



COMENIUS 2.1 Action
(Training of School Education Staff)
(119117-CP-1-2004-1-IT-COMENIUS-C21)



Education and Culture

Socrates

Cypriot Paper on Educational and Teaching System



The education system in Cyprus

- 1.1 Education population**
 - 1.2 Language of instruction**
 - 1.3 Planning functions and extent of public-sector funded education**
 - 1.4 The education system in Italy**
 - 1.5 Pre-primary education**
 - 1.6 Compulsory full-time education**
 - 1.6.1 Phases**
 - 1.6.2 Admission criteria**
 - 1.6.3 Length of the school day/week/year**
 - 1.6.4 Class size / student grouping (average)**
 - 1.6.5 Curricular control and content**
 - 1.6.6 Assessment, progression and qualifications**
 - 1.7 Upper secondary and post-secondary education**
 - 1.7.1 Types of education**
 - 1.7.2 Admission criteria**
 - 1.7.3 Curricular control and content**
 - 1.7.4 Assessment, progression and qualifications**
- 2. Education systems for people in special needs**
 - 3. Methods of teaching**
 - 4. The use of ICT in the educational system**
 - 5. Ongoing reforms**

Introduction

With the declaration of the Independence of Cyprus in 1960 the responsibility for matters of education of the Greek and Turkish communities was entrusted to the Greek Communal Assembly and the Turkish Communal Assembly respectively.

After the inter-communal conflict in 1964, the Greek Communal Assembly was dissolved and the Ministry of Education of the Cyprus Republic was founded under Law 12 of 1965.

With this structural institutional reform, the responsibility for all matters concerning education was undertaken by the Ministry of Education, a central bureaucratic mechanism governing and monitoring the educational system of the country, with the Minister of Education (political person) and the Director General (permanent public employee) at the top of the dominating hierarchy. In 1969, the Committee of Educational Service, an independent fivefold body, the members of which are appointed by the President of the Republic, was founded with a 6 years term of service.

Cyprus education suffered a severe blow as a result of the Turkish invasion in 1974 since many schools were occupied by the Turkish army and many students were forced to abandon their homes and schools.

The general aim of Education in Cyprus is the mental, emotional, spiritual and physical development of students, and the provision of knowledge and skills necessary for the continuation of their studies or their initiation into the socio-economic life of the country. Cyprus education also aims at the preparation of citizens who abide by the universal values of freedom, democracy and justice.

Characteristics of the Cyprus Educational System

The Cyprus Educational System has the following main characteristics:

Centralization

- The responsibility for the formulation of educational policy rests with the Council of Ministers.
- The Ministry of Education and Culture is responsible for the administration of all levels, the application of educational laws that govern the operation of education, the preparation of educational legislation and the preparation of the budget on education and culture, which is submitted to Parliament for approval. Also, it determines the Curriculum, the books and the means of education.
- In the public educational institutions the teaching staff is appointed, promoted and subject to disciplinary proceedings by the Education Service Committee. The said committee promotes also the inspectors and the senior officers of education.
- The schools are controlled by the Ministry, via the school inspectors and school heads.
- The Ministry finances the Local School Commissions that are in charge of the construction, maintenance and equipment of school buildings.

- The private schools are managed by private individuals or bodies, but come under the supervision and control of the Ministry of Education and Culture.

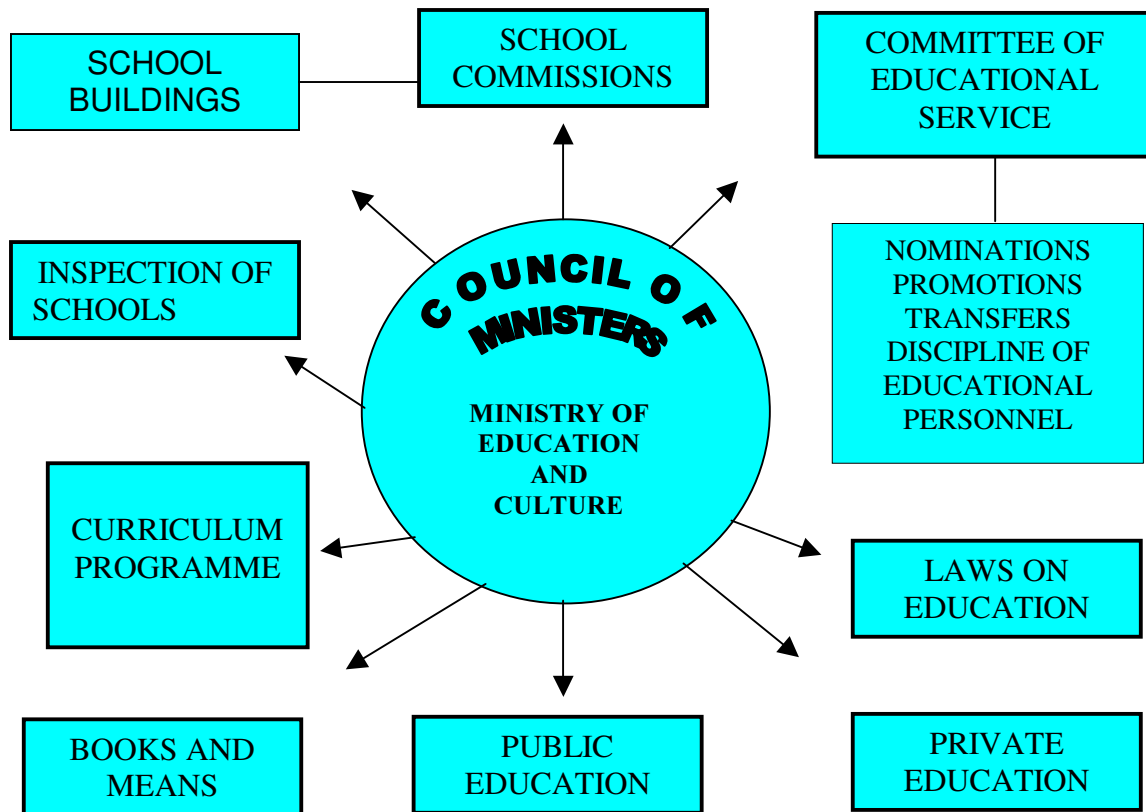


Figure 1: Centralization is one of the characteristics of the Cyprus Educational System

Compulsory education

All children from the age of 4 years and eight months up to the age of fifteen are obliged to attend school.

Free education

The public primary and secondary education is free of charge. The government pays the salaries of teachers, provides books and other material to schools and subsidizes all local Commissions on the basis of the number of registered pupils.

Parallel education

The community, thus, sets an enormously high value on education with extremely high motivation among parents. This, according to the Unesco Report (1997), means that there is intense competition among high school graduates to obtain places at the University of Cyprus and at universities abroad. This intense competition prompts parents to supplement school education with private tuition to the extent that there exists what might be described as an informal complementary education system which has a backlash on the schools and causes many problems.

Influence by other educational systems

The educational system of Cyprus has been influenced by the educational systems of Greece, Britain and the USA. Their impact is obvious in the organization and administration of education, the curriculum and the school textbooks. This is a natural consequence of the British rule over Cyprus that affected the systems of organization and administration of schools as well as the education of schoolteachers of primary education. At the same time, most teachers of secondary and tertiary education studied in universities of Greece, Britain and the USA.

Structure of the Educational System

The organization and structure of the Cyprus educational system, as have been shaped since the formation of the Cypriot state resemble those of the Greek system. Specifically, it has the following basic levels:

- PRIMARY EDUCATION (Pre-primary & primary education)
- SECONDARY EDUCATION (Gymnasium & Lyceum)
- HIGHER EDUCATION (Higher & Tertiary Education)

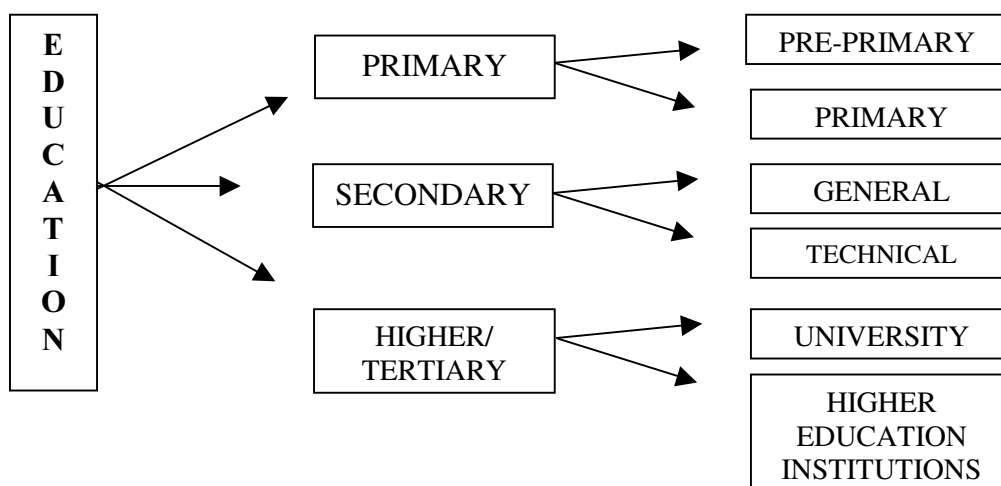


Figure 2: Structure of the Cyprus Educational System

UNIVERSITIES – POLYTECHNICS AND OTHER INSTITUTIONS OF TERTIARY EDUCATION					TERTIARY EDUCATION
15 – 18 YEARS OLD	ENIAIO (Comprehensive) LYCEUM	TECHNICAL EDUCATION	3 YEARS ATTENDANCE	OPTIONAL EDUCATION	SECONDARY EDUCATION
		APPRENTICESHIP SCHEME	3 YEARS ATTENDANCE	OPTIONAL EDUCATION	
12 – 15 YEARS OLD	GYMNASIUM		3 YEARS ATTENDANCE	COMPULSORY EDUCATION	

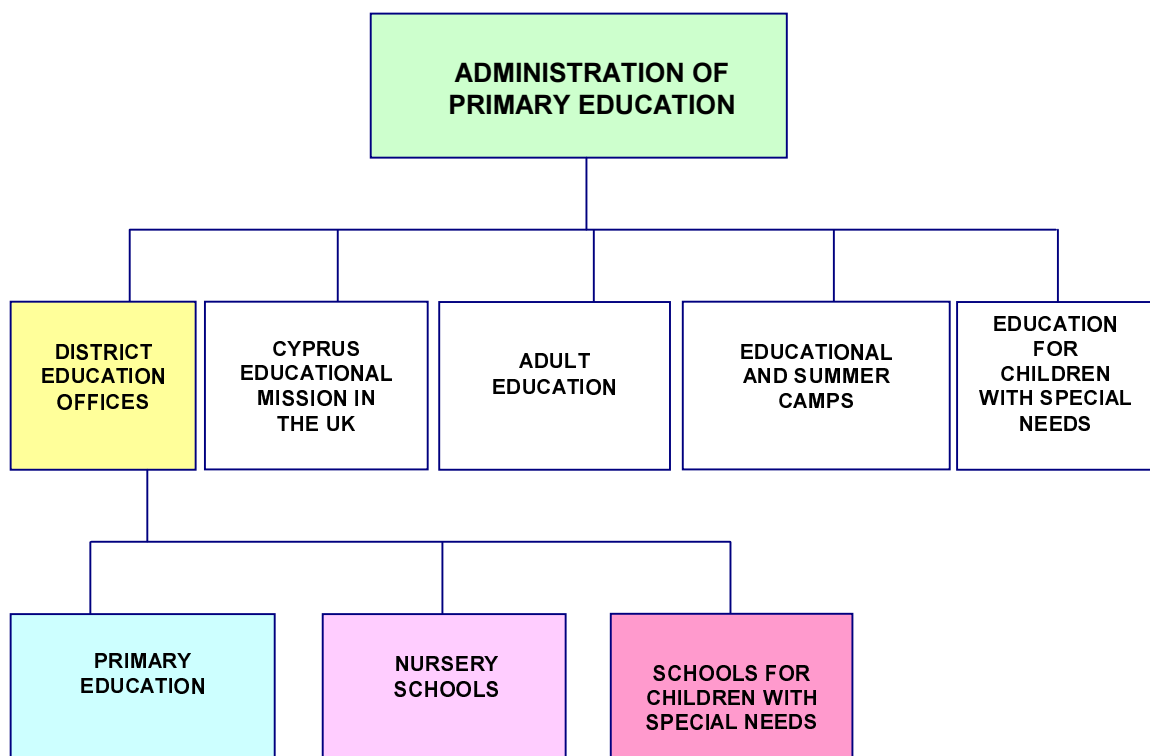
6 – 12 YEARS OLD	PRIMARY EDUCATION ↓		6 YEARS ATTENDANCE	COMPULSORY EDUCATION	PRIMARY EDUCATION
5 – 6 YEARS OLD	PRE-PRIMARY EDUCATION (NURSERY SCHOOL) ↓		1 YEAR ATTENDANCE	COMPULSORY EDUCATION	
3 – 5 YEARS OLD	PRE-PRIMARY EDUCATION (NURSERY SCHOOL)		2 YEARS ATTENDANCE	OPTIONAL EDUCATION	

Figure 3: The Cyprus Educational System

COMPULSORY FULL-TIME EDUCATION

Primary Education (Pre-primary & Primary education)

Primary Education constitutes the main and fundamental stage of education, which lays the foundation for the harmonious development of children in the cognitive, emotional and psychomotor sector. For this reason, the administration of the department of Primary Education insists on the continual improvement and upgrading of Primary Education by encouraging the in-service training of the teaching staff, the writing of new books, the appointment of more teachers in the education for children considered as having special needs and the extension or construction of new school buildings.



The various sectors of the department of Primary Education include pre-primary education (pre-primary schools: state, communal, private), primary education (primary schools in the free and occupied parts of Cyprus), education for children with special needs (schools for children with special needs and the rendering of individualized help to children with special needs placed in primary schools), Cyprus educational mission in the U.K., adult education centers, educational and summer camps and education of the Greeks of diaspora.

Pre-primary education

The Ministry of Education and Culture of Cyprus, is responsible for the education of 3 year old children and over. It takes on the responsibility to complement the family's role, to provide ample support and augment the developmental stage of the children and to satisfy their basic needs for an integral personality in an experiential environment, so as to enable them to recognize their capabilities and enhance their self-confidence.

From the school year 2004-2005, for children aged between 4 years and 8 months to 5 years and 8 months attendance is compulsory and free of charge, whereas children aged between 3 - 4 years and 8 months who take up vacant places in public institutions, have to pay fees which are determined by the Ministry of Finance. The State covers all expenses for the functioning of the state institutions and continues to subsidize the functioning of the communal pre-primary schools. There are no criteria for attendance. The population of public pre-primary compulsory education for the school year of 2004 – 2005 was 9 920 children who were allocated to classes with an average number of 23 children per class.

The curriculum of public pre-primary schools is included in the curriculum of primary education. The basic aim of pre-primary education is:

‘to help the child to adapt smoothly to the wider school environment, to include itself in the society with comfort and safety and to secure, maintain and promote its healthy growth in all respects (intellectual, social, sentimental, moral, religious and aesthetic) to the maximum possible extent, depending on the stage of maturity’ (Curriculum, Ministry of Education and Culture, p. 39).

The Ministry of Education and Culture makes available all the necessary prerequisites for the most effective implementation of qualitative educational programmes. This is achieved by retaining as many elements of the natural way of living of the family as possible, with emphasis on the free activation of the children, on comfort, love, support, trust, acceptance, safety and on respect for their personal uniqueness and also by offering to the schools financial support, guidance and supervision.

The following objectives are achieved through educational programmes:

- Children's equal development in the cognitive, emotional and psychomotor domains
- The development of children in skills, attitudes, values and principles
- Children's preparation to attend primary school and maximization of their capabilities for school success.

The syllabus of pre-primary schools is drawn from the following:

- the natural environment (inanimate, processes, phenomena)
- the social and cultural environment (individuals, teams, foundations, institutions, monuments, activities, events)
- the personal and family life of children (personal experiences, incidents, situations)
- the daily life of school (accidental or pre-designed incidents)
- the needs, the interests, the abilities of children (Curriculum, Ministry of Education and Culture, p. 39).

The daily program lasts 5 hours and 20' on a five day basis and is comprised basically of the following parts:

HOUR	SUBJECTS/ACTIVITIES
07:45 – 8:45 08:25 – 09:05	Free Activities (1) Tidying up – Washing
09:05 – 09:45	First period of Teaching (2)
09:45 – 11:05	Break
11:05 – 11:45	Second period of Teaching (3)
11:45 – 12:25	Entertainment – Fruit – Break (4)
12:25 – 13:05	Silent Activities

Primary Education

Attendance in Primary School is compulsory for six years. Children should be at least five years and eight months old, in order to get enrolled in the first grade.

The population of primary education for the year 2004-2005 was 57 626. The maximum number of children in classrooms was 30. The school year comprises 180 days between the beginning of September till the middle of June. Schools open five days a week with an average of 35 lesson hours. The school day begins at 7: 45 until 13:05 and a lesson lasts 40 minutes.

The cornerstone of the aims of Primary Education has always been the harmonious development of the personality of children. This is believed to be achieved under conditions which help children acquire knowledge, develop right attitudes and cultivate skills, and in situations in which children are prepared to face the unceasing but changing world in a responsible manner.

According to the ten-year schooling educational programme, the aim of Primary Education is to create and secure the necessary learning opportunities for children regardless of age, sex, family and social background and mental abilities so that they will be able to:

- Develop harmoniously in the cognitive, emotional and psychomotor domains using to the maximum the means that contemporary technology offers.
- Deal successfully with various problems they may face including difficulties in familiarizing with the school and the wider environment.
- Promote socialization; establish their national and ethnic identity and their status as citizens of the Republic of Cyprus.
- Acquire positive attitudes towards learning; develop social understanding, fighting spirit, belief in human values, respect for our cultural heritage and human rights, appreciation of beauty and disposition for creativity and love for life and nature in order to become sensitive in preserving and improving the environment

The curriculum covers:

Modern Greek Language: Listening and oral expression, Reading, Written Expression, Basic conceptual and orthographic vocabulary, Grammar, Writing, Dexterities of study and exploitation of sources

I know and I do not forget: A lesson that aims at providing knowledge to pupils on the Turkish invasion in Cyprus and present to them the occupied areas.

Mathematics

Social Subjects

Environmental Study

Orthodox Christian Education

History

Geography

Citizenship

Science: Plants, Animals, Human Body, Time, Ground, Interval, Ecology, Forces, Magnets, Light, Sound, Heat, Electricity, Energy

Lower secondary education (the gymnasium)

Lower secondary education offers full-time compulsory education to pupils 12 to 15 years of age. Full attendance is also obligatory. A public primary school leaving certificate is required in order to enroll in the gymnasium without entrance examinations. On graduation, the students are awarded the 'Apolysterion Gymnasiou'.

During the school year 2004-2005 the number of pupils attending the gymnasia amounted to 28 050 with an average of 25 pupils per class.

The school year comprises 180 days between the beginning of September till the middle of June. Schools open five days a week with an average of 37 lesson periods. The school day begins at 7:30 until 13:35 and a lesson lasts 45 minutes.

Aims and Objectives

The gymnasium's overarching goal is to provide pupils with general education within more flexible, comprehensive-teaching structures which prepare pupils for subject selection at the lyceum level. Through general education, with an emphasis on humanities (social sciences, physical sciences and aesthetics), it is expected that learners will have the opportunities to develop autonomy as a skill

for lifelong learning, self-monitoring and self-direction and self-fulfillment. Therefore, exposure of the pupils to a common curriculum at this level, involves the fundamental assumption that general education provides pupils with the knowledge, skills and attitudes that empower them to understand themselves, their own language and culture, and relate, meaningfully, to people who are linguistically and culturally different and with whom the pupils choose to communicate in various situations.

Specifically, the main educational objectives at the Gymnasium level aim at enabling the learners to:

- broaden their traditional value system (aesthetic, moral, social, personal, technical and economic)
- acquire, expand and synthesize knowledge that will help them meet personal, social, and economic challenges
- develop skills for critical literacy through the acquisition of their first language
- acquaint themselves with a range of different Art forms, express their artistic talents and progressively form their own sense of connoisseurship
- become self aware of their potential in terms of skills, interests and talents and be able to appreciate the importance of both intellectual and vocational aspects of work in order to select the type of work they aspire to develop physically by cultivating their kinesthetic skills.

The Curriculum and the Syllabuses

The curriculum of Gymnasiums is organized under broad subject-matter areas. It is comprised entirely of required subjects that are identical for all students.

It covers the following subjects:

Mother tongue:	Modern Greek & Classical Greek
Maths	
Natural Studies:	Physics, Chemistry, Biology, Anthropology, Natural Science & Geography
Social Studies:	History, Religious Knowledge, Career Education, Civics & Economics
Foreign Languages:	English, French
Information and Technology:	Computer Studies, Technology, Home Economy
Physical Education	
Aesthetic Education:	Music & Art

The language of instruction in all public schools (primary and secondary) is Greek.

Upper secondary education

- Eniaio lyceum
- Secondary technical and vocational education

Eniaio lyceum:

The Cyprus educational system started the school year 2000-2001 with one of the greatest developments in the last 20 years in secondary education. The development concerns the important structural change in the system by establishing the eniaio lyceum system on a pancyprian scale. The eniaio lyceum replaced the lyceum of optional subjects which functioned for over 20 years.

The lyceum cycle of state upper secondary general education offers a 3 year optional education programme for pupils aged between 15 and 18. The holders of 'Apolysterio Gymnasiou' may enter a lyceum or a technical school without taking further examinations.

During the school year 2004-2005 the number of pupils attending the Lyceum reached 23 303 with minimum 16 and maximum 24 pupils per class. The school year comprises 180 days between beginning of September till the middle of June. Schools open five days a week with an average of 37 lesson periods. The school day begins at 7:30 until 13:35 and a lesson lasts 45 minutes.

Aims and Objectives

Based on the socioeconomic, cultural and national needs of Cyprus public state upper secondary education offers equal opportunities for education and aims at promoting and developing a healthy and moral personality in view of creating able democratic and law abiding citizens. It also aims at ingraining the national identity, the cultural values and the universal ideals for freedom, justice, peace as well as nurturing, love, respect for fellow-men in order to establish mutual understanding and democracy.

Eniaio lyceum is characterized by focusing on general education (including technological and economy education) and developing a multifaceted personality by:

- a) the didactic process and the various pedagogical activities which nurture a wide range of skills and types of thought such as:
 - critical thinking
 - creativity and originality
 - imagination
 - observation
 - cooperation
 - problem solving and coping with a variety of situations
 - analysis skills
 - writing skills
 - the ability of assessment and self-assessment
- b) developing skills and attitudes so that a youth can cope with the challenges of the modern world as a pupil and later as a citizen

Study Programme/Subjects of the Eniaio Lyceum

The pupils have the flexibility to form their own timetable according to their interests and inclinations. In this they are assisted by the teachers of career Guidance and Counseling and the Committee for the Assessment of Pupils' Options.

The study program is divided into three types:

- Common core subjects which are compulsory subjects for all pupils. These subjects aim at providing general education. They are: Modern Greek, Classical Greek, Maths, Science, History, Religious knowledge, Civics, Economics, Compulsory foreign languages, Computer Science, Technology, Physical Education, Music & Art.

- Optional stream subjects which are selected by the pupils according to their preference and what is pursued is a more systematic and profound study of the subjects which interest the pupils. These subjects are taught 4 periods per week. They are : Classical Greek, History, Latin, Maths, Physics, Chemistry, Computer Science, Technology, Drawing, English, French, German, Accountancy, Shorthand, Typing-Secretarial Skills, Physical Education, Music Subjects, Art Subjects & Family Education)
- Subjects of special interest and/or enrichment which are selected by the pupils in view of affording the pupils the opportunity to study a variety of subjects to enrich or support or satisfy their special inclinations or interest or needs. They are the same as optional stream subjects and are taught 4 periods per week also.

Secondary Technical and Vocational Education:

Secondary Technical and Vocational Education (STVE) offers programmes of:

- Formal Secondary Technical and Vocational Education
- Apprenticeship Scheme and
- Life-long Learning

The total population of STVE for the school year 2004-2005 reached **4235**.

Formal STVE

It is offered in two main directions (Theoretical and Practical). Students enter STVE schools after they graduate from the Gymnasium at the age of fifteen. Both Theoretical and Practical direction studies have a duration of three years.

Upon completion of their studies, graduates of STVE are awarded a leaving certificate, which is recognized as equivalent to any six-year Public Secondary Education school-leaving certificate.

Apprenticeship Scheme

It has been in operation since 1963, and addresses drop-outs from the formal education system for the ages 15 to 17. Apprentices are employed in industry, where they receive on the job training, and have the opportunity for general education and school based vocational training on a day release basis for a period of two years.

Life-long Learning

Evening classes are also offered at several technical schools, aiming at providing students with the opportunity to enrich their knowledge and abilities to compete for employment in a rapidly changing world.

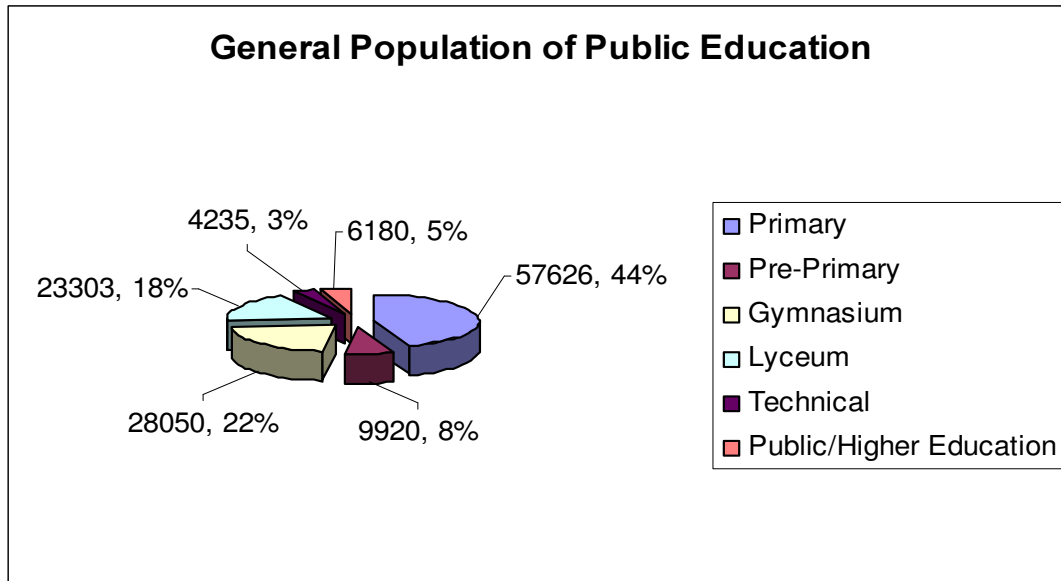


Figure 4: General population of public education

Private secondary education:

Although private secondary schools maintain a considerable degree of independence in their operation and curricula, they are registered with the Ministry of Education and Culture and comply with certain curriculum and facility requirements mandated by law.

Curriculum programmes for most private secondary schools extend over a six-year period with emphasis on general education for the first three years. Foreign language schools have six or seven year curriculum programmes with English, French, Italian or Arabic as the basic languages of instruction. A few private secondary schools are attached to primary schools providing an integrated twelve-or-thirteen-year programme.

Entry to these schools is through competitive entrance examinations.

Assessment, progression and qualifications

At the level of students

The assessment of pupils, which forms an integral part of teaching, aims at gauging the degree of success of its aims as they are set by the curricula. Assessment combines a variety of types and techniques so that it can achieve a reliable, objective and fair evaluation of knowledge, the critical thinking and the skills of the pupils, contribute to self-knowledge and autonomous thinking as well as how well pupils acquire objective information, the level of their learning and their capabilities. In addition, assessment provides to the education system information on the results of its tasks and gives feedback on the teaching and learning process, so that there can be continuous improvement. Assessment is also a way for parents to be informed about their children's performance. Finally it creates incentives for learning in an environment of cooperation and mutual respect either by the creation of competitive spirit or by the mere individual satisfaction of attaining high performance and acquiring knowledge.

A student is assessed on:

- involvement in the daily work in the class and the overall activities at school.
- the results of performance as presented in written examinations at the trimesters and the final exams.
- the projects and other activities

The education system at the secondary level provides for diagnostic assessment of pupils, formative assessment and final written examinations conducive to promotion. Formative assessment is conducted throughout the school year for continuous monitoring and control of the teaching-learning process in view of finding out and tackling possible problems as well as finding out the suitability of the teaching methods and tools employed.

Continuous assessment in the Gymnasium is on a scale of A to E. It is both oral and written (quizzes, revision tests and individual or group projects) supplemented by compulsory internally set final examinations in June on a 1 to 20 scale for Greek, Mathematics, History and Natural Science.

Continuous assessment in the upper division, eniaio lyceum & technical school is on a scale of 1-20. It is also both oral and written (quizzes, revision tests, class tests and projects) supplemented by compulsory internally set final examinations in Greek, Mathematics, History and Physics.

A certificate of completion of the lower-division studies ensures the pupil's entry in the upper division. Following the nation-wide comprehensive final examination in the upper division an aggregate of marks based on the results determines the pupil's successful graduation. A school leaving certificate 'APOLYTIRION' is a qualification for employment in clerical positions and provides access to local and overseas tertiary education establishments.

Eligibility for admission to the public higher education institutions of the country is secured through the 'APOLYTIRION' of the upper cycle of secondary education. Furthermore, and because of the limited number of places in these institutions, this eligibility is associated with the need for participation in examinations, called 'Entrance Examinations' that are organized by the Ministry of Education and Culture and which aim at ranking and distributing the places to secondary school graduates according to their interests and achievement. It has to be stressed that the 'Entrance Examinations do not measure any type of ability or knowledge levels, but have ranking as their sole objective.

At the level of teachers

A university degree (or on equivalent degree) in the subject to be taught renders teachers eligible for inclusion in the official register of candidates for appointment.

A teacher's appointment is based on a system where primary priority is determined by the year of submitting the applications (on the principle 'first come first served'). Secondary priority (among the applicants of the same year) is decided on a system of units which the candidate accumulates according to the date(s) of graduation, special qualifications and a personal interview.

Prior to permanent appointment, a secondary school teacher is required to attend a pre-service training course, at the Cyprus Pedagogical Institute whose foremost aim is to contribute to the educational advancement of teachers of Cyprus, thereby improving the quality of education. Furthermore, prior to permanent appointment a teacher may serve as a substitute for short or long term needs and/or maintain temporary status on contract.

A newly appointed teacher is on probation for two years and they are inspected by the inspectors of the Ministry of Education and Culture.

Newly promoted secondary deputy heads attend compulsory once-a week courses for a year. These courses focus on administrative and coordinating skills.

Teachers are civil servants and, although they are appointed by an independent body, The Educational Service Committee, they come under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Education and Culture.

The role of inspector

The inspector plays a key role in education in Cyprus. Besides the task of inspecting teachers formally during the two-year period and then again after the twelfth year of service when teachers become eligible for promotion, they also assess the school heads during a wider inspection process called general inspection.

In the primary sector, the inspector with responsibility for the main disciplines looks after the majority of staff in a number of schools, making this role particularly important because it involves the overall functioning of the schools within which the inspector becomes the 'interlocutor' for the teachers. The situation appears to differ in the Secondary sector, although here again an inspector is allocated particular responsibility for a school. 'Major' or 'General' inspections are undertaken by a team of inspectors who carry a whole-school inspection. The criteria are legally established and cover a wide range of issues.

A third role is in the area of the curriculum where inspectors take part in curriculum development, the production of textbooks, the identification of curricular resources, the setting of examinations for the school leaving certificate and for the university selection examination.

Progression and curriculum

The curriculum should have progression in which successive items and topics should make increasing demands on the students, drawing them deeper into the subject and offering problems and tasks of increasing difficulty. According to the Unesco Report (1997, §2.11.2), it appears that the planning of the curriculum for continuity and progression has been thoughtful and well-pursued within each separate stage (primary & secondary). The use of curriculum committees and well-qualified staff teams have ensured that a coherent curriculum is available for teachers whose complaints are more about balance and quantity rather than about continuity and progression.

Post-secondary education (Higher/Tertiary Education)

Currently Higher Education is provided by public and private third level institution as follows:

- University level higher education
- Non- university public higher institutions
- Non – university, private higher education institutions (colleges)

The University of Cyprus was founded in 1989 and started its operation in September 1992 and it offers programmes at undergraduate and postgraduate

level based on education and research and also confers doctorates. Now it is in its thirteen year of operation with about 4110 students.

The University is a public corporate body and is governed by:

- The Council
- The Senate

General Objectives

The main objective of the University is the advancement of science, knowledge, learning and education by teaching and research.

Curricula

The programmes of studies at the University of Cyprus are based on credit hours. One credit hour is normally equivalent to one weekly 50-minute 'class' per semester.

To graduate from the University, a student must successfully complete 120 credit hours (extra requirement: 6-9 credits for foreign language), which must include 12-15 credit hours of free electives outside the major area of study from at least two Faculties of the University.

The University of Cyprus currently offers programmes through the following Faculties and Departments:

- a) **Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences**, with Departments in
Education
Foreign Languages and Literatures
Social and Political Science
Turkish Studies
- b) **Faculty of Pure and Applied Science**, with Departments in
Computer Science
Mathematics and Statistics
Natural Science
- c) **Faculty of Economics and Management**, with Departments in
Economics
Public and Business Administration
- d) **Faculty of Letters**, with Departments in
Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies
Classics and Philosophy
History and Archaeology
- e) **Polytechnic Faculty**, with Departments of
Civil Engineers and Engineers of Environment
Electricians of Engineers and Mechanic of Computers
Mechanical engineers and Engineers of Production

Approximately 550 students are admitted to the University of Cyprus every year. The great majority must satisfactorily pass the competitive entrance examinations set by the Ministry of Education and Culture. Those eligible to participate in the exams are Cypriot citizens, or those with at least one parent of Cypriot origin. Prospective students must have graduated from six-year high school.

Overseas students must possess a good knowledge of Greek or Turkish language and their admission is based on G.C.E or G.C.S.E or other equivalent examinations, or based on the results of special examinations set by the University of Cyprus.

Evaluation of a student's performance in a course is decided by the faculty member responsible for the course and approved by the department. Testing and evaluation may include written and/or oral examinations at the end of the semester, laboratory exercises and active participation. The various ways required for evaluation and their relative weight are given in the detailed course description.

Teaching Methods

The academic year comprises of two semesters. In all Departments attendance is compulsory and continuous. Students are expected to complete their studies in eight semesters. Each semester the student registers for courses corresponding to 12-18 credits in accordance with the requirements of the programme.

The individual teacher, department, faculty, or a combination of these decides teaching methods. Most courses involve a combination of formal lectures and more informal seminars and certain courses require practical sessions in which students are encouraged to participate. The languages of instruction are Greek and Turkish. (The official languages are stipulated by the Constitution of the Republic of Cyprus).

Open University

A provisional committee has been set up by the government to prepare the ground for the establishment of an Open University.

TEPAK

A provisional committee has been set up by the government to prepare the ground for the establishment of a technological university.

Non-University Public Higher Education

The public institutions operate under the supervision of the appropriate Ministries. Each Ministry, in collaboration with the Board of Management, the Director and the faculty of the institution concerned, may set regulations for the type and level of courses, admission requirements, curricula, assessment and the number of students admitted each year, and is wholly responsible for organizing and governing the institution.

There are seven public institutions of non-university higher education:

1. Higher Technical Institute
2. Cyprus Forestry College
3. Higher Hotel Institute of Cyprus
4. School of Nursing
5. Public Health Inspectors School
6. Cyprus Police Academy
7. Tourist Guides School

The basic admission requirement for public non-university higher education institutions is the completion of a total of 12 years primary and secondary education, which is certified by the Lyceum Apolyterion or Technical School Apolyterion or equivalent.

Success to competitive entrance examinations is also required for most institutions. Success in G.C.E. A-level examinations is also accepted for admission in particular institutions.

Public non-university higher education institutions offer specialized programmes in various fields needed by the state, ranging from technical engineering to nursing, hotel and tourism management, forestry and other professional disciplines.

The main objective is to provide high level education and produce able and reliable professionals in their field. Studies are normally organized in 3-year diploma programmes, which include different specialization lines. Students are assessed by sitting in semester and often midterm examinations. Workshop and laboratory assignments are marked individually, with this mark forming a percentage of the final work in the given topic. Project work as well as industrial training are also assessed and taken into consideration in the final mark allocation.

Teaching methods involve lectures on the theoretical level, extensive practical training and projects. Students complete their training with practice in industry

The language of instruction in most public non-university institutions is English.

Private Institutions of Higher Education

A number of private tertiary institutions offer programmes in various fields of study (e.g. secretarial studies, business administration, electrical, civil and mechanical engineering, hotel and catering, banking, accountancy and computer studies, pre-primary and primary education), with a duration of one to four years.

Law 67(I)/96 regulates the establishment control and operation of tertiary institutions in Cyprus. According to this Law, all private tertiary institutions have to register with the Ministry of Education and Culture. In 2004, twenty-three private institutions of higher education were registered with the Ministry and offer specific courses leading to the awards Certificate/Diploma/Higher Diploma/Bachelor. Recently (July 2005) a new law for the establishment of private universities has been passed.

Admission requirements to these institutions are, a secondary school leaving certificate, and good knowledge of English.

Their main objective is to prepare students for a successful professional career.

The programmes in most institutions are offered through a two semester academic year and the language of instruction is normally English.

Teaching methods involve lecturers, practical training and projects, while assessment takes the form of written and oral examination, as well as the submission of projects. The individual institution and the Ministry's appropriate services offer guidance.

Final qualifications in Higher Education

In public and private non-university higher education institutions, depending on the programme of study, there are the following intermediate-final qualifications:

- Certificate (one year programme)
- Diploma (two year programme)
- Higher Diploma (three year programme)

- Bachelor's degree (four year programme)
- Masters degrees

The University of Cyprus awards ptychio, the first final university degree, to all students who have successfully completed the 4-year respective programme of study. The first post-graduate degree, Master of Science or Master of Arts, is being conferred after successful completion of a 3-semester programme of study. Finally, the University of Cyprus awards Ph.D., the doctoral degree – to students who successfully meet the requirements.

Recognition of Degrees

In January 2000 the Cyprus Council for the Recognition of Higher Education Qualifications (KY.S.A.T.S) started offering its services by examining applications for degree recognition. The Council also offers written information to employers and interested persons on the matter of recognition. In the year of 2004, the educational evaluation – accreditation process has continued by SEKAP and 156 programmes of study, offered by private Institutions of Higher Education, are currently accredited.

TERTIARY UNIVERSITY AND NON-UNIVERSITY		POPULATION IN			2004
Educational Institution	Students			Student/Teacher Ratio	
	Men	Women	Total		
TERTIARY UNIVERSITY	1,063	3,047	4,110	13.2	
University of Cyprus	1,063	3,047	4,110	13.2	
TERTIARY NON-UNIVERSITY	9,796	6,943	16,739	15.9	
Public	1,198	872	2,070	10.2	
Cyprus Police Academy	477	116	593	15.6	
School of Nursing	231	565	796	21.5	
Higher Technical Institute	331	54	385	5.1	
Higher Hotel Institute	85	92	177	5.5	
Forestry College	22	0	22	3.7	
Mediterranean Institute of Management	52	45	97	6.5	
Private	8,598	6,071	14,669	17.2	
TOTAL	10,859	9,990	20,849	15.3	

Figure 5: General population of Higher Education

Education systems for people with Special Needs

In Cyprus the provision of education to disabled children has traditionally taken place in special schools, where they are segregated from their peers. In 1979 this practice was made statutory by the Law for Special Education, whose most important provision was the education of disabled children in segregated settings. The 1979 law remained in force until 1999, when a new law was passed giving the right to all children to attend their neighborhood school; new legislation has been criticized for continuing to speak only of 'children with special needs'.

During the past decade, the government of Cyprus has encouraged and supported the education of children considered as having special needs within the mainstream education system. Furthermore, a 'special' teacher for the support of these children has been placed in almost all schools. In most cases, special teachers are part-timers, covering two or three schools per week.

Schools for Children with Special Needs:

The department of primary education has under its supervision the schools for children with special needs. Currently nine special schools are functioning for the service of 338 children with high individualized needs, such as blind and deaf students. These children are educated by specialized teachers. At the same time individualized help for 3 452 children within the mainstream of primary schools is offered by specialist teachers.

At the level of the gymnasium, education for pupils with special needs has become a top-priority. Pupils with severe hearing or visual impairment, mental disability, emotional disturbance or severe orthopedic impairment are in special ways prepared for integration in the mainstream school community and later on for integration in society.

The recent passage of a new Special Education Law, (1999, 2001), guarantees with the enforcement of relevant rules and administrative regulations, the right of pupils with disabilities to suitable public education within mainstream secondary school setting. At the Ministry of Education and Culture, specialized Committees have been set up at all three levels of education, to observe the enforcement of the recent law. At the Lyceum and the Gymnasium levels, special committees are currently actively seeking to identify issues facing special education providers, so that the latter group can develop solutions to turn these issues into learning opportunities in classroom practices.

At the Gymnasium level, special classes are gradually being provided based on each pupil's medical, psychological, speech, hearing and educational history. Attempts are also being made so that each pupil's instructional programme is evaluated in consultation with his/her parents. Based on the results of such evaluation, the pupil may attend a regular classroom with an itinerant teacher or resource teacher in a resource or special room in the school. All the pupils are entitled to the individualized instruction they need. This means that there are offered appropriate space (resource rooms) means (modern technology) special timeframe (time to complete a task) and special evaluation/assessment procedures. In these ways it is expected that these system wide initiatives can have real impact.

Methods of teaching

Mixed ability teaching is a clear and stated policy of the Ministry of Education and Culture. There is no restriction in this policy to Primary schools or to the early stages of Secondary schools and it must be assumed that it applies through to the third year of Lyceum. Of course in Cyprus mixed ability is adopted as policy throughout the school stages. The argument is made that differentiation is achieved at the Lyceum stage because pupils choose the options in which they are most able.

According to the Unesco report (1997, §2.15.2), on one hand the policy has political and social value because pupils are all taught together and there is no social stigma on those who are less able. It is also argued that mixing pupils in the same class means that there are no 'bad' classes filled with underachieving, unmotivated, ill-disciplined pupils.

Research into mixed ability teaching suggested that results from streamed and mixed ability classes for individual pupils were at least similar and that the social value of mixed ability therefore gave an advantage.

The other side of the argument (see Unesco report, 1997 §2.15.4/5/6) points to the difficulty of undertaking mixed ability teaching. It is not simply a question of placing pupils of widely varying abilities in the same class and then teaching them as if they were a homogenous group. There must be appropriate teaching for all pupils. The curriculum must take into account the wide range of abilities in terms of differentiation, content and pace. Also mixed ability teaching requires teachers highly skilled in this methodology and this requires training at both pre-service and in-service stages. Concluding it seems that mixed ability teaching is proving to be extremely difficult and it is doubtful if it is actually being practiced even in Primary schools, where it is most predominant in other educational systems.

The status of educational technology in primary and secondary education

All European nations have established policies for incorporating ICT in education. Their objectives have been set in the categories of equipment, the acquisition and development of software, the skills of teachers and students, and the use of the Internet. Cyprus has established objectives in all six areas for primary education and upper secondary education. In the primary level, the trend among European education systems is to integrate ICT as tools for learning.

After a special evaluation report of the Cyprus education system – conducted in 1997 by the International Institute for Education Planning (1997) – a number of reforms were set forth in an effort to raise the quality of education. Among these innovations was technology integration into all levels of classroom teaching. Efforts are currently under way to integrate computers and the Internet in primary and secondary school levels.

The department of primary education has established a pilot programme to introduce computers and related technologies into the classroom. During the academic year 1993-1994, computers were introduced to some primary schools as a pilot project (Information Technology Group, 2000). The main goal of the project was to identify how computers could be integrated into classroom teaching in ways that they will improve education and learning for all students. In the summer of 2000, an official decision was made to equip every classroom of upper-primary with a computer and a color printer. A plan for lower grades is also under development.

The full implementation of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) has currently gained top priority in secondary education both at the Gymnasias (lower secondary schools) and the Eniaia Lyceum (upper secondary schools). Relevant proposals have been developed and are directly run by the Ministry of Education and Culture within the frame work of the Strategic Planning for Development in Cyprus (1999-2003) and of the Strategic Planning Towards an Information Society in Cyprus.

The following categories of ICT are included in the new proposals: financing, acquisition, management, maintenance, design of special ICT syllabuses, and teacher training in the new media applications and evaluation. The stated overall goals and objectives of the above interconnected categories, covering both long-term and short-term educational planning, are:

- to harmonise the general educational policies of Cyprus to those of Europe since Cyprus is at the pre-accession phase.
- to link ICT initiatives to those of e-Europe and design suitable curricula.
- to develop the potential of turning Cyprus into a regional, and possibly into an international, center for providing educational services including services in ICT and foreign language teaching/learning.

At present, the challenge for the educational policy makers is to link all the above interconnected goals and categories of ICT to the National Curriculum in general, and to micro-sequences of teaching and learning pedagogy at the classroom level in particular. The Ministry of Education and Culture aiming at the effective implementation of ICT across the curriculum both in respect of their mastery and of their utilization is supporting learner-development, has worked out policies:

At the level of subject Curriculum

Year 2002 is the first year of the full implementation of a National Curriculum for Information and Communication Technology as a subject matter in its own right (compulsory or optional), at all levels of the Public Educational System.

At the level of school syllabuses

Information and Communication Technology as a tool is planned to be integrated with other subject areas including foreign language teaching. Implementation at this level is expected to take the form of the design of special ICT thematic structures accompanied by appropriate changes of degrees of complexity of the learning tasks. For example, e-lesson plans in various subject areas could be developed based on this line of thought. What is needed is a visible fund of external expert knowledge to be made available to local educational systems on regular basis in preparing such e-lesson plan packages for the subject areas selected (e.g. foreign language learning).

At the level of macro-educational sequences

An interesting proposal for National Certification in the use of ICT has been put forward at the Ministry of Education and Culture for the period of 2003-2006. This proposal includes several projects including the education and training of all the teachers in new media applications.

Ongoing reforms

According to the Information Bulletin of the Ministry of Education and Culture (2005) the Minister described the main objectives of the government in education as follows:

'a modern education that would mould an answer to the challenges of the 21st century which should, after recording the real needs of society, propose the particular practical ways for creating active citizens with democratic ideas, social sensitivities and love for their homeland'

In order to achieve the above objectives, the Minister referred to certain innovations that have been implemented and some other that are in the stage of implementation. These are:

1. Initiating a public dialogue for Educational Reform

One of the most important actions of the government was the nomination of a Committee of Experts in September 2003, for the preparation and submission of a report with proposals for the reformation and the modernization of the Cypriot Educational System. The committee completed its work and submitted its Report with proposals on 31 August 2004. The Report was communicated to all the educational and social institutions. On 30 January 2005 the government inaugurated the dialogue for educational reform, on the basis of an explicit mechanism and framework. The Council of Education and the Councils of Primary, Secondary and Higher Education have already discussed the matter and produced concrete results.

2. Dealing with school failure

The issue of school failure has been dealt with through the introduction of Areas of Educational Priority in three networks of schools. The program covers all educational levels as it provides measures for strengthening the school units in a way that it includes the children from kindergarten until Lyceum. Schools selected are located in downgraded areas that are often also characterized by multicultural particularities.

3. Rearrangement of the day-long Primary School, and extension of the measure to pre-primary and secondary schools.

4. Administrative restructuring of the Ministry of Education and Culture

In September 2003 the implementation of a restructuring plan in the Ministry began which aims at an administrative structure that will ensure the adoption and application of decisions on the total spectrum of education, both horizontally and vertically, and will eliminate the complete separation of the three levels of education.

5. Preparation of a New Evaluation Scheme of Educational Work and Educators

A team of experts is in the process of developing a new evaluation scheme of educational work and educators.

6. Changing the landscape in Tertiary Education

- Financial support is provided to the University of Cyprus for the introduction and operation of new Schools and Departments.
- Promoting the enactment of legislation for the operation of a Technological University in 2007.
- Supporting the foundation and operation of an Open University.
- The preparation of a new system of admitting students in higher and tertiary institutions

7. Establishment of a centre of Educational Research and Evaluation

8. Fighting Parallel education

Within the framework of the dialogue for the educational reform, the teaching material has been reduced by 20%, the examination tests have been restructured and illegal tuition centers are prosecuted.

9. Training of teachers

The multifaceted programs of training teachers offered through the Pedagogical Institute have been extended. Emphasis is given on the training of teachers on the information technology and in their pre-service preparation.

According to the Minister of Education and Culture, the government's objective is to materialize the above priorities the soonest possible.