The effectiveness of the traineeship programmes as a way of the insertion of young professionals in the Greek labour market

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Abstract

Traineeship programmes are held in many different ways in Greece in both private and public organizations. The most popular type of traineeship in Greece is the student traineeship while great appeal also occurs with the various traineeship programmes subsidized by the European Union. Opinions differ about the effectiveness of these programmes as a tool for the insertion of young professionals in the labour market as long as high rates of youth unemployment in Greece imply that traineeships are only a temporary solution to the problem.

For the purpose of the current study it was conducted a primary research through questionnaires at which participated both former trainees and Greek companies who shared their opinion and attitude towards various aspects of the traineeship programmes that take place in Greece. In fact, it is of general consensus that traineeship programmes are an effective job training tool that gives the opportunity to develop skills and acquire substantial experience in a professional work environment. As further confirmed by the findings of the current study traineeships constitute an effective way for the insertion of the young professionals in the workplace only in regards to the experience they gain as long as the majority of the participants in traineeship programmes are not offered a job position after the completion of the programme and they return in the unemployment status.

Best practices of other countries provide with feedback about potential improvements regarding the realization of traineeships in Greece in terms of the necessary provisions that have to be made in order to provide trainees with the minimum labour rights. As long as there is a margin for the organizations to adjust as they wish the special terms and conditions of their programmes, what is missing is a unified legal framework which will regulate every aspect of the traineeship programmes in Greece whether they are held in the cadre of studies or not.
Acknowledgements

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CHAPTER 1

1.1. Introduction

The recent financial crisis in Greece has emerged significant socio-economic changes in the Greek labour market resulting in a negative effect on the unemployment rates especially among young professionals. High levels of youth unemployment in Greece\(^1\) reveal several causes of the phenomenon, among which we could identify the inability of the Greek labour market to absorb the young workforce as well as the difficulty of the Greek educational system to build a bridge between its graduates and the labour market.

Greece as a member state of the European Union adopts the European policies towards the decrease of youth unemployment\(^2\) and the active participation of young people in society. One of the key elements of this effort refers to the creation of a substantial connection between young professionals and the labour market through effective methods of insertion and social inclusion. However, the high rates of youth unemployment create enquiries about the effectiveness of such methods in the Greek labour market.

In order for young professionals to join the active workforce the prime method used by both the Greek education institutions and by the Greek state is by launching traineeship programmes in public and private organizations which aim to provide young people with professional experience in their field of studies. Indeed, traineeship programmes become more and more popular and are adopted by both public and private organizations which offer internships for a predetermined period of time. The Greek state, adopting the EU’s policy towards the decrease of youth unemployment, has been also establishing subsidized traineeship programmes with the aim to help young professionals to become active workforce. Considering the various traineeship programmes as a method to enhance the insertion of the young professionals in the workplace, it is of great interest to examine whether or not all these programmes that

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take place in the Greek labour market constitute an effective way for the real insertion of the participants in the workplace.

Thus, the purpose of the current study was to investigate the current practices for the insertion of the young professionals in the Greek labour market and, in particular, to examine the effectiveness of the traineeship programmes as a tool of job training and further insertion in the workplace. In the beginning of the current study there are presented the data of the Hellenic Statistical Authority (EL.STAT.) regarding the unemployment rates in Greece and, especially, the youth unemployment rates which gave the incentive for the realization of the current research as long as the high unemployment rates among young people imply that the measures followed towards the insertion of young professionals in the labour market seem to be inadequate or unsuccessful.

As long as the current study is focused on the traineeship programmes as a method of insertion in the workplace, the second part concerns the existing traineeship programmes in Greece, which are launched either by the education institutions before graduation whereas there are also presented the traineeship programmes run by the Greek State after graduation, the voluntary traineeships and those launched exclusively by the companies themselves as well as the legal status of all these programmes. Detailed reference is further realized concerning the best practices in Greece and particularly in other countries which follow similar programmes for the insertion of young professionals in the workplace in order to identify the possible aspects that could be introduced in the Greek reality.

The recording of the existing traineeships that currently take place in Greece leads to the specific research questions of the current survey concerning the terms and conditions under which the traineeship programmes are realized in Greece as well as whether all these programmes are finally effective for the acquisition of professional experience and for the further insertion of the young professionals in the labour market.

The survey was fulfilled with the completion of a primary research which was conducted through questionnaires and interviews both to former trainees in Greek organizations and in Greek companies running traineeship programmes in order to gather data from two different perspectives and examine in parallel the results of the two main factors of the law of supply and demand. On the one hand, the former trainees (the “supply”) provided with feedback about their experience as they are the
ones who confronted both the advantages and the disadvantages of the traineeship opportunities. On the other hand, the companies (the “demand”) represent the other side of the coin as they provided information about their ways of managing the traineeship programmes they run.

The key findings from the primary research were expected to give data regarding the usage of the traineeship programmes and the evaluation of their effectiveness as methods for the insertion of young professionals in the labour market. Based on the assessment of these key findings the final conclusions of the current study are concentrated in combining the criticism towards the existing traineeship programmes with recommendation of new ones which will add value both to companies and trainees and will lead to the improvement of the job market in Greece for the young professionals.

1.2. Unemployment in Greece

In order to have a deep understanding of the reasons that led to the investigation of the effectiveness of the traineeship programmes in Greece, it is important to have a thorough look on the existing unemployment rates in Greece and, especially, on the youth unemployment rates.

According to the Hellenic Statistical Authority (EL.STAT.), in the 1st quarter of 2014 the employed persons in Greece were 3,483,716 while the unemployed were 1,342,299 persons. The unemployment rate was 27.8%, the same with the previous quarter and 0.2% higher than the 1st quarter of 2013.

Table 1 presents the unemployment rates based on two characteristics, the gender and the age of the unemployed persons. It is interesting to notice that in the 1st quarter of 2014 the unemployment rate for males was 25.0% whereas the unemployment rate for females was considerably higher (31.4%).

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Table 1: Unemployment rate (%) by gender and age groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Groups</th>
<th>1st Quarter 2013</th>
<th>1st Quarter 2014</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Males</td>
<td>Females</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>24.9</td>
<td>31.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15-24</td>
<td>55.1</td>
<td>66.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-29</td>
<td>39.3</td>
<td>43.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-44</td>
<td>22.8</td>
<td>30.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45-64</td>
<td>18.3</td>
<td>21.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65+</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>5.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Hellenic Statistical Authority (EL.STAT.)

Moreover, considering the unemployment rate among different age groups (see Figure 2) we observe that young people record the highest unemployment rates in Greece as far as during the 1st quarter of 2014 in the age group of 15-24 the unemployment rate was 56.7% and in the age group of 25-29 the unemployment rate was 42.4%. Interestingly, as observed in the above Table 1, young females in the age group of 15-24 recorded higher unemployment rate (61.5%) in comparison with the males of the same age category (52.6%).

![Figure 1: Unemployment rate (%) by age group as for the 1st Quarter 2014](image)

In addition, the survey of the Hellenic Statistical Authority includes information about the educational level of the unemployed persons in Greece as for the 1st quarter of 2014. Table 2 illustrates that persons who completed primary education recorded the highest unemployment rate (45.0%) while the unemployment
rate is also high among those who have not attained school at all (38.4%). Lower unemployment rates are met among those who have completed post-graduate or PhD studies (15.3%) and among the university graduates (18.7%). We observe once more that unemployment rate is higher among females who have completed university studies (21.0%) than among the males of the same educational level (16.1%).

Table 2: Unemployment rate (%) by gender and educational level

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of education</th>
<th>1st quarter</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2014</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Males</td>
<td>Females</td>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>24.9</td>
<td>31.1</td>
<td>27.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post Graduate Students, PhD</td>
<td>13.6</td>
<td>18.3</td>
<td>15.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University</td>
<td>14.7</td>
<td>20.7</td>
<td>17.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tertiary Vocational Educational, Post-Secondary Vocational Education</td>
<td>23.8</td>
<td>36.3</td>
<td>30.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary Education</td>
<td>26.3</td>
<td>35.7</td>
<td>30.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower Secondary Education</td>
<td>31.6</td>
<td>37.4</td>
<td>33.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary Education</td>
<td>28.6</td>
<td>26.8</td>
<td>27.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did not complete Primary Education</td>
<td>37.8</td>
<td>20.2</td>
<td>32.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did not attend school</td>
<td>39.2</td>
<td>47.7</td>
<td>43.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Hellenic Statistical Authority (EL.STAT.)

The youth unemployment rates as presented above give a disappointing image of the situation in Greece regarding the existence of a qualified young workforce which remains inactive. At first glance, it is reasonable to wonder which are the ways in order for the unemployed young professionals to enter the workplace and whether or not the existing opportunities are effective enough so as to result in their substantial insertion in the labour market.

The subject of the current study is concentrated in the most common way of connecting young professionals with the workplace, that of the realization of a traineeship programme either during the process of their studies or afterwards at the point after their graduation. In the following chapter it was attempted a complete recording of the various traineeship programmes that take place in the Greek labour market. Those programmes are launched either in the cadre of the studies at the education institutions or after the graduation based on initiatives of the Greek State or private entities.
CHAPTER 2: Literature Review

A lot of studies globally have investigated the functioning of traineeships as a tool for insertion in the labour market. Indeed, the majority of traineeship literature has primarily conceptualized traineeships as a learning experience for trainees whereas the functioning of traineeships from a recruitment perspective by the host organization after the completion of the traineeship has largely been overlooked. Regarding the empirical work that has been realized worldwide, the majority of these studies have been largely descriptive in nature, providing for example an overview of the traineeship experience, or analyzing the characteristics of a successful internship programme from an intern’s point of view.

Therefore, traineeships are presented in the literature as a form of experiential learning where trainees have the opportunity to apply theories from education to real workplace. Among the benefits from the realization of a traineeship programme for the trainees there have been highlighted the enhanced interpersonal skills, the problem-solving and critical thinking as well as job related skills. This variety of benefits for trainees enhances the effectiveness of internships as a tool of experiential learning and job training. What’s more, previous studies have ended up with the conclusion that former trainees benefit from enhanced employability in the labour market generally, rather than been converted to employees of the host organization of their traineeship.

Regarding the motivation of the organizations to provide traineeship positions, the primary reasons stressed out in the literature are related to more direct benefits such as the fact that trainees supplement an existing workforce and constitute an inexpensive source of labour or as a cost-effective means to complete special

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projects. Arguably, a number of previous studies have found out that the primary reason of organizations for launching traineeships is to attract, recruit and screen potential future employees while another survey found that a substantial number of former trainees were afterwards employed by their host organization.

In particular, a NACE survey of 266 employers that took place in the United States in 2011 showed that an average of 39% of all entry level employers in the United States were former trainees of their host organization which can support the argument that the traineeships in the US are being extensively used as a recruitment process. Also, surveys have been applied in large companies such as Hewlett Packard, which revealed that approximately 70% of their new employees come from their former intern pools, and Morgan and Goldman Sachs, which showed that the company employed over 80% of their new employees in 2008 and 2009 though their traineeship programs.

Moreover, previous research on universities, which are also stakeholders with regard to business student traineeships, has shown that faculties across the different disciplines of the high education institutions concur regarding the importance of sustaining and developing their students’ internship programmes. Universities benefit from the development and career opportunities of their students through their participation in internships and, as a result, universities are able to stand up for the continuous demand to produce work-ready university graduates and bridge the gap between education and business world. Moreover, by enhancing the employability of their graduates through the students’ traineeship programmes, universities take advantage of reputational benefits which assist them to attract and retain new graduates.

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students\textsuperscript{14}. Also, traineeships foster links between universities and the business world, which is further an advantage for the institutions to seek funding for research\textsuperscript{15}.

Finally, empirical studies on the contribution of traineeships in the career development of the young graduates\textsuperscript{16} indicated that the completion of a traineeship programme is a significant variable which influences the ability of the trainee to obtain a career-related position\textsuperscript{17}. Another study conducted in Greek universities in 2006 has found out that placing graduates or students in companies through traineeship programmes can enhance labour market policies by improving graduates prospects in the labour market\textsuperscript{18}. In particular, the relevant survey has ended up with the conclusion that working experience gained through the traineeship programmes contribute positively to the students’ career development as long as traineeships assist students to develop their skills and acquire better self confidence and better self motivation.

As far as the current study is concerned, it investigates the effectiveness of traineeship programmes as a form of the insertion of young professionals in the labour market in Greece. An exhaustive recording follows of the traineeships that take place in Greece as well as of the best practices of other countries after defining the notion of the traineeship programmes in the framework of the human resources management field of business.

2.1. Traineeship as a form of job training

Initially, in the context of the human resources management traineeships are considered to be a form of job training\textsuperscript{19}. Thus, job training refers to the various methods of preparing an employee to perform a task by providing with the necessary


information about the task, a demonstration of its performance, an opportunity for the employee to imitate the demonstration and subsequent feedback.  

The traineeship as considered to be a method of job training is defined as a way of getting qualified through training in a particular profession during which you are either paid or unpaid while you get the training. In particular, a traineeship is an education and training programme in order to acquire work experience. Usually, the traineeship programmes are oriented on giving young people the skills and experience that employers are looking for. Ideally, traineeships prepare young people for their future careers by helping them to become ‘work ready’.

In the Greek reality the traineeship programmes are also addressed to the young professionals who wish to gain work experience in their field of study. Traineeships are launched by the educational institutions during the studies as well as by public and private entities after the graduation of the students of any educational level. In the following sub-chapters of the current study there are presented the traineeship programmes that are realized in the Greek labour market before and after graduation.

2.2. Student Traineeship Programmes

In Greece, the traineeship is considered to be an important part of the educational system, as it relates the students with the labour market. The scope of the students’ traineeship programmes is to contribute to the better use of the knowledge and skills acquired during the studies in a professional environment and to the further integration in the workplace. The traineeship also creates a two-way channel of transferring information between educational institutions and industrial partners. Moreover, the application of the knowledge in the labour market contributes to the professional orientation of the students and the development of entrepreneurship initiatives after graduation while at the same time the acquisition of professional experience through the traineeship helps the students to set their business goals.

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20 [http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/job-training.html#ixzz3C3O1rKmA](http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/job-training.html#ixzz3C3O1rKmA)
In addition, taking into consideration the fact that, nowadays, the higher education institutions focus on achieving the best possible indicators concerning the absorption of their graduates in the labour market, it is a key criterion for the institutions to provide their students with effective operations towards the insertion in the labour market by establishing a network of traineeship programmes and job offers. Both the Greek Universities and the Higher Technological Education Institutions integrate in their course programmes the realization of a traineeship by the students in organizations of the public or private sector. Apart from the higher education institutions traineeships are also part of the studies in the Vocational Training Institutions (IEK). Finally, during the latest years students have the opportunity to realize a traineeship in another country through the mobility programmes of the European Union.

2.2.1. Traineeships for university students

Greek Universities started launching traineeship programmes since 1997 in the cadre of the Operational Programmes “Education and Initial Vocational Training I” for the period 1997-2000, “Education and Initial Vocational Training II” for the period 2000-2005 and “Education and Initial Vocational Training III” for the period 2006-2008. These Programmes of the Greek Ministry of National Education and Religious Affairs were included in the Community Support Framework for Greece for the period 1997-2006 and were co-financed by the European Union (European Social Fund - ESF, European Regional Development Fund - ERDF) at a percentage of 75% and by the Greek State at a percentage of 25%.

For instance, the National Kapodistrian University of Athens runs traineeship programmes since 2001 and according to the data provided by the internship office of the university for the period 2001-2008, 7,021 students have realized traineeship programmes in public and private organizations subsidized by the Operational Programme "Education and Initial Vocational Training II". Another example is the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, at which the Internship Office operates since 2002 on the implementation of the programme “Internships for AUTH students” and

23 Internship Office of the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens. Available:: http://www.grapas.uoa.gr
used to be funded by the Operational Programmes "Education and Initial Vocational Training I" and "Education and Initial Vocational Training II". Under these two Operational Programmes approximately 10,000 students participated in traineeship programmes.

The overall assessment of the Operational Programme "Education and Initial Vocational Training" for the period 2000-2008 showed that the introduction of the traineeship programmes was welcomed positively by the higher education institutions and has created the ground for the continuation of such programmes. Thus, onwards, the traineeship programmes of the Greek universities continued as part of the Operational Programme "Education and Lifelong Learning 2007-2013" of the National Strategic Reference Framework (NSRF), which is also co-funded by the European Union (European Social Fund) and the Greek State, through the Public Investment Programme of the Ministry of Education & Religious Affairs. Moreover, under the aforementioned Operational Programmes, the Higher Education Institutions have created Internship and Career Offices which are responsible for the connection of students with the labour market. For instance, currently, the programme “Internships for AUTH students” of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki operates in the cadre of the Operational Programme "Education and Lifelong Learning". In the context of the NSRF 2007-2013, the Internship Office supports twenty-three Departments of the University participating in the programme “Internships for AUTH students”.

As far as the general terms and conditions of the traineeships are concerned, the traineeship programmes take place in public or private organizations and their duration varies from one department to another as long as each University and each department sets its own terms and conditions for the realization of the students’ internships. What also varies from one department to another is whether or not the internship is mandatory as part of the academic course programme or not. For the majority of the universities’ course programmes the traineeship is optional whereas there are some course programmes for which the internships are mandatory as they constitute a prerequisite for obtaining a degree (i.e. medicine, primary education,

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25 National Strategic Reference Framework website, Report on the projects of the Operational Programme "Education and Initial Vocational Training". Available: [http://www.espa.gr/el/Pages/eLibrary](http://www.espa.gr/el/Pages/eLibrary)
physical education, music science and arts etc). It is interesting to notice that for the same studies in a University and in a Higher Technological Education Institution such as for example in computer sciences, engineering, agriculture, accounting and management, for the students of the Higher Technological Education Institutions the traineeship is mandatory whereas for the university students it is not.

Furthermore, regarding the legal prerequisites for the realization of an internship by the university students, it is obligatory for the students to be insured against the risk of accident whereas there is no provision for the health insurance coverage of the trainees. Regarding the funding of the traineeship programmes this also depends on the educational institution and, in particular, whether or not the University has ensured the funding of these activities. For instance, the “Student Practice Programme” of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki is implemented within the framework provided by the Operational Programme “Education and Lifelong Learning,” which is co-funded by the European Union (European Social Fund) and national resources. Thus, the compensation and insurance of the interns at the Social Insurance Institution (1% at risk of accidents) are covered by the University, under the Operational Programme "Education and Lifelong Learning" 2007-2013. In several cases, the host entities where the students realize their internship contribute to the payment of the interns they occupy and thus increase the total amount of their compensation. When there is no possibility of funding an internship through the NSRF Programme, the funding of the internship is undertaken solely by the host organization. Moreover, there are also voluntary traineeship programmes as for instance the voluntary traineeship programmes of the National Kapodistrian University of Athens which take place in public bodies (i.e. the Greek Parliament, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs) which is a statutory form of traineeship. The aforementioned traineeship programmes aim at providing the university students with a first work experience and they are realized in the cadre of the student life.

Finally, it is interesting to mention that there has been created a central database of available internship positions for undergraduate students of the Greek Higher Education Institutions which aims to simplify the contact procedure between

stakeholders and mitigate the bureaucracy. This new internship search tool is called “Atlas” and is a centralized online service which interconnects companies that provide internship positions with all academic institutions in Greece by creating a unique internship positions database\(^{29}\). Both companies who wish to offer student traineeship programmes and students who are interested in realizing a traineeship can visit this new database.

2.2.2. Traineeships for students of the Higher Technological Education Institutions

The framework of the traineeship programmes run by the Higher Technological Education Institutions is more structured than the one for the Universities due to the fact that most of the course programmes of TEI include an obligatory 6-month internship in order for the students to obtain their degree. The internship period was first established for TEI students in 1983 with the law 1404/83 which stated that the practice is part of the learning process and therefore an integral part of the academic course programme\(^{30}\). For the period 1997-2008 the traineeships run also under the Operational Programmes “Education and Initial Vocational Training”, the same as universities. After their successful completion the traineeship programmes continued as part of the Operational Programme "Education and Lifelong Learning 2007-2013" of the National Strategic Reference Framework (NSRF) which gave the opportunity for more students to participate.

The special terms and conditions of the internship for TEI students vary also from one department to another and each Technological Educational Institution sets its own requirements to its students. However, the general rule is that the traineeship is mandatory as it constitutes an integral part of the course programme; it lasts for six months and is realized during the last semesters of the studies. The Presidential Decree 174/85\(^{31}\) introduced the framework of the organization, monitoring and evaluation of the internship and, in particular, the 6-month duration of the internship for TEI students as well as the obligations and the rights of the trainees.


As far as the legal status of the TEI students’ traineeships is concerned, it is compulsory for TEI students during their internship either in a public or in a private entity to be insured in the Social Insurance Institution (IKA) only against the risk of accident, in accordance with the applicable legislation\textsuperscript{32}. Regarding the compensation of the trainees from the Technological Education Institutions, this has been set since 1985 with the Law 1566/85\textsuperscript{33}. In particular, those who perform an internship in the cadre of their studies in an organization of the private sector they are due to a compensation which is calculated as the 80\% of the wage of an unskilled labourer which has been issued according to the National General Collective Labour Agreement. What’s more, the companies of the private sector employing trainees from TEI they take advantage of a 50\% grant from the Manpower Employment Organization (OAED) on the compensation paid each time. For the students realizing an internship in a public entity the amount of the compensation is set to be 176 euros per month\textsuperscript{34}.

Since the introduction of the Operational Programme “Education and Lifelong Learning” of the National Strategic Reference Framework for the period 2007-2013 there has been developed a new legislation from the Greek State regarding the compensation for the traineeships of TEI students. In particular, for those who perform an internship in the cadre of the Operational Programme “Education and Lifelong Learning” the financial support provided to the student is 330 € per month. Additionally, if the student realizes an internship in the private sector, the employer is also required to pay a minimum monthly amount of 126,60 € for students under 25 years old or the amount of 193,60 € for students over 25 years in accordance with the Law 4046/2012\textsuperscript{35}. For the internships in the public sector (Ministries, Local Authorities, Regions, Public Entities, Universities / TEI etc.) the student is additionally compensated with the amount of 176.08 euros\textsuperscript{36}.

\textsuperscript{34} Technological Education Institution of Athens, Career and Internship Office. Available at: http://www.teiath.gr/career/articles.php?id=3323&lang=el
\textsuperscript{35} Explanatory Circular 4601 / 304-12.3.2012 of the Ministry of Labour and Social Security
2.2.3. Traineeships for students of the Vocational Training Institutions

The students of the Public and the Private Vocational Training Institutions (IEK) also realize traineeship programmes since 1996 when the Minister of National Education and Religious Affairs introduced the internship for the students of these institutions. Indeed, as it was stated in the relevant Ministerial Decision\textsuperscript{37}, the students of the Vocational Training Institutions could realize a 6-month internship in a public or private entity which was optional apart from specific course programmes for which the Institution could decide to be mandatory.

Currently, there is a Ministerial Decision of 2014 which regulates the operation of the Vocational Training Institutions\textsuperscript{38} including provisions for mandatory traineeship or apprenticeship programmes of the students in these Institutions. According to the aforementioned decision the internship or apprenticeship is of total duration of 960 hours, it takes place during the fifth semester of studies and can be realized in private or public entities and in individual professionals as well.

Regarding the legal framework of the traineeship or apprenticeship programmes for the students of the Vocational Training Institutions, the trainees or apprentices should be employed in positions relevant to their field of studies. The working hours have been set to be six to eight hours per day in the morning or in the afternoon but never at night for a 5-day working week while it is prohibited to work on Saturday, Sunday and in the official holidays\textsuperscript{39}. The trainees or apprentices are not entitled to health insurance but their Vocational Training Institution is obliged to secure them to the Social Insurance Institution (IKA) only against the risk of accident\textsuperscript{40}. Moreover, the traineeship is unpaid as long as the employer is not obliged to pay any compensation to the trainee\textsuperscript{41} but the six-month duration of the internship experience is recognized as professional experience in order for the students to obtain

\textsuperscript{37} Ministerial Decision Ζ / 1802 / 06.02.96 of the Minister of Education and Religious Affairs (Official Government Gazette 104/vol. B’/06.02.96).
\textsuperscript{39} Vocational Training Institution of Sindos-Thessaloniki. Available: http://iek-sindou.thess.sch.gr/?q=el/system/files/KANONISMOS.pdf
\textsuperscript{41} Ministerial Decision Ζ/1802/6.2.96 of the Minister of Education and Religious Affairs (Official Government Gazette 104/vol. B’/22.02.1996).
a license to exercise their profession. However, the traineeship of IEK students may be financed by national and / or EU funds, in accordance with the applicable provisions.

2.2.4. The Erasmus Placement Programme

Greek students of the higher education institutions have the opportunity to realize an internship abroad through the Erasmus Programme of the European Union. Although the Erasmus Programme was established in 1987 aiming at youth exchanges across the European Union, the Erasmus Placement Programme was introduced in 2007 as a programme of the European Union for student traineeships and was part of the Lifelong Learning Programme (LLP) which was run from 2007-2013 and funded education and training across Europe. Indicatively, the European Commission’s database states that only for 2010 the number of Greek recipients of EU grants for study, training and volunteering under the Lifelong Learning Programme was 8,000.

The activities of Lifelong Learning Programme (LLP), including the Placement programme, continue under the new Erasmus+ Programme from 2014-2020. In the field of education and training, the student traineeship programmes in other European countries, the eligibility requirements and criteria for the participants are now integrated in the Mobility Project for higher education students under Key Action 1. It is very important to mention that according to the press release of the European Commission the proposed funding levels for the period 2014-2020 in the field of training will be overall 500-540 million Euros, approximately 50 % - 60 % more as compared to the 2007-2013 programmes. These numbers reveal the success of the programmes of the LLP which led to the endorsement of the new funding programme.

Regarding the terms and conditions of the traineeship programmes realized in the Erasmus+ framework, the traineeships can take place in almost all European countries for a period of 2-12 months during which students have the opportunity to

work in a company, a university, a research center or another organization abroad and
gain professional experience. The traineeships under the Erasmus+ Programme cannot
take place in the EU institutions, in institutions or organizations managing EU
programmes or in Greek embassies and consulates\textsuperscript{46}.

Traineeships at a workplace abroad are supported during short cycle, first,
second, third cycle studies and within a maximum of one year after the student’s
graduation. Therefore, for the Greek students those who have the right to realize a
traineeship abroad through the Erasmus+ Programme are the undergraduate,
postgraduate or PhD students in a University or Higher Technological Education
Institution as well as the students of the Vocational Training Institutions.

Wherever possible, the traineeships should be an integrated part of the
student’s study programme as long as the traineeship can be recognized as part of their
studies. However, the students can realize a work placement abroad regardless of
whether the traineeship is mandatory for the completion of their studies while it is
important to notice that the trainees are also provided with some funding during the
traineeship abroad.

Regarding the legal status of the traineeship placements of the Erasmus+
Programme, the Erasmus grant does not include an insurance policy. The training
agreement indicates if the organization offering the placement will cover the liability
insurance so it is up to the host organization to provide the trainee with insurance. If
the employer does not cover the liability insurance, student should take care of it on
his own in order to be secured\textsuperscript{47}. However, the European Health Insurance Card is an
adequate health insurance document at it gives EU citizens access to medical care
during residence in an EU country or in Switzerland. Apart from the European Health
Insurance Card the trainees must at least have personal liability insurance which they
cover on their own expenses as it is necessary in order to be covered for any fallout
from an incident (including an accident in the workplace)\textsuperscript{48}.

As far as the potentials of the new Erasmus+ are concerned, this programme
of the European Commission, more than in the past programmes, is very promising as

\textsuperscript{46} Gapyear. Available: \url{http://www.gapyear.gr/erasmusPlacement.html}
\textsuperscript{47} University of Tampere, \textit{Instructions for Erasmus Work Placements 2013-2014}, Centre of
International Education.
\textsuperscript{48} International Affairs Office, National University of Ireland, \textit{Erasmus placements and insurance –
important information for students}. Available: \url{http://www.nuigalway.ie/careers/pdfs/plct_lip_insurance_outgoing_placements.pdf}
it will offer space for developing mobility activities that involve partner organizations with different backgrounds and active in different fields or socio-economic sectors providing with more opportunities and options to the participating students.

2.3. The Voucher traineeship programme

Apart from the students’ traineeship programmes, similar opportunities are provided by public and private organizations for young professionals after their graduation. Initiatives towards an aggregate plan for traineeships addressed to young professionals have been organized by both the Greek State and private organizations. The most popular traineeship programme which is run the last year by the Greek State is the Voucher programme.

Voucher is a programme of professional training through 5-month traineeships for unemployed young professionals between the ages of 18-29. The programme is run by the Manpower Employment Organization (OAED) and was first introduced in September 2013. The action aims to support the unemployed in several sectors of the Greek economy, in order for the participants to practice their skills and gain work experience as well as to reduce unemployment.

The first year of the programme was completed in May 2014 during which 35,000 unemployed young people participated in several sectors of the Greek economy and 10,000 participated especially in the tourism industry. After the successful completion of the first year, the second year of the Voucher programme starts at September 2014 and is separated in two different age groups. 30,000 participants will come from the age group 25-29 and 12,000 from the age group 18-24. Priority will be given to companies in the growing sectors of the economy (energy, environment, information technology); however, the 42,000 unemployed young people will realize their traineeships in all industries.

Regarding the educational level of the unemployed young people who benefit from the Voucher programme, they need to have graduated either from Universities/Higher Technological Education Institutions or from High

School/Vocational Training Institutions. Prerequisite for all participants is to be registered in the Manpower Employment Organization (OAED).

The action is subsidized by the NSRF (National Strategic Reference Framework) in the cadre of the Programme entitled "Human Resources Development" under the supervision of the Greek Ministry of Labour, with resources of Greece and of the European Union (European Social Fund).

The first stage of the programme is the theoretical training which is realized by the Vocational Training Centers (KEK) and lasts approximately two and a half weeks. The second stage is the so-called traineeship, during which the participant after realizing some interviews he/she chooses the company where he/she will realize the 5-month traineeship.

As far as the legal status of these traineeship programmes is concerned, a tripartite agreement is signed between the unemployed young professional, the employer company and the Vocational Training Center (KEK). The unemployed young people who take part in the Voucher programme they are neither employees nor trainees; a new term has been invented and they are called “beneficiaries”. During their traineeship they have neither pensionable stamp nor social insurance coverage in the Social Security Institution (IKA). They are not employees and for that reason they are not subject to the Labour Inspectorate in order to claim labour rights. After the completion of their traineeship they are paid an educational allowance for the 5-month traineeship which is not given by the employer but it is subsidized by the NSRF (National Strategic Reference Framework) as described above.

Indeed, the call for applications No 1/2013 for the programme "Voucher for the entrance in the labour market of the unemployed young people up to 29 years old", based on the relevant joint ministerial decision, designates the general terms governing the Voucher programme as follows: “The unemployed who will be registered in the Registry of Beneficiaries have only the rights and obligations set out herein” (§ 1.5. iv.). Regarding the conditions for the realization of the traineeship, “the traineeship of the beneficiaries is mandatory and takes place in accordance with the terms of the aforementioned call for applications” (§ 4.5.) whereas no more

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51 Which is integrated in the Operational Program "Workforce Development" with Protocol Number: 3.11577/5.7600/1-4-2013 of the Ministry of Labour, Social Security and Providence, the General Secretariat of Management of European Union’s and other funds and the Special Service for the application of the co-financed actions of the European Central Bank.

52 The 1.5188/ουχ.3.968/15.4.11 (ΦΕΚ 915/Β/20.5.2011) Joint Ministerial Decision.
allowances are provisioned for the participants unemployed young people apart from the educational allowance after the completion of the traineeship as described above. It could be simply characterized as a legitimate inelastic labour force without labour rights.

Overall, the Voucher programme aims at facilitating the insertion of young people up to 29 years in the labour market combining training with internships. In particular, the programme aims at improving the skills of the workforce in order to find a job more easily. However, this has not actually happened after the completion of the first year of the programme as long as Greece is still experiencing serious unemployment rates especially among young people. Indeed, based on recent data of the Hellenic Statistical Authority (EL.STAT.), in May 2014, when the first cycle of the Voucher programme had been completed, the unemployment rate in the age group 15-24 was 53.1% and in the age group 25-34 was 34.3% compared to 37.3% in the same month last year.\(^{53}\)

It is interesting to refer to a survey of ALBA Graduate Business School at the American College of Greece\(^ {54}\) for the labour market which found out that 30.5% of the Greek companies that participated in the survey during the period February to May 2014, stated that they recruit staff through the Voucher programme of the Manpower Employment Organization (OAED) for young unemployed up to 29 years old which offers wages below the minimum wage.

In conclusion, although a large number of unemployed have joined the Voucher programme, only a few of them have been ultimately hired by the companies after the completion of their traineeship. So we could say for the effectiveness of this programme that an extremely low rate\(^ {55}\) even below 5% has finally found a job whereas the remaining percentage (95%) returns to the previous state of the unemployment and job search, only including this experience on his resume.


2.4. The traineeship programmes of the companies

Apart from the subsidized programs that are launched within the initiatives of the educational institutions or the Greek State, a lot of companies run traineeship programs on their own either in the form of graduate trainee programmes or as a form of simple internships. Examples of large organizations that offer well-structured traineeship programmes globally that are not subsidized by external resources are Coca Cola, Canon, Eurobank, Google, Hewllet Packard, Intel, Nokia, Shell, Siemens, Toyota, and the United Nations\(^5^6\). Some of these companies run such programmes in Greece also as for instance the “Graduate Trainee Programme 2014” of Coca Cola 3E or the “Youth Executives Programme” which was run by Eurobank Ergasias in 2006. Companies through such programmes or simple internships offer the opportunity to recent graduates or young professionals to acquire structured and comprehensive knowledge of the operations of the company, to cultivate their entrepreneurial spirit and make their first steps in the workplace. Whether or not they will be further offered a position in the company this is up to the employer to decide.

The departments where the traineeship positions are offered vary from one company to another (i.e. marketing, accounting, human resources, operations, Information Technologies, legal services, sales etc.) and the duration varies as well according to the company’s needs and scope. Companies choose to launch traineeship programmes for a lot of different reasons as for instance to create a pool of candidates for potential future recruiting, to cover short-term needs of the company, for marketing purposes or other reasons.

Given the fact that there is no pattern of framework regarding the choice of a company to launch traineeship programs for young professionals it is impossible to record every single traineeship which is run by Greek companies. However, regarding the legal status of these traineeships, if these programmes do not take place in the cadre of the aforementioned subsidized student internships where special terms and conditions are provisioned, then they are subject to the general rules of the labour law. Thus, the trainees have the rights of the employees, they have to be provided with health insurance in the Social Security Institution (IKA) and they are entitled to the minimum wage according to the National General Collective Labour Agreement.

2.5. The voluntary traineeship programmes

Voluntary traineeship programs are launched by both private and public entities in Greece as well as by non-governmental and non-profit organizations and they are an opportunity for the volunteers to gain work experience and develop their skills in order to enhance their curriculum and benefit from the development of a professional network. The voluntary traineeship programs constitute a form of voluntary work which is defined by the International Labour Office (ILO) as “unpaid non-compulsory work; that is, time individuals give without pay to activities performed either through an organization or directly for others outside their own household”\(^{57}\).

In Greece there is no legal definition of the voluntary work apart from the definition given by the Greek Federation of Non-Governmental Organizations which states that "volunteering is the commitment of a person to work without pay for a definite or indefinite period of time for the common good of the society"\(^{58}\). Moreover, there is not also any legal framework in Greece regarding the labour status of the volunteers. Therefore, volunteers are not covered by any form of legal protection and, as long as there is no specific legislation, the general regulations are applied concerning employment and health insurance issues.

In particular, those who perform any kind of voluntary work, including the voluntary traineeship programs, are solely dependent on the organization where they perform their work to cover their expenses for the realization of their voluntary activity due to the fact that there is no legal provisions for the reimbursement of their expenses as, for instance, their water, coffee and food during a full-time voluntary programme\(^{59}\). There is also no legal provision regarding the insurance of the volunteers, therefore, their protection in case of an accident, disease or damage from third parties depends on the organization where they work. If the organization does


\(^{58}\) University of Peloponnesse (2006), Project: Study of the volunteerism in Greece. Mindwell S.A., Athens

not provide insurance, the volunteer must have his own private personal insurance\textsuperscript{60}. Taking into consideration that volunteers do not belong to a formal legal status, they are not also issued with any social benefits. However, they can benefit from the rights associated with their parallel social status, if any, apart from that of the volunteer (i.e. student, unemployed, etc).

Despite the lack of legal provisions for the protection of the volunteers, voluntary traineeship programmes still constitute a method of gaining professional experiences and knowledge. It is interesting to refer to a global search engine for voluntary training programs for young people (available at: \texttt{http://www.elix.org.gr}) which includes a detailed catalogue of active proposals for voluntary work camps in Greece and in abroad as well.

### 2.6. Best practices

#### 2.6.1. The ReGeneration programme

ReGeneration\textsuperscript{61} is an initiative of an international NGO for young people in Greece called “Global Shapers Athens Hub” which was established in 2011 and focuses on achieving shared social goals in connection with issues such as unemployment in young people, entrepreneurship, the overall bottom-up economic growth and volunteerism in Greece. The ReGeneration programme was run for the first time in 2014 and leads to a six-month internship programme which offers substantial training and work experience in large companies in Greece. The programme refers to young people, graduates of Universities, Technological Education Institutions or Colleges in all fields of knowledge, with or without a title of postgraduate studies and with limited work experience.

As a training programme, ReGeneration is a joint action of the biggest companies active in Greece as it is not the product of a single company, but serves a framework for cooperation between many companies. Some of the 26 companies that participate in 2014’s ReGeneration programme were ANT1 Group, Athenian

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\textsuperscript{60} Hellenic Republic, European Union & General Secretariat for youth (2012). \textit{Study on the investigation and survey of the current situation of volunteerism in Greece under the European Programme “European Year of Volunteering 2011}, Kedros S.A.

\textsuperscript{61} The Regenerarion programme. Available: \texttt{http://regeneration.gr}
Brewery, Eurobank Group, Johnson&Johnson, Microsoft, Mytilineos Group, Nestlé Hellas, Pfizer, Pharmanel Pharmaceuticals S.A., PwC, Siemens, Coca-Cola Company, TITAN and Travelplanet24.

As far as the structure of the programme is concerned, it is a combination of six months’ paid internship, intensive training, personal development and volunteer work in a NGO. However, the programme does not guarantee a permanent position in the hiring company as long as the decision to proceed with a permanent engagement is a decision taken only by the employer company itself after the completion of the internship programme. What it not made clear by the programme is the legal status of those traineeship positions in the companies that will hire the successful candidates. However, it is a very nice initiative which gives the opportunity to all candidates to take part in a well-structured recruitment procedure with on-line test assessments of skills and knowledge, formal interviews and case-study analysis.

2.6.2. The Job Shadowing

Job Shadowing is a new trend of on-the-job learning, career development, and leadership development intervention. This new tool has gradually become very popular for organizations worldwide which use job shadowing as a very effective tool for learning. Particularly, Job Shadowing involves working with another employee who might have a different job in hand, and might either have something to teach, or can help the person shadowing him or her to learn new aspects related to the job, organization, certain behaviors or competencies

In other words, Job shadowing is a career exploration activity that offers an opportunity to spend time with a professional currently working in a person’s career field of interest. Essentially, what Job shadowing offers is a chance to see how you can actually work in a specific job. Job shadowers have the opportunity to observe the day-to-day activities of someone in the current workforce while they also can have their questions answered.

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Job shadowing is also used as an educational programme for college students as it gives them the opportunity to learn about a particular occupation or profession in order to decide if it might be suitable for them. In practice, a business who runs a job shadowing programme typically partners with an educational institution in order to provide a student with the experience of what it is like to perform a certain type of job. For a few days the student will spend time in the business he is interested in while at the same time he will be accompanied by an experienced worker of the business as he performs the targeted job. In that way, job shadowing, the same as internships, can give young professionals the opportunity to gain exposure and first-hand experience as long as these alternatives really make the difference between assuming what a potential career would be like and actually understanding it based on personal exposure through an actual visit to the organization.

2.6.3. The “stage” in France

The French system of higher education integrates both in the undergraduate and the postgraduate studies an internship period with the scope to help the insertion of the students in the workplace. This internship period is called “stage” and is a period of practical training which is held as an additional part of the academic studies. In France, it is necessary to be enrolled in an educational institution in order to complete an internship. The internship is an essential part of the academic course programme. It allows students to become familiar with the professional world and to apply their knowledge.

Host organizations which accept the “stagiaires” (interns) are businesses, public enterprises, government agencies, public institutions, local authorities and associations. Large companies usually offer “stage” positions, but there are also small and medium enterprises (SMEs), small and medium industries (SMIs), or very small enterprises (VSE) where the students can realize their internships.

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64 [http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/job-shadowing.html#ixzz3DJ0lq7VF](http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/job-shadowing.html#ixzz3DJ0lq7VF)

Any “stage” is subject to a binding agreement between the host organization, the academic institution and the student. The “stage” contract is a document required by the French government for any student interested in doing an internship in France and it is similar to a job contract, in that it specifies the missions and the expectations demanded of interns.

What’s more, for any internship in France that lasts longer than two months, employers are obliged to provide the interns with a minimum monthly stipend of approximately 435 euros\textsuperscript{66} whereas in depends to the employers if they want also to provide food vouchers, public transportation subsidies, or other benefits. With the new law for internships that came into force the 26 June 2014 the new minimum monthly stipend for the “stages” that will start in 2015 will be 523 euros\textsuperscript{67}.

Indeed, the French state has managed to build a uniform legal framework for every stage that take place in the cadre of the studies by providing the trainees with substantial rights and a minimum wage. Currently, the “stage” is used as a bridge to the workplace as long as companies search their workforce through educational institutions by introducing traineeship positions which are usually converted to job positions after the completion of the traineeship period.

2.6.4. The "Gap Year" programme

In the professional world, a gap year is when one stops his or her formal work life to pursue other interests. However, today gap year for the American students refers to a pre-college period of academic courses, language studies, volunteer work, travel or internships, all for the purpose of improving themselves in knowledge, maturity, decision-making, leadership, independence and self-sufficiency, thus improving their resumes\textsuperscript{68}.

British and European students, on the other hand, have adopted a different approach to the "Gap Year" by generally working for 3-6 months and then travelling throughout the globe for the remaining time before college begins. This is intended to

\textsuperscript{66} The stipend for the internships lasting more than two months is calculated based on the base of the 12.5% of the time limit for social security. Loi n° 2009-1437 du 24 novembre 2009 relative à l’orientation et à la formation professionnelle tout au long de la vie


\textsuperscript{68} [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gap_year](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gap_year)
expand the mind, personal confidence, experiences, and interests before college. The “GapYear” is generally viewed by parents as a formative year for young adults to become independent and learn a great deal of responsibility prior to engaging in University life.

There is an online search engine (available at: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gap_year) where everyone interested in gaining experience abroad can look for an internship, a summer job, graduate jobs, au pair jobs, a teaching job, a work starter pack and a lot of different opportunities. It is a great opportunity for any young professional to realize a training abroad and broaden his horizons in his field of interest. Such an experience gives birth to new perspectives, way of thinking and even abilities and skills.

2.6.5. The Global Internship Programme of AIESEC

The AIESEC (Association internationale des étudiants en sciences économiques et commerciales, in English: International Association of Students in Economic and Commercial Sciences) was founded in 1956 and is the largest international, non-governmental, student-run organization in the world with presence in 124 countries and 2400 universities and has more than 100,000 members (as of January 2014). AIESEC’s international headquarters are in Rotterdam, Netherlands, whereas in Greece it has presence in Athens, Thessaloniki, Piraeus and Patras.

The Global Internship Programme of AIESEC is a programme that offers internships abroad and gives the opportunity to students or young graduates to develop their leadership skills by working and leading teams as well as their personal characteristics, through a professional internship experience in an international development environment. AIESEC provides a platform for students in different universities and colleges which facilitate the application process for those interested in going on an international internship. Participants can choose to work in areas of management, technology, education, or development; helping to build one’s corporate skills.

Regarding the legal framework of these internships it depends on the legislation of the country where the host organization is found whether or not there are

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provisioned special terms and conditions for the traineeship programmes. However, living and working in a foreign country is by all means a great opportunity for a young individual to practice his knowledge and enter in an international professional environment.

2.7. Research questions

After the detailed recording of the various traineeship opportunities in Greece and in abroad, the current study concentrates on the traineeship programmes that take place in the Greek workplace and aims to investigate the framework in which those programmes are conducted. The key question of the current survey is the following: are the traineeship programmes an effective method for the insertion of the young professionals in the labour market?

Alongside with the key question the current research aims to examine which are the most popular traineeship programmes in Greece as well as the special conditions under which the traineeships take place such as the duration, the working hours and the refunds that are provided by the employers. In order to approach the key question there are also investigated the level of satisfaction of the participants in traineeship programmes regarding the skills and knowledge they have acquired, the working environment and the training they have received as well as whether or not they were given the option to be hired by the company where they have realized their traineeship after the completion of the programme.
CHAPTER 3: Methodology

3.1. Sample

The sample of the current research was composed from two different sub-samples. The first sub-sample was composed by 143 adult young professionals of every educational level who have realized a traineeship programme in Greece. The second sub-sample was composed by 21 representatives of Greek companies, regardless of industry sector, which were running traineeship programmes at the time of the realization of the current study.

3.2. Research tools

3.2.1. Questionnaire for former trainees

For the purpose of the current study there was constructed a new questionnaire of twenty-five questions. Twenty-four out of the twenty-five questions were closed ended multiple choice questions and one of them was open ended question (see Appendix A).

This questionnaire emerged after a synthesis and modification of five other questionnaires previously used for the needs of the evaluation of the traineeship programmes run by the higher education institutions either in Greece or under the framework of the Erasmus placement programme and provided by the career offices of the universities.

The creation of the questionnaire was on-line through the Google-drive-forms application and was distributed via social networks (available at: https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1y0RaULW9lhh0De1cSWBAwSDU64F9lhnWxzjPzSY8/viewform?c=0&w=1&usv=mail_form_link). The answers to the questionnaire were gathered during the period from 7 to 23 September 2014.
The questionnaire followed the general principles for the construction of questionnaires in surveys conveyed in the field of social sciences\textsuperscript{70}.

3.2.2. Questionnaire for companies

For the purpose of the current study there was also constructed a new questionnaire of twenty-five questions. Twenty-three out of the twenty-five questions were closed ended multiple choice questions and two of them were open ended questions (see Appendix B).

The construction of this questionnaire was partially based on evaluation questionnaires distributed by companies to their trainees after the realization of their internship and partially based on questionnaires provided by the career offices of the universities concerning the evaluation by the employers of the students’ traineeship programmes that took place in their organizations.

The creation of the questionnaire was realized on-line through the Google-drive-forms application and was distributed via email (available at: https://docs.google.com/forms/d/19bQsO8msHVzkHcjsRDwa3OGydoj9Vcg8oEPbvYe9g/viewform?c=0&w=1&usp=mail_form_link). The answers to the questionnaire were gathered during the period from 9 September 2014 to 3 October 2014.

The questionnaire followed the general principles for the construction of questionnaires in surveys conveyed in the field of social sciences\textsuperscript{71}.

3.2.3. Interview

For the scope of the current study apart from the quantitative research which was the main approach of the survey it was also conducted a qualitative research. For the qualitative approach, the interview was used as the data collection method which offers immediacy of the participants. In particular, there were realized six interviews, in the three of which there were interviewed young professionals former trainees and in the other three there were interviewed three representatives of Greek organizations.


The interviews were conducted from 11 to 19 September 2014, five of them were conducted face to face and one was conducted by telephone.

The interview was constructed by seven open ended questions, the three of which were common for both the former trainees and the representatives of the enterprises. The purpose of conducting the interviews was to further investigate and examine in depth the opinion and the motives of both former trainees and companies towards the effectiveness of the traineeship programmes. Moreover, the realization of the interviews aimed to provide with a more accurate and objective approach in order to establish a higher degree of reliability and validity of the current survey.\footnote{Oppenheim, A. N. (2000). \textit{Questionnaire design, interviewing and attitude measurement} (New ed.). London, UK: Continuum International Publishing Group Ltd.}

### 3.3. Statistics

For the analysis of the findings of the research tools that were used for the purpose of the current survey, there were applied descriptive statistics which describe the basic features of the data in the study. Descriptive statistics provided with simple summaries about the sample and about the observations that have been made in each one of the two questionnaires. Together with a simple graphics analysis, they formed the basis of the quantitative analysis of data of the current survey.

Moreover, apart from the simple descriptive data analysis there was further applied a cross-tabulation analysis in order to summarize categorical data and create contingency tables which provided with a basic picture of the interrelation between several pairs of answers in the questions imposed to the participants of the questionnaires. For the cross-tabulation analysis the statistical software package SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) version 20.0 was used.
CHAPTER 4: Findings

4.1. Findings of the questionnaire for former trainees

4.1.1. Sample demographics

Regarding demographic information of the sample of the 143 former trainees that participated in the survey (see Table 3), the proportion of females was almost 59% (85 out of 143), while the proportion of males was 41% (58 out of 143). As far as the age of the participants is concerned, the majority of respondents (110 out of 143) were between 18-30 years old, 36% (51 out of 143) in the age group 18-25 and 41% (59 out of 143) in the age group 26-30 while 19% (27 out of 143) belong in the age group 31-35 and 3% (5 out of 143) were older than 35 years old. Regarding the educational level of the respondents almost 90% of the sample are highly educated people and, in particular, 39% were master graduates (56 out 143) and 50% university or TEI graduates (72 out of 143). A proportion of 7% of the respondents were undergraduate students (10 out of 143) and a proportion of 3% were high school or IEK graduates (5 out of 143).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>%</th>
<th>(Frequency)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gender</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>(85)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>(58)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Age</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18-25</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>(51)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26-30</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>(59)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31-35</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>(27)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt;35</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>(5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Educational level</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High school/Vocational Training Institution (IEK) graduate</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>(5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undergraduate student</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>(10)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University/Technological Education Institution graduate</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>(72)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master graduate</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>(56)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3: Sample demographics for former trainees
4.1.2. Descriptive statistics

After analyzing demographic issues of the sample of the former trainees, there are presented the answers of the respondents regarding the characteristics of their traineeship (see Table 4) and, particularly, the type of the traineeship programme they followed, their research method to find their traineeship, the assessment they went through to be selected for the traineeship and the duration of their traineeship.

More than half of the respondents have realized a student traineeship (54%) which is consistent with the practice of the higher education institutions in Greece to incorporate in the undergraduate studies an optional or mandatory traineeship as described herein in the second part of the current study. A percentage of 27% have realized a paid traineeship programme whereas a percentage of 10% have realized a voluntary traineeship which means that they were not paid by their employer. The voucher traineeship programme, which was introduced in 2013 by the Greek State, was also among the types of traineeship realized by the respondents at a proportion of 8%.

Almost 47% of the respondents-former trainees have found their traineeship through the career services of their educational institution whereas 36% of them were assisted by their friends and family. Companies’ and career websites have been used as research tools of the respondents in lower proportions, 7% and 8% respectively, while social networks and employment agencies were almost not at all used by the respondents.

Regarding the assessment that the participants of the survey have been through in order to be selected for the traineeship position, the majority of them (45%) have gone through an interview and 6% through a group interview while a proportion of 26% of the respondents has been selected based only on a CV assessment. There has been no assessment for a 17% of the participants while only a proportion of 4% of the respondents has gone through a skills’ and abilities’ test assessment in the selection process. Finally, for a proportion of 2% their courses’ grades have been the criterion for their selection in the traineeship programme.

As far as the duration of the traineeships is concerned, 45% of the respondents have realized a traineeship lasting between 3-6 months and 31% a traineeship lasting between 1-3 months. Fewer respondents have realized long-lasting traineeships and, particularly, a proportion of 13% has remained in the traineeship position for a period
of 6-12 months whereas only 11% of the respondents have stayed in their position for more than a year.

Table 4: Characteristics of the traineeship programmes of the participant former trainees

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of traineeship programme</th>
<th>% (Frequency)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Voluntary traineeship</td>
<td>10% (15)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student traineeship</td>
<td>54% (77)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apprenticeship</td>
<td>1% (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage</td>
<td>1% (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voucher traineeship programme</td>
<td>8% (11)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paid internship</td>
<td>27% (38)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Where did you look for and find your traineeship from?</th>
<th>% (Frequency)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>University career office</td>
<td>47% (67)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Company website</td>
<td>7% (10)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social networks (ex. Facebook, linkedin)</td>
<td>1% (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career websites</td>
<td>8% (11)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friends and family</td>
<td>36% (52)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment agency</td>
<td>1% (1)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Did you go through some sort of assessment to be selected for the traineeship position?</th>
<th>% (Frequency)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CV assessment</td>
<td>26% (37)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interview</td>
<td>45% (65)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group interview</td>
<td>6% (8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skills and abilities test assessment</td>
<td>4% (6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other: Course grades</td>
<td>2% (3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No assessment</td>
<td>17% (24)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Duration of the traineeship programme</th>
<th>% (Frequency)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-3 months</td>
<td>31% (45)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-6 months</td>
<td>45% (64)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-12 months</td>
<td>13% (8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt; 1 year</td>
<td>11% (16)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Concerning the business sector where the respondents have realized their traineeship programme the following figure presents their answers (see Figure 2). In particular, the participants of the survey have followed a traineeship in organizations which operate in construction and materials (13%), health, social services, financial and legal services (10%), as well as in the bank and education sector (both 8%) and in technology (6%). Other industries, in which part of the respondents has realized their traineeship, have been the trade sector and the industrial products and services (both 5%), the travel and leisure industry and the food and beverage sector (both 3%), as
well the media, telecommunications and the oil and gas industry (2%). Very few of the traineeships (1%) have taken place in the raw materials industry, the insurance sector and the research area.

The participants of the survey were also questioned about the funding of their traineeship position (see Figure 3); whether they were paid by the company itself or by external resources (i.e. subsidized programmes). It is interesting to notice that 38% responded that their position was funded by external resources whereas 15% of them answered that their position was partially funded by the organization itself and partially by external funding. A proportion of 36% said that it was the company which was paying for their remuneration whereas a proportion of 10% was not paid at all during their traineeship which is reasonable taking into consideration that 10% of the respondents have realized a voluntary traineeship programme.
Concerning further refunds and/or treatments that the participants of the survey had enjoyed during their traineeship programme apart from their wage, the respondents had the option to choose more than 1 answers in case that their organization had provided them with more refunds (see Figure 4). Surprisingly, half of the respondents (51%) had no other refunds and/or treatments during their traineeship while 31% was provided with water and coffee. A proportion of 19% was covered with social security insurance and a proportion of 9% was further compensated for their travel expenses. Interestingly, 5% of the respondents were provided with coupons for meals.
Furthermore, the following table summarizes the answers of the respondents to the questionnaire concerning the perceptions of the former trainees towards various aspects of the traineeship they have realized and, more specifically, their satisfaction about their traineeship experience (see Table 5).

Regarding the relevancy of the traineeship object to the studies of the respondents (Question 10), 40% of them answered that the object of their traineeship was totally relevant to their object of studies while 27% was also satisfied with the level of relevancy between their studies and traineeship position. On the other hand, 21% of the respondents ranked the relevancy at the medium point.

About the equipment which was necessary for the realization of the traineeship (Question 15) almost half of the respondents (48%) were fully provided with what was needed and a proportion of 31% found that the necessary equipment was provided in an adequate degree.

In addition, 40% of the participants considered that the traineeship they finally realized was totally corresponding to the description of the position (Question 16) while 31% of them also felt that this correspondence was adequate enough. Instead 19% of the respondents rated the same characteristic in the medium value.

Regarding the orientation that the participants of the survey experienced during their traineeship (Question 17), 41% of them said that they has the most proper and sufficient orientation in their workplace while 32% also answered that this orientation was sufficient enough to insert them into the new working environment. However, when they were questioned whether the traineeship provided them with challenging and rewarding work (Question 18), a proportion of 22% of the respondents answered that the work was not challenging enough whereas 27% was neutral. Only 16% of the respondents felt that their work during their traineeship was very challenging and rewarding while 29% believed that it was quite challenging.

As long as the relations with the mentor and the colleagues is concerned (Question 19), a proportion of 38% of the former trainees that took part in the survey answered that they had great support and collaboration with their mentor/colleagues, 31% of them replied that the support and collaboration of their mentor/colleagues was pretty good whereas a proportion of 19% was neutral.
Furthermore, examining whether or not the traineeship programme contributed in developing skills and acquiring substantial experience (Question 20), 36% of the respondents replied that this contribution of their traineeship was very significant while 31% of them considered that contribution quite significant. On the contrary, a proportion of 17% considered the same element neither significant nor insignificant. Regarding the level of satisfaction of the overall traineeship experience (Question 21), only 27% of the participants in the survey denoted that their traineeship experience was excellent, 38% of them were satisfied enough whereas 25% rated their satisfaction in the middle point. A proportion of 8% was rather disappointed by their traineeship experience while only 1% was totally dissatisfied.

Last but not least, the participants of the survey were questioned to what extent they feel confident that they can meet the market demands after the end of their traineeship (Question 24). Only a percentage of 16% feels completely confident, a percentage of 32% feels confident enough while 29% rated their level of confidence in the mid-point. Conversely, 19% of the respondents do not feel that their traineeship programme has made them confident enough to meet the market demands.

Table 5: Perceptions of the former trainees concerning their satisfaction about their traineeship programme (1: the lowest rate – 5: the highest rate)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Q.</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>AVG</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>How relevant was the object of the traineeship to your studies?</td>
<td>3.87</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>In what level you were provided with all the necessary equipment (i.e. desk, computer, tools etc.) for the realization of the traineeship?</td>
<td>4.15</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.</td>
<td>To what extent the traineeship corresponded to the traineeship description adequately?</td>
<td>3.99</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17.</td>
<td>To what extent there was proper and sufficient orientation into the workplace during the traineeship?</td>
<td>3.99</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18.</td>
<td>To what extent the traineeship provided you with challenging and rewarding work?</td>
<td>3.27</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19.</td>
<td>To what extent you had the support and collaboration of your mentor/colleagues?</td>
<td>3.94</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Moreover, the participants of the survey were questioned what they liked the most about their traineeship and they were given a list of features (see Table 6) among which they could choose more than one answers. It seems that the most important benefit for them (64%) was the fact that their traineeship was an opportunity for gaining knowledge. Equally important have been for the respondents the good co-workers (51%) they were working with and the professional work environment (50%) they had the chance to join in. A proportion of 47% liked also the fact that their traineeship has been an opportunity to develop their skills as well as an opportunity to create a new contacts’ network (45%). Among the rest of the benefits the respondents have identified in their traineeship experience have been the different responsibilities (22%) and the good supervisor (28%). On the contrary, the good pay and the flexible working schedule were among the features that only a small proportion of the participants in the survey benefited from during their traineeship as long as these features have gathered a percentage of 12% and 9% respectively.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Q. 22.</th>
<th>Which of the following did you like the most about your traineeship?</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Opportunity for gaining knowledge</td>
<td>64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Good co-workers</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Professional work environment</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Opportunity for development of skills</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Creation of a contacts’ network</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Good supervisor</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Different responsibilities</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Good pay</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Flexible schedule</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Finally, considering whether or not the former trainees were given the option to be hired by the organization where they realized their traineeship programme after the completion of the traineeship, it is interesting to notice that even though the majority of the respondents (64%) was not given that option, a proportion of 36% had the opportunity to remain in the company at a working position after the end of their traineeship (see Figure 5).

![Figure 5: Option to be hired after the end of the traineeship](image)

4.1.3. Cross-tabulation

Inter alia the former trainees who participated in the survey were also questioned about the working hours they were told that they will work during their traineeship and the real working hours they finally worked (see Table 7). In particular, 38 out of 143 respondents had agreed for a part-time traineeship and, finally, only 78.9% of them worked as part-time trainees whereas there was a statistically significant difference with the proportion of 18.4% of them who ended up to be full-time trainees as well as with the proportion of 2.6% of them who ended up working overtime (over 40 hours per week). Among the 97 respondents who were full-time
trainees there was a statistically significant proportion of 13.4% of them who ended up working overtime. The statistically significant difference of the aforementioned proportions reveal the existence of an interrelation between the number of the expected working hours and the real working hours of the participant former trainees.

Table 7: Cross-tabulation between the expected working hours and the real working hours of the former trainees

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EXPECTED WORKING HOURS</th>
<th>REAL WORKING HOURS</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Part-time</td>
<td>Full-time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part-time</td>
<td>30\textsubscript{a}</td>
<td>7\textsubscript{b}</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full-time</td>
<td>3\textsubscript{a}</td>
<td>81\textsubscript{b}</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 hours</td>
<td>0\textsubscript{a}</td>
<td>0\textsubscript{a}</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open working timetable</td>
<td>2\textsubscript{a}</td>
<td>0\textsubscript{a}</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Each subscript letter denotes a subset of Real working hours categories whose column proportions do not differ significantly from each other at the .05 level.

Furthermore, in the following table it was attempted an examination of the relationship between the way of funding of the traineeship position and the option to be hired after the end of the traineeship. In other words, it seemed interesting to see how many trainees were given the choice to be hired by the company after the end of their traineeship in relation with whether or not the company was funding their traineeship position by its own resources. In particular, from the 52 respondents whose traineeships were funded by the company’s resources, 42.3% of them were given the option to stay in the company whereas from the 53 respondents whose traineeships were funded by external resources (i.e. subsidized programmes) only 32% were given the option to be hired afterwards.
Table 8: Cross-tabulation between the funding of the traineeship position and the option to be hired

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FUNDING OF THE TRAINEESHIP POSITION</th>
<th>OPTION TO BE HIRED</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Company's resources</td>
<td>22&lt;sub&gt;a&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
<td>30&lt;sub&gt;a&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>External funding</td>
<td>17&lt;sub&gt;a&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
<td>36&lt;sub&gt;a&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both</td>
<td>10&lt;sub&gt;a&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
<td>12&lt;sub&gt;a&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No funding</td>
<td>2&lt;sub&gt;a&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
<td>14&lt;sub&gt;b&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[Each subscript letter denotes a subset of Option to be hired categories whose column proportions do not differ significantly from each other at the .05 level.]

Additionally, there is a statistically significant difference between the traineeship position which were not funded at all and the option to be hired by the company afterwards (see also Figure 6). In particular, from the 16 respondents who realized an unpaid traineeship programme, 87.5% of them was not given the option to be hired by the company after the completion of the traineeship which shows that the ability of a company to hire a trainee was interrelated with its ability to fund its own resources. By the time the company could not fund the traineeship position at all, it was not expected to be able to fund a job position.
Another relation that displayed interest was the one between the duration of the traineeship programmes and the option to be hired after the completion of the traineeship (see Table 9). Among the 45 respondents who realized a 1-3 month traineeship only 17.8% of them were given the option to be hired by the company after the end of the programme whereas the majority of them (82.2%) were not given that option; difference which was proven to be statistically significant. This significant difference implies that there is an interrelation between the duration of the traineeship and the option to be hired afterwards which is reasonable if we consider the fact that a short-term traineeship period (1-3 months) is not enough to test a trainee in order to decide whether or not to hire him/her afterwards. On the other hand, among the 64 who realized a 3-6 month traineeship, the option to be hired was proposed to 42.1% of them instead of the rest 57.8%.
Table 9: Cross-tabulation between the duration of the traineeship programmes and the option to be hired after the completion of the traineeship

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DURATION OF TRAINEESHIP PROGRAMME</th>
<th>OPTION TO BE HIRED</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-3 months</td>
<td>8&lt;sub&gt;a&lt;/sub&gt; 37&lt;sub&gt;b&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-6 months</td>
<td>27&lt;sub&gt;a&lt;/sub&gt; 37&lt;sub&gt;a&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-12 months</td>
<td>8&lt;sub&gt;a&lt;/sub&gt; 10&lt;sub&gt;a&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt;1 year</td>
<td>8&lt;sub&gt;a&lt;/sub&gt; 8&lt;sub&gt;a&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>51 92</td>
<td>143</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[Each subscript letter denotes a subset of Option to be hired categories whose column proportions do not differ significantly from each other at the .05 level.]

Concerning the traineeships which lasted 6-12 months (18 out of the 143); 44% of them were given the option to be hired afterwards unlike the remaining 55.6% (see also Figure 7). For those who realized a more than 1 year traineeship (16 out of the 143), half of them were offered afterwards a job in the company unlike the other half.

Figure 7: Cross-tabulation between the duration of the traineeship programmes and the option to be hired after the completion of the traineeship
4.1.4. Interview findings

The demographic characteristics of the three former trainees that were interviewed are presented in Table 10 while there are also included the main characteristics of the type of traineeship they realized.

**Table 10: Demographic and traineeship characteristics of the interviewees**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Demographics</th>
<th>Interviewees</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>28</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational level</td>
<td>Postgraduate student</td>
<td>Postgraduate student</td>
<td>Master graduate</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traineeship position</td>
<td>Marketing trainee</td>
<td>Auditor trainee</td>
<td>Finance trainee</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duration of the traineeship</td>
<td>6 months</td>
<td>2 months</td>
<td>6 months</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Company</td>
<td>Parapharmaceutical Company</td>
<td>Business and Cultural Development Center</td>
<td>Hellenic Petroleum</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industry Sector</td>
<td>Health</td>
<td>Financial Services</td>
<td>Oil &amp; Gas</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Furthermore, Table 11 summarizes the main points of the answers of the interviewees to the seven open ended questions that were imposed to them. Considering the most beneficial part of their traineeships all the three interviewees have pointed out the acquisition of new skills whereas the most difficult part for the two of them was the fact that it was the first time in their lives that they had to take the responsibility of their actions and be part of problem-solving situations. However, a common problem they have faced was the overtime hours they had to work while one of the three interviewees confronted long delays regarding her payment as long as her position was part of a subsidized student traineeship programme.

Regarding the contribution of the traineeship to their future career all the three former trainees have underlined the importance of their traineeship in acquiring work experience and skills which constituted significant qualifications for their future as professionals in their field of interest. Concerning their opinion about whether or not traineeships constitute an effective tool for job training and for the insertion of young professionals in the labour market, it is of general consensus among the three interviewees that traineeships can be effective as job training methods, however, when it comes to the insertion in the labor market the companies usually do not proceed in further recruitment.
Indeed, the first interviewee underlines that “traineeship is the first step of the student in the labor market where he has the opportunity to apply the knowledge he gained at his studies in a real workplace”. Moreover, regarding the effectiveness of the traineeship programmes the second interviewee stressed that “they are effective when the employer is willing to teach and guide you and he does not treat you as cheap labor”. On the contrary, the first interviewee points out that, nowadays, young professionals tend to realize more than one traineeship programmes in order to gain a temporary income until they find a job. In her opinion, “the traineeship is a very important tool for the first steps of a student in the labor market, however, a second or a third traineeship programme does not provide you with extra skills anymore but it covers only financial needs and is a temporary solution in the continuous job hunting process of the young professionals”.

Their general opinion about the various programs (i.e. voucher, other subsidized programmes etc) of the Greek State to enhance the insertion of young people in the workplace is negative as long as they believe that these programmes solve temporarily the problem of unemployment while the second interviewee stated also that “they degrade the notion and the scope of the traineeship programmes; when the age limit of these programmes reaches 29 years old we are not talking about trainees anymore but it is just cheap labour”.

About the problems that young people face today in order to insert in the labor market all three interviewees highlighted the recent economic crisis in Greece which led to the reduction of job offers. The first interviewee also believes that the more experienced workforce is preferable than young professionals who lack of long standing professional experience.

Table 11: Main points of the answers of the interviewees to the seven open ended questions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Q.</th>
<th>Interviewee 1</th>
<th>Interviewee 2</th>
<th>Interviewee 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1. What was the most beneficial part of your traineeship? | • Acquisition of soft skills  
• Relations with colleagues | • Non-financial rewards  
• Motivating incentives | • Acquisition of soft skills |
<p>| 2. What was the most difficult part of your traineeship? | • Taking responsibilities | • Taking responsibilities | • Problem-solving cases |
| 3. Which were the main problems you have | • Long delays in payment | • Overtime work | • No problems |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Answer Options</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>confront during your traineeship?</td>
<td>• Overtime work</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 4. How do you feel that your traineeship will contribute in your future career? | • Experience  
• Skills  
• Professional relationships | • Skills  
• Creativity                                                                 |
| 5. What is your opinion about the effectiveness of the traineeship programs as a tool of job training for young professionals and as a tool for insertion in the labor market? | • First step of the student in the labor market  
• Application of knowledge in real workplace  
• Difficulty to access a job contract | • Effective as a job training tool  
• Ineffective as a tool to find a job  
• Trainees are treated as cheap labor                                                                 |
| 6. What is your opinion about the various programs (i.e. voucher, OAED programs etc) of the Greek State to enhance the insertion of young people in the workplace? | • Degradation of the labor market  
• Temporary reduction of unemployment | • Degradation of the traineeship programmes  
• Labor for free                                                                 |
| 7. Which are the problems that young people face today in order to insert in the labor market? | • Lack of jobs  
• Economic crisis  
• More experienced workforce is preferable than young professionals | • Economic crisis  
• Employers cannot identify the skills of the candidates                                                                 |

4.2. Findings of the questionnaire for companies

The number of the companies that participated in the survey was 22, however, one respondent was dropped out of the sample due to the fact that the company he/she represented was not launching traineeship programmes at all and as a result he/she could not contribute in the study. Therefore, the sample of the companies was constructed by 21 participants. Although the sample was very small as long as it could not be achieved greater participation by the companies requested, there will be presented the results of the research in order to have even the slightest evidence
regarding the perceptions of the companies towards the traineeship programmes they launch.

4.2.1. Sample demographics

Regarding the demographic characteristics of the sample of the companies (see Table 12), almost half of the participants (10 out of 21) were holding the position of the Human Resources manager of the organization they represented, 6 out of 21 were acting managers of another department in their organization, 2 of them belonged in the administrative staff and 3 of them had the position of CEO.

Concerning the business sector of the participating companies, there were representatives from various industries of the Greek economy as shown in Table 12. As far as the size\textsuperscript{73} of the companies is concerned 8 out of 21 were medium-sized companies (50-250 employees), 7 of them were large companies (>250 employees), 4 out of 21 were very small companies (1-10 employees) and 2 of them were considered as small (10-20 employees).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position in the organization</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HR manager</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>10 out of 21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manager of other department</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>6 out of 21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative staff</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>2 out of 21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CEO</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>3 out of 21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Business sector</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Oil &amp; Gas</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>1 out of 21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction &amp; Materials</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>1 out of 21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raw materials</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>1 out of 21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industrial Products &amp; Services</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>4 out of 21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food &amp; Beverage</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>3 out of 21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travel &amp; Leisure</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>2 out of 21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trade</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>1 out of 21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bank</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>1 out of 21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insurance</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>2 out of 21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technology</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>1 out of 21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication and Marketing</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>1 out of 21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consulting services</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>2 out of 21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research projects</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>1 out of 21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.2.2. Descriptive statistics

The participants of the survey have gone through a series of questions regarding several characteristics of the traineeship programmes that their organizations launch (see Table 13). First of all, they were questioned what different types of traineeship programmes they offer where the majority of the participating companies (76%) said that they offer student traineeships. About half of them said that they offer paid internships as well as traineeships through the voucher programme of Manpower Employment Organization (OAED).

Regarding the number of years the companies have been running traineeships, 7 out of 21 respondents run such programmes the last 1-5 years, 6 of them the last 5-10 and 5 of them the last 10-20 years. Moreover, 8 out of the 21 participating companies said that the average number of trainees the company accepts in a period of one year is 1-2 trainees whereas only 2 of them occupies more than 10 trainees per year.

Concerning the duration of the traineeships launched by the respondents, the majority (76%) runs 3-6 month traineeships. The specific departments of the companies where the traineeships take place vary from one company to another while there are launched in parallel traineeships in different departments of the same company as presented in Table 13. In order for the participating companies to communicate their traineeship positions the respondents said that they use several tools such as the universities’ career offices (71%), the companies’ websites (43%) and the word of mouth (33%). It is interesting to notice that 1 out of the 21 respondents added the Atlas platform as a tool to communicate the traineeship positions of the company which is the new tool described in the second part of the current study which has been recently created in order to link the students directly with the companies which offer such programmes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Size of the company</th>
<th>Very small (1-10 employees)</th>
<th>19%</th>
<th>4 out of 21</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Small (10-50 employees)</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>2 out of 21</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium (50-250 employees)</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>8 out of 21</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large (&gt; 250 employees)</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>7 out of 21</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 13: Characteristics of the traineeship programmes of the participant companies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of traineeship programmes</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Voluntary internship</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>6 out of 21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student traineeship</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>16 out of 21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apprenticeship</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>4 out of 21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>1 out of 21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voucher traineeship</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>10 out of 21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paid internship</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>11 out of 21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of years the company launched traineeship programmes</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&lt; 1 year</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>1 out of 21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-5 years</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>7 out of 21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-10 years</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>6 out of 21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10-20 years</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>5 out of 21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt; 20 years</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>2 out of 21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of trainees the company accepts in a period of 1 year</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-2 trainees</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>8 out of 21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-5 trainees</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>5 out of 21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-10 trainees</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>6 out of 21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt;10 trainees</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>2 out of 21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Duration of the traineeship programmes</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-3 months</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>3 out of 21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-6 months</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>16 out of 21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-12 months</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>1 out of 21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt;1 year</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>1 out of 21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Department of the company that offer traineeship positions</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Marketing</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>11 out of 21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accounting</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>8 out of 21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human Resources</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>5 out of 21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operations</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>9 out of 21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information Technologies</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>8 out of 21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication and public</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>3 out of 21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative/Office</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>3 out of 21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legal services</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>2 out of 21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sales/Customer service</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>9 out of 21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tools used by the company use to publish a traineeship position</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Company site</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>9 out of 21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social networks (ex. Universities’ career offices)</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>2 out of 21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment agencies</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0 out of 21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online career websites</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>4 out of 21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employees’ word of mouth</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>7 out of 21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Atlas platform</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>1 out of 21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Furthermore, Figure 8 presents the answers of the participating companies regarding the way they fund the traineeship programmes they run. A proportion of 24% of the respondents said that they cover the cost of the traineeship wages by their own resources whereas 29% of them is based on external funding which means that they run some sort of subsidized traineeship programmes. A proportion of 48% answered that they use both forms of funding which makes sense if we consider the fact that the participating companies run more than one type of traineeship programmes.

![Graph showing funding sources](image)

**Figure 8: Funding of the traineeship position**

Concerning further refunds and/or treatments that the companies under question provide to their trainees apart from remuneration, the respondents had the option to choose more than 1 answers in case that their organization provides more than one extra refunds (see Figure 9). About half of the respondents answered that they provide their trainees with water and coffee as well as with their travel expenses while 8 out of the 21 companies said that they also provide their trainees with social security insurance.
In addition, the representatives of the companies were questioned whether or not the traineeships that their companies run, aim to the direct recruitment of the trainee after the completion of the traineeship (see Figure 10). The results are divided in the middle as soon as about half of the participating companies replied positively and the other half negatively.

![Figure 9: Other refunds/treatments provided during the traineeship programme](image)

More specifically, the participants had the option to demonstrate the primary reasons for which their company chooses to run traineeships (see Table 14). The
creation of a pool of candidates emerged out of the 21 respondents as the primary reason (71%) as well as the accommodation of short-term needs of the company (67%). In addition, the respondents said that trainees constitute a cheap labour force for the company (33%) while for some of them it is a way to “test-drive” candidates for open vacancies in the company (33%). Finally, a proportion of 29% of the respondents identified among the reasons for running traineeships the support of students who need to acquire work experience in a professional environment.

**Table 14: Reasons for launching traineeship programmes**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Create a pool of candidates for potential future recruiting</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>15 out of 21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cover short-term needs of the company</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>14 out of 21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cheap labour force</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>7 out of 21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Test-drive” candidates for open vacancies</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>7 out of 21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentoring opportunities and novel perspectives for the current staff of the company</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0 out of 21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support students</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>6 out of 21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marketing purposes</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0 out of 21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Regarding the contribution of the traineeship programmes in developing skills and acquiring work experience, all the 21 participants in the survey agreed that the traineeships launched by their companies contribute in developing the skills of the trainee and offer the chance to acquire substantial experience (see Table 15).

**Table 15: Does the traineeship programme of your company contribute in developing the skills of the trainee and acquiring substantial experience?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Q.20. Does the traineeship programme of your company contribute in developing the skills of the trainee and acquiring substantial experience?</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>12 out of 21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>9 out of 21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0 out of 21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0 out of 21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0 out of 21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.2.3. Interview findings

The demographic characteristics of the three representatives of the companies that were interviewed are presented in the following table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Demographics</th>
<th>Interviewees</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Position in the organization</td>
<td>Human Resources Manager</td>
<td>Legal Counselor</td>
<td>Logistics Director</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Company</td>
<td>International organization</td>
<td>Groupama Phoenix SA</td>
<td>Retail chain</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Company size</td>
<td>Medium (50-250 employees)</td>
<td>Large (&gt;250 employees)</td>
<td>Large (&gt;250 employees)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industry Sector</td>
<td>Bank</td>
<td>Insurance</td>
<td>Retail</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Additionally, Table 17 summarizes the main points of the answers of the three interviewees to the seven open ended questions that were imposed to them. Firstly, they were questioned how the traineeships that their company offers improve the skills of the trainees. The first interviewee highlighted the fact that the traineeships of the financial institution she works “include a dissemination of the activities of the Bank and provide the trainees with knowledge of the Bank’s everyday operations” while the second interviewee points out the experience the trainees gain in a well structured work environment of a large company where responsibilities are strictly allocated.

Considering the benefits they enjoy as employers by launching traineeship programmes, the main advantages underlined by the three interviewees were the promotion of the image of the organization, the creation of a pool of candidates for potential future vacancies and the address of short-term needs of the company whereas the second interviewee stressed that “it is a way to have specialized services in low cost”.

Evaluating the contribution of the traineeship programmes they run to the future career of their trainees, all the three interviewees rated the experience gained in their company as a significant qualification in their business field while the second interviewee stated, in particular, that “our trainees are able to stand in any large enterprise”.

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Furthermore, speaking on behalf of their organizations they confirmed that they establish future cooperation with their trainees after the completion of their programmes either in the form of administering reference letters or by providing with information and guidance in their research projects in the cadre of their studies.

Regarding their opinion about whether or not traineeships constitute an effective tool for job training and for the insertion of young professionals in the labour market, the first interviewee believes that traineeships contribute in the professional and personal development of the trainees while, in her opinion, “the scope of the traineeships is not to stay in the company they realized the traineeship but to gain experience for their future career”. The second interviewee considers traineeships as an effective job training method whereas the third interviewee noted that “in some cases companies proceed in recruitment of their trainees as long as trainees are already familiar with the culture of the company and have been tested for their skills and knowledge”.

The opinion of the second interviewee about the various programs (i.e. voucher, other subsidized programmes etc) of the Greek State to enhance the insertion of young people in the workplace is that “they give a temporary relief to the unemployed young people but they do not create new job positions” whereas the third interviewee believes that although these programmes do not solve the unemployment problem they give the opportunity to young people to gain work experience.

About the problems that young people face today in order to insert in the labor market all three interviewees highlighted the fact that, currently, there is plethora of supply in terms of inactive workforce whereas the labour demand is seriously less. The first interviewee added at that point that “traineeships are an illusion for students that there are jobs; there isn’t labour market in Greece anymore”.

Table 17: Main points of the answers of the interviewees to the seven open ended questions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Q.</th>
<th>Interviewee 1</th>
<th>Interviewee 2</th>
<th>Interviewee 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. How do the traineeships in your company improve the skills of the trainees?</td>
<td>• Dissemination of the activities of the Bank • Assignment of every day rooting tasks</td>
<td>• Practical knowledge of the company’s operations • Acquisition of experience in a well structured work environment</td>
<td>• Acquisition of hard skills • Become part of a large enterprise</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### 2. How do you think you benefit as an employer by launching traineeship programmes?
- Promotion of the image of the Bank
- Support students of the Member States of the Bank
- Take advantage of specialized services at low cost
- Cover short-term needs
- Promote corporate social responsible profile
- Create pool of candidates

### 3. Do you believe that the traineeship programs in your organization are important for the trainees and can help them to find work in the future?
- Endorsement of CV for positions in international financial institutions
- Trainees are able to stand in any large enterprise
- Become familiar with all the operations of an insurance company
- Acquisition of experience in a leader retail company in Greece
- Important for future career in the retail industry

### 4. Do you establish future cooperation with your trainees beyond the traineeship?
- Administration of reference letters when requested
- Support in their research studies
- Cooperation is established in the form of keeping in contact on an interpersonal basis
- Administration of data for their studies
- Trainees become part of the company’s professional network

### 5. What is your opinion about the effectiveness of the traineeship programs as a tool of job training for young professionals and as a tool for insertion in the labor market?
- Personal and professional development
- The scope is not to stay in the company but to gain experience for their future career
- Completely effective as a job training tool
- Difficult for the companies to keep them due to lack of financial resources
- Acquisition of professional experience
- Companies proceed in recruitment with some of their trainees

### 6. What is your opinion about the various programs (i.e. voucher, other subsidized programmes etc) of the Greek State to enhance the insertion of young people in the workplace?
- Not informed about the existence of such programmes
- Temporary relief of the unemployed
- Do not promote permanent employment
- Temporary solution of the unemployment problem
- Opportunity to gain work experience

### 7. Which are the problems that young people face today in order to insert in the labor market?
- Traineeships are an illusion for students that there is future
- Labour market does not exist anymore
- Mismatch of skilled workforce and job offer
- Lack of job positions
CHAPTER 5: Discussion

The discussion of the findings as those presented in the fourth chapter of the current study is realized around the key question of the current survey which is the following: are the traineeship programmes an effective method for the insertion of the young professionals in the labour market? At the same time it is interesting to detect the special terms and conditions under which the participants in the survey have experienced during their traineeship programmes as well as the attitude of the participating companies towards similar issues.

5.1. Discussion of the findings for the former trainees

To begin with, taking into consideration the fact that the majority of the respondents (110 out of 143) were between 18-30 years old we can assume that the traineeship experience was recent for them and they were able to contribute in the research questions accurately enough. Regarding also the educational level of the respondents almost 90% of the sample was highly educated population which endorses their validity as respondents in the survey.

Concerning the most popular traineeship programme among the respondents more than half of the respondents have realized a student traineeship (54%) which is consistent with the practice of the higher education institutions in Greece to incorporate in the undergraduate studies an optional or mandatory traineeship as described herein in the second part of the current study. The voucher traineeship programme appeared also among the types of traineeships of the sample (8%) which is interesting to notice in such a small sample if we consider the fact that this programme started in 2013 and only one cycle of the programme has been completed until today.

The role of the career offices of the universities is also enhanced by the respondents as half of them used their services to look for a traineeship programme (48%) while the interview emerged as the main assessment tool in the traineeship selection process of the respondents (51% including the group interview). Regarding the duration of the traineeships the most frequent periods among the respondents were those of 3-6 months (45%) and 1-3 months (31%) which is compliant with the scope
of the traineeship as a job training tool during which trainees acquire skills and apply knowledge and should not substitute the employees.

In addition, concerning the working hours of the participants former trainees a cross tabulation analysis took place between the expected working hours and the real working hours of the respondents (see Table 7). Significant difference was apparent regarding the trainees who expected to work part-time and only 78.9% of them did so whereas a proportion of 18.4% worked, finally, as full-timers and 2.6% worked even overtime (over 40 hours per week). Another significant difference was found between the full-timers respondents and a proportion of 13.4% among them who ended up working overtime. These findings imply the exploitation that occur in some cases by the employers of the trainees who take full advantage of their trainees and treat them as cheap labour. This conclusion is further supported by the interview findings of the current survey as far as the overtime work was highlighted as a problem by 2 interviewees.

It is also interesting to notice that the funding of the traineeships of the respondents was realized in a proportion of 38% by external resources and of 15% by both the company’s and external resources which reveals the tendency of the companies to cover the cost of their traineeship positions through subsidized programmes. As far as the further refunds/treatments are concerned, surprisingly, half of the respondents (51%) had no other refunds and/or treatments during their traineeship while only 19% of them was provided with social security insurance which should be taken for granted for any form of working status even that of the trainee.

However, what was optimistic concerned the responses of the participants in the survey regarding their satisfaction about their traineeship experience. With an average above 3.8 (on a scale from 1 to 5) in all six questions measuring the perceptions of the former trainees towards various aspects of the traineeship they have realized, it can be concluded that the majority of the respondents were satisfied with the relevancy of their studies to the object of their traineeship, with the equipment they were provided by the hosting company, with the orientation and the collaboration they had in the workplace by their co-workers as well as with the challenging and rewarding character of the work they were allocated. Moreover, the majority of the respondents felt that their traineeship programme contributed in developing their skills and acquiring substantial experience and endorsed their level of confidence in
order to meet the market demands. These aspects show that the traineeship in the case of the majority of the respondents operated effectively as a method for their insertion into a workplace and as a job training tool. This conclusion is supported by the benefits of the traineeship that were highlighted by a great proportion of the respondents, such as the opportunity for gaining knowledge (64%) and for the development of skills (47%), the professional work environment (50%) and the establishment of nice relations with the co-workers (51%).

The aforementioned findings of the questionnaire are further supported by the interview findings according to which the interviewees pointed out the acquisition of soft skills as the most beneficial part of their traineeship and the experience they have gained. About the effectiveness of the traineeships the overall conclusion of the interviews is also that they are effective as a job training tool whereas it is difficult to remain in the same company afterwards as an employee.

On the contrary, when the participants of the survey were questioned whether they were given the option to be hired by the company they realized their traineeship after the completion of the programme, it is interesting to notice that even though the majority of the respondents (64%) was not given that option, a proportion of 36% had the opportunity to remain in the company at a working position after the end of their traineeship. Attempting to interpret these findings in connection with the key question of the current survey about the effectiveness of the traineeships for the insertion of young professionals in the workplace, the aforementioned proportions reveal that the majority of the traineeship programmes fulfill their scope with the completion of the programme and most of the companies do not choose to proceed with further recruitment of the trainees.

Furthermore, proceeding in a cross-tabulation analysis we searched for interrelations between the option to be hired after the completion of the traineeship and other traineeship characteristics such as the way of funding of the traineeship position and the duration of the traineeship (see tables 8 & 9). The findings showed that there is a significant difference between the number of the respondents-former trainees who were not funded at all during their traineeship (voluntary traineeship) and the option to be hired afterwards as long as the majority of them (87.5%) were not given that option. That could be easily explained if we consider that when the company cannot even fund a traineeship position it will not be able to fund a working position either. Interestingly, the same conclusion fits to the traineeships of the
respondents which were funded by subsidized programmes. Indeed, only 32% of the trainees whose position was funded by external resources were given the option to remain in the company afterwards which shows that the companies that use subsidized programmes to fund their positions and do not use their own resources do not choose to keep the trainees after the end of their programme. Moreover, from the 52 respondents whose traineeships were funded by the company’s resources, 42.3% of them were given the option to stay in the company which can lead to the conclusion that the companies who are able to cover the trainees’ cost on their own they are also capable of funding further a job position for them.

Regarding the interconnection of the same feature (option to be hired) with the duration of the traineeship programme, significant difference appeared in relation with the traineeships that lasted a period of 1-3 months as long as the majority of those trainees (82.2%) were not given the option to be hired after the completion of their traineeship. That difference could be possibly due to the fact that a period of 1-3 months is not sufficient for an employer to decide about the skills of the trainee and his/her suitability to become an employee of the company. On the other hand, it is possible that this difference reveals the temporary character of the short-time traineeship programmes during which trainees take only a small glimpse of a workplace.

5.2. Discussion of the findings for the companies

Although the sample of the participating companies in the current survey is very small (21 companies) we can extract still some useful inferences. Indeed, the fact that the majority of the participants belong in the management group of their companies (10 HR managers, 6 managers of other departments and 3 CEOs) validate the information they provided via their responses to the questionnaire.

As far as the size of the companies is concerned 38% were medium-sized companies (50-250 employees), 33% of them were large companies (>250 employees). Indeed, large and medium-sized companies tend to run regularly traineeship programmes which constitute an integral part of its human resources policy with the scope to give the opportunity to young professionals to gain work experience. This argument is also supported by the second interviewee of the companies’ group of interviews who also underlined the great level of practical knowledge their trainees gain.
Regarding the most popular type of traineeship programme they run, the student traineeship programme gathered the majority of responses in that questionnaire as well (76%) which is compliant with the introduction of mandatory traineeships in the course programme of the undergraduate studies. Moreover, about half of the respondents said that they offer paid internships as well as traineeships through the voucher programme of Manpower Employment Organization (OAED) which is reasonable due to the fact that the voucher programme is a fully subsidized programme and give the chance to the companies to occupy trainees for free.

Considering the most common duration of traineeship programmes, the findings for the companies coincide with those for the former trainees in the sense that 76% of the participating companies run 3-6 month traineeships. What also coincided is the fact that the majority of the respondent companies (71%) use the career offices of the higher education institutions to communicate their traineeship positions. At that point, it worth noticing that 1 out of the 21 respondents added the Atlas platform as a tool to communicate the traineeship positions of the company which is the new tool described in the second part of the current study that has been recently created in order to link the students directly with the companies which offer such programmes. Its scope is to become gradually the main tool for the research of traineeship programmes in the Greek labour market.

Additionally, regarding the way of funding of the traineeship positions only a proportion of 24% of the respondents said that they cover the cost of the traineeship wages by their own resources whereas the rest of the them either use exclusively external funding (29%) or both internal and external resources (48%). These findings imply that the participating companies take advantage of the various subsidized programmes in order to avoid the cost of the traineeship positions. Concerning further refunds and/or treatments that the companies under question provide to their trainees apart from remuneration, the findings contradict the relevant results in the former trainees’ questionnaire, as long as only 10% of the respondent companies said that they do not give any other refunds to their trainees while at the same time 38% of them said that they cover social security insurance of their trainees and a significant proportion of 52% covers also travel expenses of their trainees.

Furthermore, it was investigated the reasons for which they launch traineeship programmes as well as whether they aim to the direct recruitment of the trainee after the completion of the traineeship. The primary reasons highlighted by the respondents
were the creation of a pool of candidates (71%) as well as the accommodation of short-term needs of the company (67%). In addition, the respondents admitted that trainees constitute a cheap labour force for the company (33%) while for some of them it is a way to “test-drive” candidates for open vacancies in the company (33%). These findings are also supported by the interview findings according to which the interviewees underlined the aforementioned benefits as well as the fact that they take advantage of specialized services at low cost.

About half of the respondents further admitted that the traineeships that their companies run, aim to the direct recruitment of the trainee after the completion of the traineeship. However, it could be the object of another study what type of job contracts were offered to these trainees and of what duration while we should also consider the fact that, as long as the voucher traineeship programmes are concerned, the employers which proceed in the recruitment of the trainee after the completion of the programme they benefit from a subsidy of the Manpower Employment Organization (OAED) which covers the cost of the social security insurance of the employee for a period of 2 years.

Regarding the benefits of the traineeships, all the 21 participants in the survey agreed that the traineeships launched by their companies contribute in developing the skills of the trainee and offer the chance to acquire substantial experience. These findings show that the participating companies believe, on the one hand, that the traineeships are an effective job training tool while, on the other hand, they enhance the insertion of young professionals in the labour market as long as for the majority of the respondents traineeships create a pool of candidates for them and at the same time half of them directs the traineeships towards further hiring of their trainees. These findings are in accordance with the perceptions of the interviewees regarding the importance of the traineeships their companies launch for the future of their trainees as far as they stressed the importance of the professional experience they gain in the pursuit of a future career in a similar industry sector.
CHAPTER 6: Conclusion and Recommendations

Overall traineeship programmes in Greece take place in many different ways leaving a margin for the organizations to adjust as they wish the special terms and conditions of their programmes. The most popular type of traineeship in Greece is the student traineeship programmes which constitute an optional or mandatory part of the studies of the undergraduate students as this was also confirmed by the findings of the primary research that was conducted.

Great appeal also occurs with the various subsidized traineeship programmes which cover either fully (i.e. voucher traineeship programme) or partially (i.e. student traineeships) the cost of the trainee creating controversies about the effectiveness of these programmes. High rates of youth unemployment in Greece intensify also the necessity to redefine the scope of these programmes in order to lead to more permanent solutions to the problem.

However, it is of general consensus from both sides (trainees and companies) that traineeship programmes are an effective job training tool that gives the opportunity to develop skills and acquire substantial experience in a professional work environment. As further confirmed by the findings of the current study traineeships constitute an effective way for the insertion of the young professionals in the workplace only in regards to the experience they gain as long as the majority of the participants in traineeship programmes are not offered a job position after the completion of the programme and they return in the unemployment status.

At that point, it would be encouraging to look into some recommendations in order to improve the way the traineeships are held in Greece. First of all, as the literature review and the primary research revealed that what is missing is a unified legal framework which will regulate every aspect of the traineeship programmes in Greece whether they are held in the cadre of studies or not. This framework should include the rights and obligations of the trainees, the minimum wage and the social security coverage as this happens with the case of “stage” in France.

Taking into consideration the fact that there has already been made a step towards this direction with regards to the explicit regulation of the traineeships of TEI students, it is necessary for the Greek State to create a general framework which will also include the traineeships held by the rest of the education institutions and,
basically, those held by the companies themselves. The example of TEI includes provisions about the minimum wage for both public and private companies as well as the minimum social security (only against accident) which should be endorsed with healthcare coverage and apply these provisions for every type of paid traineeship either it is held in the private or the public sector. The status of the voluntary traineeships needs also to be put into a regulated cadre as long as, currently, there is no provision at all. The reason for this necessity is based on the fact that trainees become part of the workforce of the organizations they realize the traineeship, they work and offer their services and, as a result, they have to safeguard their labor rights against their employers.

What could also enhance the content of the traineeship programmes in Greece would be to incorporate new forms of training such as the job shadow which alters the traditional way of the training procedure and makes more active the role of the job shadower. The success of job shadowing as an optional part of higher institutions’ educational programme in abroad advocates the advantages of this programme. In practice, Greek education institutions could partner with businesses in the field of the studies they operate in order to provide their students with the experience of what it is like to perform a certain type of job. For a few days students will spend time in the business they are interested in and will undertake a certain task while at the same time they will be accompanied by an experienced worker of the business as they perform the targeted job.

Considering how the traineeships could become a more effective tool for the insertion of young professionals in the labour market in the concept of leading to further recruitment of the participants, it is very difficult to cope with such a subject due to the fact that there are more serious problems behind this issue that have to be solved and refer primarily to the weakness of the Greek economy to absorb the plethora of unemployed. After all, it seems reasonable to wonder: our goal is to recycle unemployment through training programmes and free staff for companies in the form of traineeships, or to create the conditions for new jobs, through the effective management of Union’s resources which are committed for this purpose?

Finally, there were three research constraints in the current survey; the sample was of limited size and there was applied a simple random sampling method. Also, the research tools that were applied in the current study (questionnaires and interviews) were not tested for reliability and validity due to the fact that the
questionnaires were constructed for the first time for the purposes of the current survey. Future research on the topic would be interesting to be realized on larger samples of both former trainees and companies in order to be more representative of the population. In addition, a stratified sampling method would enable researchers to draw inferences about specific subgroups (by gender or educational level) that may be lost in a more generalized random sample. Lastly, the research tools should be weighted in the coefficient of reliability and validity (internal and external).
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Appendices

A. Traineeship questionnaire for trainees

A.1. Traineeship questionnaire for trainees (Greek original version)

1. Σε ποια από τις παρακάτω ηλικιακές ομάδες ανήκετε; *

   o 18-25
   o 25-30
   o 30-35
   o >35

2. Παρακαλώ συμπληρώστε το φύλο σας. *

   o Άνδρας
   o Γυναίκα

3. Σε ποια από τις παρακάτω κατηγορίες ανήκετε; *

   o Απόφοιτος-η λυκείου / ΙΕΚ
   o Προπτυχιακός-η φοιτητής-τρια
   o Πτυχιούχος ΑΕΙ/ΤΕΙ
   o Κάτοχος μεταπτυχιακού
   o Κάτοχος διδακτορικού
   o Άλλο:

4. Ποιο από τα παρακάτω προγράμματα πρακτικής άσκησης έχετε πραγματοποιήσει;

   Εάν έχετε πραγματοποιήσει παραπάνω από 1 παρακαλώ επιλέξτε μόνο 1 από αυτά και απαντήστε και τις επόμενες ερωτήσεις βάσει αυτού.

   o Εθελοντική πρακτική άσκηση
   o Πρακτική άσκηση φοιτητών
   o Πρόγραμμα μαθητείας
   o Σύμβαση stage
   o Πρακτική άσκηση με voucher
   o Έμμισθη πρακτική άσκηση
   o Άλλο:

5. Πώς ενημερωθήκατε για τη θέση πρακτικής άσκησης;

   o Γραφείο διασύνδεσης πανεπιστημίου
6. Περάσατε κάποια αξιολόγηση για την επιλογή σας στη συγκεκριμένη θέση πρακτικής άσκησης;

- Αξιολόγηση βιογραφικού
- Συνέντευξη
- Ομαδική συνέντευξη
- Τεστ ικανοτήτων και δεξιοτήτων
- Άλλο:

7. Ποια ήταν η διάρκεια της πρακτικής σας;

- 1-3 μήνες
- 3-6 μήνες
- 6-12 μήνες
- >1 έτος

8. Σε ποιον τομέα δραστηριοποιείται ο φορέας που πραγματοποίησατε την πρακτική σας;

- Πετρέλαιο & Αέριο
- Χημικά
- Πρώτες Ύλες
- Κατασκευές & Υλικά Κατασκευών
- Βιομηχανικά προϊόντα & Υπηρεσίες
- Τρόφιμα & Ποτά
- Προσωπικά & Οικιακά Αγαθά
- Υγεία
- Εμπόριο
- Μέσα ενημέρωσης
- Ταξίδια & Αναψυχή
- Τηλεπικοινωνίες
- Υπηρεσίες Κοινής Ωφέλειας
- Τράπεζες
9. Σε ποιο τμήμα της εταιρείας πραγματοποιήσατε την πρακτική σας:

- Ασφάλειες
- Ακίνητη περιουσία
- Χρηματοοικονομικές υπηρεσίες
- Τεχνολογία
- Άλλο: 

10. Πόσο σχετικό ήταν το αντικείμενο της πρακτικής σας με τις σπουδές σας:

   1  2  3  4  5

   Καθόλου  ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Πάρα πολύ

11. Ποιο ήταν το προβλεπόμενο ωράριο της πρακτικής σας:

- Μερικής απασχόλησης
- Πλήρους απασχόλησης
- Άλλο:

12. Ποιο ήταν το πραγματικό ωράριο της πρακτικής σας:

- Μερικής απασχόλησης
- Πλήρους απασχόλησης
- Υπερωριακό (πάνω από 40 ώρες την εβδομάδα)
- Άλλο:

13. Πως χρηματοδοτήθηκε η θέση της πρακτικής σας:
14. Ποιες άλλες παροχές είχατε κατά τη διάρκεια της πρακτικής;

Μπορείτε να επιλέξετε παραπάνω από 1 απαντήσεις.

- Καμία άλλη παροχή
- Κοινωνική ασφάλιση
- Έξοδα μετακίνησης
- Νερό και καφέ
- Κουπόνια φαγητού
- Άλλο:

15. Σε ποιο βαθμό σας παρασχέθηκε από το φορέα της πρακτικής ο απαραίτητος εξοπλισμός για να φέρετε εις πέρας τα καθήκοντα σας κατά τη διάρκεια της πρακτικής;

Γραφείο, Η/Υ, γραφική ύλη, εργαλεία κλπ

1 2 3 4 5

Καθόλου Κ Κ Κ Κ Κ  Επαρκός

16. Σε ποιο βαθμό υπήρξε αντιστοιχία ανάμεσα στην περιγραφή της θέσης και στην πρακτική που τελικά πραγματοποιήσατε;

1 2 3 4 5

Καμία Κ Κ Κ Κ Κ  Απόλυτη

17. Σε ποιο βαθμό λάβατε καθοδήγηση στο χώρο εργασίας σας κατά τη διάρκεια της πρακτικής σας;

1 2 3 4 5

Καμία Κ Κ Κ Κ Κ  Επαρκής
18. Σε ποιο βαθμό σας προσέφερε η πρακτική σας ενδιαφέρουσα εργασία γεμάτη προκλήσεις αλλά και ανταμοιβές;

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19. Σε ποιο βαθμό είχατε τη στήριξη και τη συνεργασία του επιβλέποντα και των συναδέλφων σας κατά τη διάρκεια της πρακτικής σας;

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20. Σε ποιο βαθμό συνέβαλλε η πρακτική σας στην ανάπτυξη των δεξιοτήτων σας και στην απόκτηση εργασιακής εμπειρίας;

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21. Πώς θα βαθμολογούσατε συνολικά την εμπειρία της πρακτικής σας;

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22. Ποιο-α από τα παρακάτω σας άρεσε περισσότερο κατά τη διάρκεια της πρακτικής σας;

Μπορείτε να επιλέξετε παραπάνω από 1 απαντήσεις.

- Ικανοποιητικές αποδοχές
- Επαγγελματικό εργασιακό περιβάλλον
- Ευκαιρία για την απόκτηση γνώσεων
- Ευκαιρία για την ανάπτυξη δεξιοτήτων
- Δημιουργία κύκλου γνωριμιών
- Ευέλικτο ωράριο
Ευχάριστο κλίμα με συναδέλφους
Καλός επιβλέπων
Μεγάλο εύρος αρμοδιοτήτων
Άλλο: __________

23. Σας δόθηκε η επιλογή να παραμένετε στο φορέα μετά το πέρας της πρακτικής σας:

Οικ Ναι
Οικ Όχι

24. Σε ποιο βαθμό αισθάνεστε σίγουρος - η ότι η ολοκλήρωση της πρακτικής σας έδωσε εφόδια για να ανταποκριθείτε καλύτερα πλέον στις ανάγκες της αγοράς:

1 2 3 4 5

Καθόλου Οικ Οικ Οικ Οικ Οικ
Πάρα πολύ

25. Άλλα σχόλια που σχετίζονται με το πρόγραμμα πρακτικής άσκησης που πραγματοποιήσατε:

A.2. Traineeship questionnaire for trainees (English version)

1. In which of the following age categories do you belong?
   - 18-25 □
   - 25-30 □
   - 30-35 □
   - >35 □

2. Please specify your sex.
   - Male □
   - Female □

3. What is your level of education?
High school/Vocational Training Institution (IEK) graduate ☐
Undergraduate student ☐
University/Technological Education Institution graduate ☐
Master graduate ☐
PhD graduate ☐
Other ☐ Please specify: __________

4. What type of traineeship programme did you participate in?
Voluntary/Unpaid internship ☐
Student traineeship ☐
Apprenticeship ☐
Stage ☐
Voucher traineeship programme ☐
Paid internship ☐
Other ☐ Please specify: __________

5. Where did you look for and find your traineeship from?
University career office ☐
Company website ☐
Social networks (ex. Facebook, linkedin) ☐
Employment agency ☐
Career websites ☐
Friends and family ☐
Other ☐ Please specify: __________

6. Did you go through some sort of assessment to be selected for the traineeship position?
CV assessment ☐
Interview ☐
Group interview ☐
Skills and abilities test assessment ☐
Other ☐ Please specify: __________

7. How long did your traineeship last?
1-3 months ☐
3-6 months ☐
6-12 months ☐
> 1 year ☐

8. In which of the following business sectors does the company you realized a traineeship operate?
9. In which department of the company did you realize your traineeship?
   Marketing ☐
   Accounting ☐
   Human Resources ☐
   Operations ☐
   Information Technologies ☐
   Communication and public relations ☐
   Administrative /Office services ☐
   Legal services ☐
   Sales/Customer service ☐
   Other ☐ Please specify: ____________

10. Rate on a scale form 1-5 the extent at which the object of the traineeship was relative to your studies with 1 being the least and 5 the most relevant?
   1 ☐
   2 ☐
   3 ☐
   4 ☐
   5 ☐

11. Which were expected working hours of the traineeship?
   Part-time ☐
   Full-time ☐
12. Which were the real working hours of the traineeship?
   - Part-time ☐
   - Full-time ☐
   - Overtime (more than 40 hours per week) ☐
   - Other ☐ Please specify: _________________

13. How was your traineeship funded?
   - Company’s resources ☐
   - External funding ☐
   - Partial funding from both internal and external resources ☐
   - Other ☐ Please specify: _________________

14. What other refunds/treatments did the company offer during the traineeship period?
   - No other refunds ☐
   - Insurance cover personal injury and / or social security ☐
   - Travel expenses ☐
   - Water and coffee ☐
   - Voucher for meals ☐
   - Other ☐ Please specify: _________________

15. Rate on a scale of 1-5 the extent at which you were provided with all the necessary equipment (i.e. desk, computer, tools etc.) with 1 being the least and 5 the most adequate.
   - 1 ☐
   - 2 ☐
   - 3 ☐
   - 4 ☐
   - 5 ☐

16. Rate on a scale of 1-5 the extent at which the traineeship fulfilled the traineeship description adequately with 1 being the least and 5 the most adequate.
   - 1 ☐
   - 2 ☐
   - 3 ☐
   - 4 ☐
   - 5 ☐

17. Rate on a scale of 1-5 the extent at which you got proper orientation into your workplace during the traineeship with 1 getting the least and 5 the most sufficient orientation.
   - 1 ☐
   - 2 ☐
18. Rate on a scale of 1-5 the extent at which the traineeship provided challenging and rewarding work with 1 being the lowest and 5 the highest grade.

1 ☐
2 ☐
3 ☐
4 ☐
5 ☐

19. How would you rate the level of support and collaboration you had with your mentor/colleagues on a scale of 1-5 with 1 not having support and collaboration at all and 5 having the most of their support and collaboration?

1 ☐
2 ☐
3 ☐
4 ☐
5 ☐

20. Rate on a scale of 1-5 how was the contribution of the traineeship programme in developing your skills and acquiring substantial experience with 1 being the least and 5 being the most significant?

1 ☐
2 ☐
3 ☐
4 ☐
5 ☐

21. How would you rate your overall traineeship experience on a scale of 1-5 with 1 being terrible and 5 being excellent?

1 ☐
2 ☐
3 ☐
4 ☐
5 ☐

22. Which of the following did you like the most about your traineeship?

- Good pay ☐
- Professional work environment ☐
- Opportunity for gaining knowledge ☐
- Opportunity for development of skills ☐
- Creation of a contacts’ network ☐
- Flexible schedule ☐
- Good co-workers ☐
- Good supervisor ☐
- Different responsibilities ☐
23. Were you given the option to be hired by the company after the end of your traineeship?
☐ Yes ☐ No

24. Rate on a scale of 1-5 at what extent do you feel confident that you can meet the market demands after the end of your traineeship with 1 being the least and 5 the most confident?
1 ☐
2 ☐
3 ☐
4 ☐
5 ☐

25. Other comments related to the traineeship programmes of your company:

B. Traineeship questionnaire for companies

B.1. Traineeship questionnaire for companies (Greek original version)

1. Σε ποιον τομέα δραστηριοποιείται η επιχείρηση που εργάζεστε; *
   - Πετρέλαιο & Αέριο
   - Χημικά
   - Πρώτες Ύλες
   - Κατασκευές και Υλικά Κατασκευών
   - Βιομηχανικά Προϊόντα & Υπηρεσίες
   - Τρόφιμα & Ποτά
   - Προσωπικά & Οικιακά Αγαθά
   - Υγεία
   - Εμπόριο
2. Σε ποια από τις παρακάτω κατηγορίες ανήκει η επιχείρησή στην οποία εργάζεστε; *

- Πολύ μικρή (έως 10 εργαζόμενοι)
- Μικρή (10 έως 50 εργαζόμενοι)
- Μεσαία (50 έως 250 εργαζόμενοι)
- Μεγάλη (πάνω από 250 εργαζόμενοι)

3. Ποια είναι η θέση σας στην επιχείρηση που εργάζεστε; *

- Διευθυντής Ανθρώπινου Δυναμικού
- Διευθυντής άλλου τμήματος
- Διοικητικό προσωπικό
- Άλλο: [ ]

4. Προσφέρει η εταιρεία σας προγράμματα πρακτικής άσκησης για νέους; *

- Ναι
- Όχι

5. Ποιο-α από τα παρακάτω προγράμματα πρακτικής άσκησης προσφέρει η εταιρεία σας;

Μπορείτε να επιλέξετε παραπάνω από 1 απαντήσεις.

- Εθελοντική πρακτική άσκηση
- Πρακτική άσκηση φοιτητών
- Πρόγραμμα μαθητείας
- Συμβάση stage
- Πρακτική άσκηση με voucher
- Έμμισθη πρακτική άσκηση
6. Εδώ και πόσα χρόνια προσφέρει η εταιρεία σας προγράμματα πρακτικής άσκησης;

- < 1 έτος
- 1 - 5 έτη
- 5 - 10 έτη
- 10 - 20 έτη
- > 20 έτη

7. Πόσους ασκούμενους μπορεί να δεχτεί η εταιρεία σας σε διάστημα ενός έτους;

- 1 - 2
- 3 - 5
- 6 - 10
- > 10

8. Σε ποια περίοδο ανοίγουν συνήθως οι θέσεις πρακτικής άσκησης στην εταιρεία σας;

- Φθινόπωρο
- Χειμώνας
- Άνοιξη
- Καλοκαίρι
- Όλο το χρόνο
- Περιστασιακά

9. Πόσο καιρό διαρκούν κατά μέσο όρο τα προγράμματα πρακτικής άσκησης στην εταιρεία σας;

- 1 - 3 μήνες
- 3 - 6 μήνες
- 6 - 12 μήνες
- > 1 έτος

10. Ποιο εργαλείο χρησιμοποιεί η εταιρεία σας για να επικοινωνήσει τις θέσεις πρακτικής άσκησης;

- Ιστοσελίδα εταιρείας
- Μέσα κοινωνικής δικτύωσης (π.χ. facebook, Linkedin κλπ)
11. Χρησιμοποιεί η εταιρεία σας διαδικτυακή πλατφόρμα υποβολής αίτησης για πρακτική άσκηση:

- [ ] Ναι
- [ ] Όχι

12. Πόσες αιτήσεις δέχεται κατά μέσο όρο η εταιρεία σας για μία θέση πρακτικής άσκησης:

- [ ] 1 - 100
- [ ] 100 - 300
- [ ] 300 - 500
- [ ] >500

13. Σε ποιο τμήμα της εταιρείας σας προσφέρονται θέσεις πρακτικής άσκησης:

Μπορείτε να επιλέξετε παραπάνω από 1 απαντήσεις.

- [ ] Marketing
- [ ] Λογιστήριο
- [ ] Ανθρώπινο Δυναμικό
- [ ] Τμήμα παραγωγής
- [ ] Πληροφορική
- [ ] Επικοινωνία & Δημόσιες Σχέσεις
- [ ] Υπηρεσίες γραφείου
- [ ] Νομικό τμήμα
- [ ] Πωλήσεις/Εξυπηρέτηση πελατών
- [ ] Άλλο: 

14. Ποιοι επιλέγονται συνήθως για την πραγματοποίηση πρακτικής άσκησης στην εταιρεία σας:

Μπορείτε να επιλέξετε παραπάνω από 1 απαντήσεις.

- [ ] Απόφοιτοι λυκείου
- [ ] Προπτυχιακοί φοιτητές
- [ ] Απόφοιτοι ΑΕΙ/ΤΕΙ χωρίς εργασιακή εμπειρία
15. Ποιος είναι ο πρωταρχικός λόγος για τον οποίο η εταιρεία προσφέρει προγράμματα πρακτικής άσκησης;

Μπορείτε να επιλέξετε μέχρι 3 απαντήσεις.

- Δημιουργία δεξαμενής υποψηφίων για πιθανές μελλοντικές θέσεις εργασίας
- Κάλυψη βραχυπρόθεσμων αναγκών της εταιρείας
- Φθηνό εργατικό δυναμικό
- Δοκιμή υποψηφίων για ανοιχτές θέσεις εργασίας
- Ευκαιρίες mentoring και νέων προοπτικών για το τρέχον προσωπικό της εταιρείας
- Υποστήριξη φοιτητών
- Για λόγους διαφήμισης
- Άλλο:

16. Ποιο είναι το ωράριο των ασκούμενων στην εταιρεία σας;

- Μερικής απασχόλησης
- Πλήρους απασχόλησης
- Υπάρχει δυνατότητα και για τα δύο
- Άλλο:

17. Με ποιο τρόπο χρηματοδοτεί η εταιρεία σας τις θέσεις πρακτικής άσκησης;

- Με ίδιες δαπάνες
- Με εξωτερική χρηματοδότηση (π.χ. επιδοτούμενα προγράμματα κλπ)
- Και τα δύο

18. Ποιες άλλες παροχές προσφέρει η εταιρεία σας στους ασκούμενους;

Μπορείτε να επιλέξετε παραπάνω από 1 απαντήσεις.

- Καμία άλλη παροχή
- Κοινωνική ασφάλιση
- Έξοδα μετακίνησης
19. Με ποιο τρόπο αξιολογεί η εταιρεία σας τους ασκούμενους;

Μπορείτε να επιλέξετε παραπάνω από 1 απαντήσεις.

- Περιοδική αξιολόγηση μέσω φύλλων αξιολόγησης ή ερωτηματολογίων
- Τελική αξιολόγηση μέσω φύλλων αξιολόγησης ή ερωτηματολογίων
- Τελική έκθεση πεπραγμένων από τον ασκούμενο
- Καμία έγγραφη αξιολόγηση
- Άλλο: ____________________________

20. Τα προγράμματα πρακτικής άσκησης της εταιρείας σας συμβάλλουν στην ανάπτυξη των δεξιοτήτων του ασκούμενου και στην απόκτηση εργασιακής εμπειρίας;

- Συμφωνώ απόλυτα
- Συμφωνώ
- Ούτε συμφωνώ ούτε διαφωνώ
- Διαφωνώ
- Διαφωνώ απόλυτα
- Άλλο: ____________________________

21. Τα προγράμματα πρακτικής άσκησης της εταιρείας σας στοχεύουν στην άμεση πρόσληψη των ασκουμένων μετά το πέρας της πρακτικής;

- Ναι
- Όχι

22. Πόσους πρακτικά ασκούμενους απασχόλησε η εταιρεία σας περίπου τα τελευταία 5 χρόνια (2009-2014);

- Κανένας
- 1 - 10
- 10 - 20
- 20 -50
- > 50

23. Πόσοι ασκούμενοι έχουν προσληφθεί κατά μέσο όρο από την εταιρεία σας μετά το τέλος της πρακτικής τους κατά τη διάρκεια των τελευταίων 5 ετών (2009-2014);
24. Αναφέρετε εάν επιθυμείτε το όνομα της εταιρείας σας:


25. Άλλα σχόλια που σχετίζονται με τα προγράμματα πρακτικής άσκησης της εταιρείας σας:


B.2. Traineeship questionnaire for companies (English version)

1. In which of the following business sectors does your company operate?
   - Oil & Gas ☐
   - Chemicals ☐
   - Raw Materials ☐
   - Construction & Materials ☐
   - Industrial Products & Services ☐
   - Food & Beverage ☐
   - Personal & Household Goods ☐
   - Health ☐
   - Trade ☐
   - Media ☐
   - Travel & Leisure ☐
   - Telecommunications ☐
   - Social Services ☐
   - Bank ☐
   - Insurance ☐
   - Financial Services ☐
   - Technology ☐
   - Other ☐ Please specify: ___________
2. Which is the size of your company\textsuperscript{74}?
   - Very small (1-10 employees) ☐
   - Small (10-50 employees) ☐
   - Medium (50-250 employees) ☐
   - Large (> 250 employees) ☐

3. Which is your position in the company?
   - HR manager ☐
   - Manager of other department ☐
   - Administrative staff ☐
   - Other ☐ Please specify: ___________

4. Does your company offer traineeship programmes for young professionals?
   - Yes ☐
   - No ☐

5. What type of traineeship programmes does your company offer?
   - Voluntary/Unpaid internship ☐
   - Student traineeship ☐
   - Apprenticeship ☐
   - Stage ☐
   - Voucher traineeship programme ☐
   - Paid internship ☐
   - Other ☐ Please specify: ___________

6. How many years does your company launch traineeship programmes?
   - < 1 year ☐
   - 1-5 years ☐
   - 5-10 years ☐
   - 10-20 years ☐
   - > 20 years ☐

7. How many trainees can your company accept during a period of 1 year?
   - 1-2 ☐
   - 3-5 ☐
   - 6-10 ☐
   - >10 ☐

8. During which period/periods of the year do you usually offer traineeship programmes?

\textsuperscript{74} http://europa.eu/legislation_summaries/enterprise/business_environment/n26026_el.htm
9. How long do the traineeship programmes at your company last on average?
   - 1-3 months ☐
   - 3-6 months ☐
   - 6-12 months ☐
   - > 1 year ☐

10. Which tool/tools does your company use to publish a traineeship position?
    - Company site ☐
    - Social networks (ex. Facebook, linkedin) ☐
    - Universities’ career offices ☐
    - Employment agencies ☐
    - Online career websites ☐
    - Employees’ word of mouth ☐
    - Other ☐ Please specify: ______________

11. Does your company have an online application process?
    - Yes ☐ No ☐

12. How many applications does your company accept on average for a traineeship position?
    - 1-100 applications ☐
    - 100-300 applications ☐
    - 300-500 applications ☐
    - > 500 applications ☐

13. In which department/departments of the company do you offer traineeship positions?
    - Marketing ☐
    - Accounting ☐
    - Human Resources ☐
    - Operations ☐
    - Information Technologies ☐
    - Communication and public relations ☐
    - Administrative/Office services ☐
    - Legal services ☐
    - Sales/Customer service ☐
    - Other ☐ Please specify: ______________
14. What types of applicants would most likely be selected for a traineeship programme at your company?
   High school graduates ☐
   Undergraduate Students ☐
   University/Technological Education Institutions (TEI) graduates without working experience ☐
   University/Technological Education Institutions (TEI) graduates with working experience ☐
   Master Graduates ☐
   PhD Graduates ☐
   Other ☐ Please specify: ________________

15. Which is the **primary** reason or reasons for launching traineeship programmes (up to 3 responses)?
   Create a pool of candidates for potential future recruiting ☐
   Take advantage of low-cost labour ☐
   Cover short-term needs of the company ☐
   Cheap labour force ☐
   “Test-drive” candidates for open vacancies ☐
   Mentoring opportunities and novel perspectives for the current staff of the company ☐
   Support students ☐
   Marketing purposes ☐
   Other ☐ Please specify: ________________

16. What are the working hours of the trainees?
   Part-time ☐
   Full-time ☐
   Both ☐
   Other ☐ Please specify: ________________

17. How does your company fund the traineeship positions?
   Internal funding ☐
   External funding ☐
   Partial funding from both internal and external resources ☐

18. What other refunds/treatments does your company offer during the traineeship period?
   No other refunds ☐
   Social security ☐
   Travel expenses ☐
   Water and coffee ☐
Voucher for meals☐
Other ☐ Please specify: ________________________

19. How does your company monitor and evaluate the trainee?
   Periodic evaluation through evaluation sheets or questionnaires ☐
   Final evaluation through evaluation sheets or questionnaires ☐
   Final report by the trainee for the undertaken tasks ☐
   No written evaluation ☐
   Other ☐ Please specify: ________________

20. Does the traineeship programme of your company contribute in developing the
    skills of the trainee and acquiring substantial experience?
   Strongly agree ☐
   Agree ☐
   Neutral ☐
   Disagree ☐
   Strongly disagree ☐

21. Do the traineeship programmes of your company aim to the direct recruitment
    of the trainee after the completion of the traineeship?
   ☐ Yes ☐ No

22. How many trainees did your company roughly occupy during the past 5 years
    (2009-2014)?
   No recruitment ☐
   1-10 ☐
   10-20 ☐
   20-50 ☐
   >50 ☐

23. How many trainees have been hired after the end of their traineeship on
    average during the past 5 years (2009-2014)?
   No recruitment ☐
   1-2 ☐
   3-5 ☐
   6-10 ☐
   >10 ☐

24. Indicate if you wish the name of your company (optional):
    _________________________________________________________________

25. Other comments related to the traineeship programmes of your company: