUP** Greek roma

■ In an area of intense social issues and a large concentration of roma population, the Municipality of Acharnes in Attica developed through ESF funding a Centre for the Support of Vulnerable Social Groups, as well as a Socio-medical Centre. These constitute a tangible proof of the efforts put forth by local governments to reverse the status quo and to support the vulnerable group of roma, by protecting their health and their social integration.

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■ Vaccination of roma children at Agia Sotira settlement

«At the Socio-medical centre I got help for my child who faced difficulties at school... the teacher (a specialized educator) has a very good relationship with George and he has helped him a lot».

ARGYRO M.



■ Blood sugar and cholesterol test on roma children at Avliza settlement

«After giving birth to my children I had never visited a doctor... it's a good thing they have a doctor there... and she's a woman too ... she examined me... From now on I'll do my screening tests and I'll take care of myself...»

OLGA N.



■ The Socio-medical Centre of the Municipal Welfare Organization of Nea Ionia, Magnesia, gave a new breath to attempts aiming at the social integration of roma people at the Aliveri settlement. Through the services provided to 1.500 residents, 300 of whom children, the Centre managed to reach a wary population and prove to them that the State and its authorities take actions for improving their lives!

For the first time, claims for State discriminatory treatment against roma people were filed to greek Ombudsman's office.

Social services were offered to 1.140 roma persons. All the children of the settlement have been registered with the registry office or municipal register and vaccination has been administered. Their families have been convinced of the importance of education for their children.

Medical care has been offered to 930 persons. Women were offered health services for the first time as the Centre cooperates with the Volos Hospital on gynecological screening tests.

Roma women set up the Women's Club, organizing for the first time their social life.

Change has become reality!

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«We, the women of Aliveri, set up a women's club at the Centre and we meet there every day... this is where I learnt to read and write and I can now help my children with their homework... I learnt how to fill in the applications for my welfare benefits on my own...»

MARIA T.

«This is the first time in my life that I have a regular job and regular salary... Because of my job at the Socio-medical Centre I attended Second Opportunity High School and with the rom housing loan I bought a flat in the centre of the town... Other women at the settlement want to change their lives as I did...»

IRINI F.

The Centre's Intermediator

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Towards a society of equal opportunities



■ Roma children from the Aliveri settlement, Volos

Improving knowledge and skills for all





The rapid technological development and the rearrangement of technological production in Europe have a crucial impact on employment. The demands of the labour market are increasing and render necessary the adjustment of companies and employees to the new developments.

Early enough it was decided to implement a cohesive strategy that would upgrade knowledge and skills of the country's workforce and would improve the low level of technological achievements and productivity by adjusting them to the new conditions.

Actions focused on the modernization of education and training systems, on life long learning programmes, on the adaptability of employees to technological progress in order to become competitive, productive and responsive to the increased demands of the labour market.

New programmes on the environment, information technology, special education and careers counselling were introduced in schools; post secondary studies were linked to the labour market needs, and higher education studies curricula have been improved.

Training programmes for employees, self employed and entrepreneurs have been designed and implemented on vital areas, as well as on the sector of mental and public health, welfare and the public sector. New technologies were used in the majority of cases.

The foundations were laid for vocational training certification and the establishment of a life learning system in Greece that will offer knowledge and skills according to the needs and demands of the labour market.

Resources amounting to €2,6 billion were allocated, mostly in the Community Support Framework 2000-2006 Operational Programmes; 60% allocated by OP «Education & Initial Vocational Training 2000-2006»; important contributions were provided by OP «Employment & Vocational Training 2000-2006», «Information Society 2000-2006» and «Competitiveness 2000-2006», while remarkable actions were carried out by OP «Health Welfare 2000-2006» and the 13 «Regional Operational Programmes 2000-2006».

Environmental courses in schools

■ This project concerns 4.725 programmes on «Environmental Education in Schools» throughout the country. With the participation of teachers and students of primary and secondary education, this has been a large scale intervention. It focused on providing information on the protection of the environment and contributed in sensitizing young people about ecological issues.

Under the guidance of the University of the Aegean, teachers developed innovative educational programmes aiming at instilling to students values, attitudes, knowledge and skills for diagnosing, preventing and handling major environmental issues. Hence, students' awareness was raised, as they realized the complexity and importance of environmental issues.

■ Within the context of the “Environmental Education in Schools” programme 14.020 teachers were trained and 140.960 students of primary and secondary education participated.



■ Active environmental awareness from pupils in Lesvos



■ Pupils in Zakynthos demonstrating for environmental issues



■ Pupils in Zakynthos demonstrating for environmental issues

*«It was so nice...
when the environment classes
were over that year,
we put on our T-shirts
with the slogan "green gives
life" and we marched
through the city...
because society does not
act as it should...
I, for one, have stopped
throwing wrappings
on the street».*

ANASTASIA K.
High school fresher, Zakynthos

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Improving knowledge and skills for all

OPERATIONAL PROGRAMME Education and Initial Vocational Training 2000-2006 **MEASURE 2.6** Programmes on Environmental Protection and Environmental Training **IMPLEMENTATION AREA** Greece-nationwide **IMPLEMENTATION BODY** University of the Aegean **DURATION** November 2002 - December 2006 **BUDGET** 12.731.000€ **TARGET GROUPS** Students & Teachers in primary and secondary education

'E-ducate' for students

■ The project «e-ducate» provided support to training and certification of higher education students in New Technologies and Digital Applications, offering them substantial knowledge to be used in their working environment.

Training programmes offered a wide range of options such as text processing, data bases, spreadsheets, data and communication management, web design, animation, development, network administration, application development tools.

Higher education students had the opportunity to become familiar with the basic principles of new technologies and acquire substantial knowledge and then be awarded a recognized Certificate for only 10% of the total cost. This subsidy covering 90% of the training fee for 40 hours, amounted to a maximum of 600€ per student and 1.200€ per seriously ill student.

Students could ask queries and receive information on-line at <http://www.ek-paidefteite.gr> and by calling the help line at 801-11-88-3-88. The enrolled trainees selected approved education packages offered by education institutions in their area of residence or distance learning packages (e-learning) depending on their training needs.

«Action 'e-ducate' gave to students the opportunity to have access to digital technology tools that facilitate their work and research during their studies. At the same time, it allows students to become more competitive and to improve substantially their future professional career.

We were very satisfied by the extraordinary response to this action and we were thus encouraged to continue with similar initiatives; once again it was proved that young people in Greece can be easily motivated and creative with the right stimulus».

KATERINA PAPA-KONSTANTINOY
Project manager, GRNET SA

■ The programme attracted attention, as the student participation in the programme has been impressive. There have been 60.000 enrollments in just 3 months following the launch of the programme. Approximately 55.600 participants concluded their training and received the recognized certificate, that is, 93% success. According to the final report of the programme:

- 77% of enrolled students were awarded certification on basic IT skills, such as use of computer, text processing, spreadsheets, presentations,
- 10% were awarded certification on advanced IT skills such as data bases,
- 13% on specialized issues or software packages such as web design, network administration, network security, technical support.



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OPERATIONAL PROGRAMME Information Society 2000-2006 **MEASURE 1.2** New technologies in the educational process **IMPLEMENTATION AREA** Greece-nationwide **IMPLEMENTATION BODY** Greek Research & Technology Network SA **BUDGET** 36.000.000€ **DURATION** April 2008 - June 2009 **TARGET GROUP** Higher education students, Students of the Greek Open University.

Upgrading Academic Libraries

■ The action «Upgrading and Enriching Academic Libraries» was of extreme significance to greek higher educational institutions as it initiated major changes in organization, staffing and operation of libraries.

Thirty seven libraries of educational institutions have recruited specialized members of staff; enriched and developed the collections held and launched advanced electronic services for the academic community. Members of the teaching staff are now able to improve their educational function radically as access to numerous scientific resources is offered to all.

As a result from the libraries' modernization, the Hellenic Academic Libraries Link was created (HEAL-Link, <http://www.heal-link.gr>), through which all higher education institutions gained access to a national collection of 14.000 and more foreign language scientific books.



■ University Library



■ New Library at the National Technical University of Athens



«Now I can access the full text of the electronic journals I am interested in from anywhere... there is no need to go to the library for this anymore».

ELENI P.
University student

■ A number of positive results occurred to the educational system as a consequence of the modernization of academic libraries. These are:

- the quality of higher education is now improved through the development of new services,
- higher education is linked to information society,
- undergraduate and postgraduate courses are now taught by making use of new technologies,
- researchers are now facilitated in carrying out their work,
- support is available to programmes of distance and life long learning,
- co-ordination of libraries in higher education institutions is facilitated and services have improved.



■ New Library at the National Technical University of Athens



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OPERATIONAL PROGRAMME Education and Initial Vocational Training 2000-2006 **MEASURE 2.1** Improvement of the quality of education provided **IMPLEMENTATION AREA** Greece-nationwide **IMPLEMENTATION BODIES** Higher Education Institutions **BUDGET** 146.000.000€ **DURATION** July 2000 - May 2009 **TARGET GROUPS** Teaching staff, Students, Researchers in higher education institutions

ICT seminars for employed persons

■ A total of 291 training programmes on Information and Communication Technologies skills were implemented, each lasting from 100 to 250 teaching hours, aiming at upgrading the skills and improving the adaptability of employees in the continuously changing conditions of the labour market.

Training included courses on software development, applications, communication systems and networks, Internet applications (e-business), ERP, project management, digitalization applications, multimedia material available on line, technical support for computers and networks, applications for technical, and architectural offices.

The quality of the training provided, was further enhanced by adopting the compulsory examination as prerequisite for acquiring the training certificate which is based on internationally recognized standards.

■ A total of 6.203 business employees of all economy sectors participated in these programmes, 60% of whom were women. Priority was given to employees of Small-Medium Enterprises as they have limited opportunities for training.

The performance of the 4.315 trainees in the certification examination was particularly satisfactory with 52,86% of them passing the examination successfully.





«I participated in the 'Autocad' programme, that is a tool for interior design and architecture, and the 'Photoshop' programme which is a tool for photograph processing and printed material design. This specialized training had a decisive impact on my work which was improved in terms of productivity as well as in drafting electro engineering networks and in designing company brochures».

ARISTOTELIS M.
Engineer

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OPERATIONAL PROGRAMME Information Society 2000-2006 **MEASURE 3.4** Human resources skills upgrading **IMPLEMENTATION AREA** Greece-nationwide **IMPLEMENTATION BODY** ESF Actions Implementation Authority **BUDGET** 20.537.028€ **DURATION** April 2006 - September 2008 **TARGET GROUPS** Employed, Self-employed

Seminars for employees in the sector of tourism

■ The sector of tourism can be considered the most dynamic sector in the greek economy. The skill of people employed in this sector is one of the most crucial factors for its development and particularly, in offering competitive quality services.

The education training programmes in the tourism sector aim at updating knowledge and skills as well as reinforcing human resources so that they can adjust to changes and developments in the tourism economy.

Education programmes focus on key specialities in the tourism business: hotel issues, culinary and pastry, housekeeping, etc. Following the completion of the courses, trainees were awarded a certification by the Organization of Tourism Education and Training.

In the framework of this programme, approximately 50 training courses were carried out each year, in 20 greek cities, for a period of six years. Social professional organizations of this sector (chambers, tourism employees associations) encouraged participation in these programmes; it should be noted that these training programmes were also warmly welcome by employers in the tourism industry.

«I believe this was an extremely important programme for me... I met colleagues and exchanged views, received updated information on our sector and as a result I have much better prospects in the labour market».

GEORGE CH.
Restaurant employee, Katerini



■ Culinary art class

■ A total of 6.479 employees, 3.287 of whom women, received training through these programmes.

Upon graduation they were certified professionals. This certification is very important in both the significance of the knowledge and skills acquired as well as in having these recognized, considering that the majority of trainees were not holders of degrees in tourism studies.

«These programmes should be continued in the future and everyone in the tourism sector should participate in them».

CHRISTINA K.

Hotel employee, Agios Nikolaos, Crete



■ Housekeeping class

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OPERATIONAL PROGRAMME Competitiveness 2000-2006 **MEASURE 8.1** Education and training in the tourism sector **IMPLEMENTATION AREA** Greece-nationwide **IMPLEMENTATION BODY** Organization of Tourism Education and Training **BUDGET** 6.362.059€ **DURATION** October 2002 - December 2008 **TARGET GROUPS** Employees, Self employed, Seasonally unemployed workers, Entrepreneurs, in the sector of tourism

Educational support to the 'Go on-line' programme

■ The «Educational Support to the 'Go on-line' programme» contributed in the familiarization of Small-Medium Enterprises of Greece with the Information and Communication Technologies by making use of contemporary market trends, and by placing emphasis on e-business.

The programme included training and support by experts, consultants and trainers, and was addressed to entrepreneurs and employees of Small-Medium Enterprises that had access to electronic computers and the Internet.

The training support to Small-Medium Enterprises has been assigned to consortia of Educational Institutions, Research Centers and the local Chambers of Commerce at regional level. Training included computer, software and internet courses along with consulting services on the use of e-business tools as well as the on-line training and finally communicating information through the web based portal www.go-online.gr.



■ An indirect consequence of this programme has been an increase in employment. Unemployed graduates of higher education and Information Technology high school teachers were employed as trained e-business consultants. They offered training and distance support to Small-Medium Enterprises in an organized and concerted way.

36.676 Small-Medium Enterprises from all over Greece received training, and during the programme 1.801 new posts for trained e-business consultants have been created.

This programme has inaugurated a new approach regarding the issue of adaptability in organizing the labour force and entrepreneurship in Greece.

«By introducing a personal computer, my business at the flower shop has been upgraded, but I had difficulties in using it because I had no experience of it. I attended the 'Go on-line' training programme and now I can even accept orders through the Internet».

ELENI K.
Attica



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OPERATIONAL PROGRAMME Competitiveness 2000-2006 **MEASURE 8.2** Human resources in manufacturing, commerce, services **IMPLEMENTATION AREA** Greece-nationwide **IMPLEMENTATION BODY** Greek Research & Technology Network SA **BUDGET** 17.941.129€ **DURATION** January 2002 - December 2007 **TARGET GROUPS** Entrepreneurs & Employees in SMEs

Network for the support of local market in Western Fthiotida

■ By creating and operating a local business network of 70 tourism businesses and local traditional products' companies, a joint action has been initiated for the promotion of local produce and tourism in Western Fthiotida.

For the development of the network, the appropriate equipment was purchased, a portal for the advertisement of the participating companies was created, as well as a data bank was set up so that human resource requirements served all network members concerning human resources and business planning.

■ The immediate and tangible outcome of this network is related to benefits from cultivating a corporate culture of cooperation amongst the members and in creating economies of scale.

Typical examples are the cost reduction resulting from shared advertisement and the use of shared business tools (webpage, companies and products data bank, participation in local and greek expositions). This strategy contributes in improving Internet access to new markets through the use of Internet tools (e-business) and in the uniform presentation of the network's members.

Through this network, the quality of the end product has been upgraded. This was achieved by the creation of a joint local pact related to infrastructure, consumer service provision and pricing policy.



■ The network at the Pan-Hellenic Fair in Lamia (2007)





■ Presenting the project's results (2007) at the 'Sperchiada Conference Centre'



■ Karditsa's Trade Fair (2006)

«We believe that the Network contributes greatly in the development of our area. All of us, entrepreneurs and the other residents should do our utmost so it can achieve all of its goals».

REPRESENTATIVE OF THE
'SPERHEIOSNET' BOARD OF DIRECTORS



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REGIONAL OPERATIONAL PROGRAMME Mainland Greece 2000-2006 **Measure 1.14** Human resources development initiatives in rural areas **IMPLEMENTATION AREA** Municipalities of Makrakomi, Sperchiada, Agios Georgios, Community of Timfristos **IMPLEMENTATION BODY** Development Agency of Karditsa SA **BUDGET** 20.000€ **DURATION** 2006-2007 **TARGET GROUP** Catering, accommodation & local products promotion companies

Promoting women's employment





Increasing the percentage of employed women has been a strategic objective for 2000-2006 which aimed at the equal representation of both women and men in the country's economic development.

Reconciling professional and family life of women has been the major focus. Gender mainstreaming was set as a basic principle and its application was attempted in the majority of actions.

A series of actions focused on women were implemented to many sectors of economic and social life. Positive actions in Small Medium Enterprises and large enterprises were important for the promotion of women's employment. In addition, the Hellenic Organization of Small and Medium Enterprises and Handicraft programmes' for the promotion of women's employment and entrepreneurship, that were implemented at the regional level, gave a boost to female employment and entrepreneurship.

Training programmes for women have been carried out to develop their skills in manufacturing, Information and Communication Technologies, as well as consulting services were offered on issues of gender equality. All day school programmes were also launched so mothers could be free to seek employment.

Social Service Units for children, the elderly and persons with disability were crucial in lessening women's family obligations and enabling them to enter the labour market.

With the aim to increase the percentage of working women, €812 million were allocated from all Community Support Framework 2000-2006 Operational Programmes. Special emphasis was placed on the Regions, by allocating 41,5% through the 13 «Regional Operational Programmes 2000-2006» and 28% through the OP «Employment & Vocational Training 2000-2006». The contribution of OP «Information Society 2000-2006», «Education and Initial Vocational Training 2000-2006», «Competitiveness 2000-2006» and «Health Welfare 2000-2006» was equally important.

Achieving equal opportunities for men and women is still sought after, and remains a strategic priority for the programming period 2007-2013.

'PERIKTIONI', women researchers' network

■ «Periktioni» network was established by 97 founding members, all of them women. These included representatives of Higher Education Institutions; Research Centers; and Research and Development departments of companies. The members were selected due to their international professional acclaim, their research performance, their active role and contribution in issues related to equal opportunities.

The aim of the Network was to promote the policy of equal opportunities in Research and Technology and in the development of communication channels with other respective networks in EU, the Mediterranean countries, the Balkans and the Black Sea countries. The Network consists of 7 Committees on the topics of: Statistics, Research & Development, Education, Communication & Public Relations, Industry & Enterprises, Public Research Organizations, Gender & Society.

The network was named after Periktioni, a Pythagorean female philosopher who lived in Athens in the 5th century BC. She was a writer and a mathematician who excelled in geometry and arithmetic. Some purport that she was the mother of Plato and that she initiated him in philosophy and mathematics.

■ The tangible outcome of the Network is the more efficient use of women researchers in Research and Technology. Due to the intervention by the «Periktioni» Network for the application of the minimum 1/3 gender quota rule –stipulated by the Constitution article 16– the Greek Parliament passed a provision¹ on 27th February 2008. According to this, it is compulsory to include women researchers in all research committees, provided they have the necessary qualifications for the post.



1. Law 3653/2008 article 57.



«Setting up the 'PERIKTIONI' network has been the starting point for a series of events, conferences, publications, expositions of rare material on the subject, documentaries, television spots, etc, that highlighted the issue of women's under-representation in positions of high responsibility in research.

The major achievement of the network has been the amendment that passed unanimously by the Parliament on a quota for women in the Research & Technology decision making bodies».

KALLIRROI DAFNA
Coordinator of the PERIKTIONI Network

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OPERATIONAL PROGRAMME Competitiveness 2000-2006 **MEASURE 8.3** Research and Technology Human Resources **IMPLEMENTATION AREA** Attica **IMPLEMENTATION BODY** General Secretariat for Research & Technology **BUDGET** 440.000€ **DURATION** January 2004 - December 2008 **TARGET GROUP** Women researchers

Women's employment and entrepreneurship

■ This project offered support to existing businesses owned by women, by improving entrepreneurial skills, upgrading businesses and finally, keeping women in the labour market.

It entailed targeted actions such as: the participation of women entrepreneurs to thematic workshops on the organization of enterprises, participation in business exhibitions, conferences and missions. The objective was to become more extrovert as entrepreneurs and to further promote their businesses. In addition, they received financial support for the acquisition of basic equipment aimed at the technological modernization of their businesses.

■ This project adopted an integrated approach aiming at promoting women's businesses and retaining employment in 4.826 businesses all over Greece. It supported the creation of 40 women's cooperatives in rural Greece that successfully produce and process agricultural products.



■ Hellenic Organization of Small and Medium Enterprises and Handicraft conference of the programme (Athens, 2008)



■ In a region that suffers greatly by unemployment, **Western Macedonia**, the «Women's Employment and Entrepreneurship» programme was an important counterweight to women's unemployment.

A total of 801 women's businesses took part in the programme; 70% of which participated for the first time in a co-financed project. All women were offered personal consulting services or they participated in workshops, business missions, conferences, exhibitions. Their production and clientele was improved because of the training received on new organizational models and due to the promotion of enterprises and to the upgrading of equipment.

The Conservatory -company of the private sector- was established in Kozani in 1989 constituting for Western Macedonia a reference point for all kinds of music and all musical instruments.

Aiming at stabilizing its position as a business, the Conservatory introduced a series of automated business operations by setting a mini ERP system, through the programme «Women's Employment and Entrepreneurship». The Conservatory also designed a website to support the interaction between students and teachers, and give information to parents and other collaborators on issues of their common interests.

Given the difficulties in the field of teaching music, the Conservatory offered in this way support to women's employment, and its contribution to the local community has been proved particularly significant.

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■ Hellenic Organization of Small and Medium Enterprises and Handicraft conference of the programme (Athens, 2008)

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REGIONAL OPERATIONAL PROGRAMMES, MEASURE Social Services IMPLEMENTATION AREA Eastern Macedonia-Thrace, Central Macedonia, Western Macedonia, Thessaly, Epirus, Ionian islands, Western Greece, Mainland Greece, Attica, Northern Aegean, Southern Aegean **IMPLEMENTATION BODY** Hellenic Organization of Small and Medium Enterprises and Handicraft **BUDGET** 51.465.821€ **DURATION** May 2007 - December 2009 **TARGET GROUPS** Women's business, Women's cooperatives, Employed women

«The comparative advantage of our Conservatory is our philosophy that the Conservatory carries out an important social task and does not simply follow the laws of the market. During the counseling hours about connecting our business to the internet, and through the communication network extranet even with our students' parents, I found a valuable ally... the 'automated electronic messages' on various topics such as students' attendance, class material for those who are absent, invitations to events and of course, fees due! This was the end of embarrassment, anxiety or confusion. Now, I can be a pleasant and polite manager without personal friction, having as allies those 'automatically' repeated electronic text messages».

ANNA K.
Owner of Conservatory



■ The President of the Cooperative of Ano Kallini in Florina at the fair for the programme's products (Athens, 2008)



■ Solfege lesson at the Conservatory



■ Sweet made of olives, a standardized product awarded by the 'Gourmet' magazine, April 2009

■ 426 women's businesses from the Region of Northern Aegean participated in this programme, showing that support to women entrepreneurs has reached even the most distant regions of the country. Through the «Women's Employment and Entrepreneurship» programme, **Mesotopos Agrotourism Women Cooperative of Lesvos** and its 33 women members acquired modern office equipment, developed a full marketing plan for its traditional products (sweets, marmalades, pasta, liqueurs, bread products), designed an attractive website for its products promotion and participated in the largest International exhibition for the food industries SIAL-Paris on 19-23 October 2008.

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«Reminiscing smells from the time of our grandmothers, when life was more carefree, in 1988 we managed to set up a continuously developing business, dynamic and trustworthy, in the market of Lesvos. But this is not all. Our cooperative has encouraged the whole village to participate in regional professions and activities. Today, we can host events for up to 600 persons, offering catering services as well. This programme of Hellenic Organization Small and Medium Enterprises and Handicraft has widened up our horizons... now we are about to introduce barcodes on our products... Until now our cooperative has been guided by our personal commitment and the belief that 'nothing can be done if someone hasn't dreamt of it first'... our motto now is 'the more one dreams, the more one has to work!'»

IOANNA PITSA
President of Women's Cooperative

22

Promoting women's employment

Social Service Units

■ The political wish to support women's employment in the period 2000-2006, was expressed by setting up, throughout Greece, a network of 1.620 Social Service Units. The aim was to lessen women's family obligations and to enable them to seek employment or to remain in the labour market.

In all the regions of Greece, even the most remote ones, local government's developmental agencies set up units that provided day care services for babies, infants, children, children with disability as well as services for the elderly and for disabled persons.

Programmes such as «Help at home», «Social Care Units», «Day Care Centres for the Elderly», «Nursery and Child Day Care Centres», «Centres of Creative Activities for children» and «Centres of Creative Activities for children with disability»:

- reinforced the citizens' and especially women's, feeling of social security and solidarity,
- contributed in reconciling family and working life,
- reinforced the setting up of welfare and social care services for vulnerable groups.



■ The impact of the social service units to women's employment has been significant and direct. Women were offered solutions to reconcile professional and family life, to have access to and remain active in the labour market:

- the striking majority of the 6.946 employed in the centres were mostly, previously unemployed women. They worked as educators, nurses, social workers, child psychologists, social assistants and in other similar specializations.
- 50% of working women who made use of Nurseries, Child Day Care Centres, Centres of Creative Activities for Children and Centres of Creative Activities for children with disability succeeded in retaining their job and remain in the labour market.

It is also impressive that more than 135.500 persons -babies, infants, children, elderly or in physical need- made use of these services.



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OPERATIONAL PROGRAMMES Regional Operational Programmes 2000-2006 and Employment & Vocational Training 2000-2006 **MEASURE** Social Services **IMPLEMENTATION AREA** Greece-nationwide **IMPLEMENTATION BODIES** Local Government's Developmental Agencies **BUDGET** 430.000.000€ **DURATION** May 2001 - August 2008 **TARGET GROUPS** Employed and Unemployed women

Help at home

■ The «Help at Home» or «Social Care Units» programme is the biggest of all the social services and offers structured and systematic primary social and nursing care at home, to elderly people or persons with disability. It has been beneficial to the population as:

- it helps the elderly as well as people with disability to stay in their familiar environment and milieu,
- it makes it possible to avoid services at institutions and prevents the development of social exclusion,
- it assures dignified and healthy living conditions, it maintains family cohesion and, finally, helps improve the quality of life,
- it helps women by lessening their family obligations and allows them to enter or remain in the labour market.

«I thank God that these young persons came along and they help me... They help me get to the taxi and they take me to the Hospital in Xanthi to have the dialysis... Previously it was my daughter who did that and she couldn't get a full time job because of this...»

ΑΛ Τ., 75

■ The citizens of the **Municipality of Myki** in the **Prefecture of Xanthi**, muslims, occupied mostly in stock farming and tobacco farming, had initially shown distrust to the «Help at home» programme.

This programme, although it started off rather slowly, managed to provide services to 302 elderly persons or persons with disability who needed help at their homes, while a second unit was set up in Echinós in 2004 and has served 133 persons. This unit created four (4) new jobs and a real change in the life of people residing in this mountainous and distant area, reinforced its social network and contributed in improving the quality of life for citizens who cannot take care of themselves.

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«I am a nurse in the Help at Home programme. Through this programme I was given the opportunity to do the job that I love so much. I was able to offer help to my fellow human beings. I believe that we are very essential for the daily life of the beneficiaries and their relatives, because we offer them valuable help allowing their relatives to carry out their jobs and other obligations».

ANNA S.
Nurse



■ Medical care through the programme Help at Home



■ Medical care through the programme Help at Home



Day Care Centres for the Elderly

■ The Day Care Centres for the Elderly offer structured social care to elderly persons in urban and semi-urban areas, who suffer from mobility and mental problems and are not self-sufficient. In parallel, often their families face grave social and economic problems or cannot cater for their needs because of their work obligations. These services are offered in appropriately fully equipped premises for daily or short stay, by specialized personnel, nurses, welfare officers, social carers, physiotherapists, and other personnel. These Centres:

- confront the phenomenon of the social banishment of the elderly,
- achieve a qualitative and quantitative upgrading of social care services,
- bring an economic and psychological relief to families.



«Here, at the Day Care Centre for the Elderly I spend my time pleasantly. I have made new friends, now I am not alone at home all day any more and my children do not worry about me, they go to their jobs and they are sure I take my medication. All that I need I have it here, now».

NIKOS G., 79



■ An elderly group, Day Care Centre for the Elderly in Chios

■ The provision of daily services to aged people by the Day Care Centre for the Elderly in Chios has contributed in improving their quality of life as well as in lessening family responsibilities of thirty (30) women from solely taking care of these persons, resulting in their part time employment.

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■ An elderly group, Day Care Centre for the Elderly in Chios



■ An elderly group, Day Care Centre for the Elderly in Chios

Care Units for Children

■ Setting up children care units aimed at giving mothers the opportunity to seek for or retain employment so as to reconcile family and working life.

Nurseries and Children Care Units offer education, creative entertainment, and daily meals to infants, children and children with disability, making it easier for their parents to deal with their working and family obligations. Each unit specialise according to the age group they cater for.

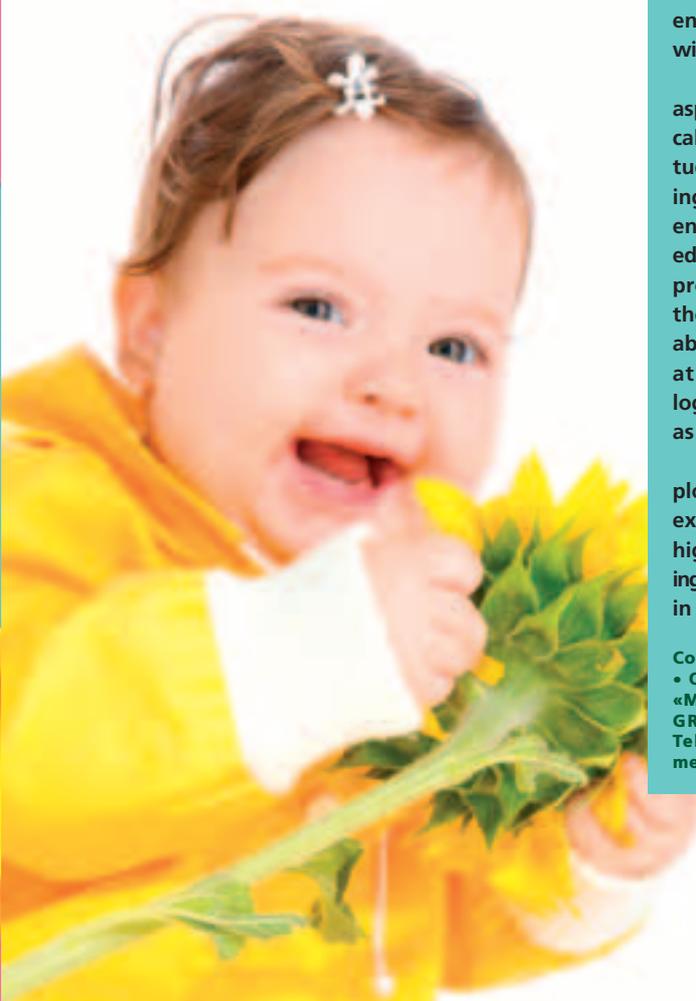
Centres of Creative Activities for Children and Children with Disability promote the psychological, mental and social development of children.

■ In the Nursery Care Centre of the Municipality of Ioannina 'Merimna' babies and infants from the age of two (2) months old until the age of entering elementary school co-exist with babies and infants with disability.

This co-existence, an innovative aspect within the standards of the local community, aims at shaping attitudes of pre-school children regarding mutual acceptance. The children enjoy equal opportunities in care and education. The personnel of the units provide guidance to the parents of the sixty two (62) children with disability, as special care is also offered at home, and furthermore psychological support is given to the family as a whole.

Thirty (30) professionals are employed in this unit from a variety of expertise. They cooperate with local higher education institutions regarding the educational programmes adopted in the units.

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*«As a mother of an infant with disability
I feel the need to extend my thanks to all who worked
for the establishment of this innovative Day Care Nursery.
The members of staff welcomed my child and showed
they care and perhaps this was the first time that I,
as a mother, felt that I was not alone in this;
I had turned to other day care units in our city
but my child was not being accepted
as their rules of operation did not offer that arrangement...
Through the day care's programme and the parents' meetings,
they managed to ensure that the education programme
is extended at home and they supported me psychologically;
disability is not harmful to the child only
but to the child's family too.
As a result I managed to find some time for myself
so as to look for employment and in this way help out my family
financially but, above all, to help my child who needs me».*

ANNA T.
Mother



■ In Pyli at the island of Kos, there is only one **Child Day Care Centre** which does not only provide care for 72 children but it also helps their mothers to enter the labour market and have a social life, by lessening their family obligations.

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■ Child Day Care Centre in Pyli, island of Kos



■ Drawing at Child Day Care Centre in Pyli, island of Kos



«Pili Day Care Centre is a friendly and safe place, pleasant and appropriate for children. It has been set up with respect and love towards them. The educators are specialized and experienced and they help each child's intellectual and social development».

KATERINA K.
Mother



■ Excursion of Nafpaktos, Lefkada, Patras Creative Activities Centres for Children with Disability and the Agrinio "Panaghia Eleousa" Centre with the flower wreath children made to celebrate 1st of May



■ Excursion of Lefkada Creative Activities Centre for Children with Disability in Nymfaio village, in Florina

■ **The Centre of Creative Activities for Children with Disability of the Municipality of Lefkada** offers services to forty (40) children and adolescents with mental and mobility disabilities. The Centre employs seven (7) women and two (2) men who are assigned with the responsibility to daily care for the children and to help them express their needs. At the same time they provide support to the children's parents and family.

This Centre has given to thirty seven (37) mothers the opportunity to work, a chance they were not offered before, as they were solely occupied with taking care of their children.

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«I was accepted in the Centre at the age of 25. There, I was given the opportunity to print my own book –to make my dream come true– and to feel that I, too, attended and participated in a 'school'»

CHRISTOS K., 30



■ Children parade from the Anaktorio Center of Creative Activities for Children



■ Drama performance by the children from Anaktorio Center of Creative Activities for Children

■ The Centre of Creative Activities for Children which provides support to children from 6 to 12 years of age, on the mountainous Municipality of Anaktorio, in Vonitsa, Prefecture of Aetoloakarnania, was a pleasant surprise for the women in the area who are mostly working in agriculture and have now found through the Centre, means to provide for the intellectual and social development of their children.

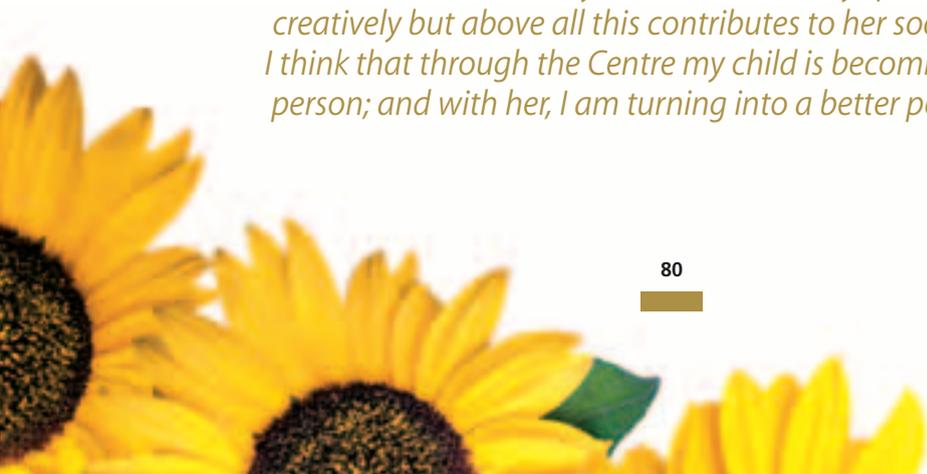
In the Centre five (5) employees offer the children the possibility to draw, perform drama plays, exercise and generally, spend their day in a creative way. At the same time, the majority of the mothers succeeded in keeping their jobs and now are able to work without worrying about their children's welfare during their absence.

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«I am a working mother. I live in a small and quite closed community with limited cultural activities and almost non-existent options for personal expression for me and my family. My daughter, Alexandra, student in the 5th grade of elementary school, almost everyday visits the 'Children Creative Activities Centre'.

When this Centre was set up I realized something was changing in town. I know that my child does not only spend her time creatively but above all this contributes to her socialization. I think that through the Centre my child is becoming a better person; and with her, I am turning into a better person too».

IRINI K.
Self employed

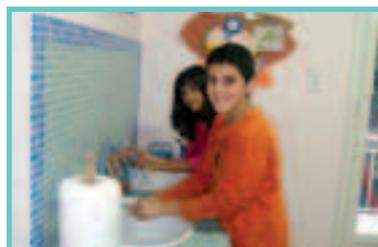


«I have only one child. From the moment he was enrolled at the 'Children Creative Activities Centre' I have the opportunity to go to work without thinking that he is alone at home and what will happen to him until I am back. And this is not all; he spends his time creatively ... the hours pass in a constructive way. What's most important for me is that I know he is in a safe place, where he can make friends, and above all he has what he needs most, games and play. Not electronic ones, not high technology modern ones, but simple, traditional ways to play with the ball, on the swings, in the playground as we did when we were children. I would say that the Centre is the only alternative for our children to play with other children, free of our do's and dont's, as if they would play if they were in a courtyard or a neighbourhood playground. I wish these Centres continue to exist in the future so that parents feel calm, safe and satisfied...»

MARIA K.
Mother, employed in the private sector

■ Setting up a **Centre of Creative Activities for Children** was part of the scheme of the Cultural Municipal Company of **South Argos** which aimed in revitalizing and enhancing the social life of the densely populated southern part of the city. This Centre offers modern social services that can support working women and relieve them from certain family obligations.

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■ Centre of Creative Activities for Children of South Argos







ΕΙΔΙΚΗ ΥΠΗΡΕΣΙΑ ΣΥΝΤΟΝΙΣΜΟΥ
ΚΑΙ ΠΑΡΑΚΟΛΟΥΘΗΣΗΣ
ΔΡΑΣΕΩΝ ΕΥΡΩΠΑΪΚΟΥ ΚΟΙΝΩΝΙΚΟΥ ΤΑΜΕΙΟΥ

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The presentation of European Social Fund best practises in Greece during 2000-2006 was a big challenge for ESF Actions Co-ordination and Monitoring Authority.

The projects that could be included in this publication were numerous and remarkable. Their selection was facilitated by the results of the ESF Actions Co-ordination and Monitoring Authority study for the evaluation of ESF best practices.

In its pages the reader will not find only representative examples of each intervention, area of the country, or target group; browsing it he will be able to “hear” what Irini, Constantinos, Argyro, Markos, Ali, Olga said about how their life changed.

We are now proud to present these ESF best practices hoping that they will have a fruitful and creative impact on future interventions of the European Social Fund in Greece and Europe.

