

Chapter 8

The Challenges of Work– Based Learning via Systemic Modelling in the European Union: The Potential Failure of Dual Education Due to Social Expectations in Greece

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ABSTRACT

While the skills mismatch is well documented in EU labour market, it renders work-based learning a plausible part of the answer to this problem. Yet, a number of issues demand handling before work-based learning is effectively utilized. Systems inquiry, through systemic modelling, constitutes a proper framework to facilitate a holistic study of such complex social phenomena. From a systemic perception, the complexity of social systems has prevented a holistic study. The descriptive power of systemic modelling allows for such a study that relates labour-market to

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dual education via apprenticeship. Thus, the respective systems are studied as a whole; the challenges arising are specified and the limitations of the solution are clarified. The application of apprenticeship in heavily industrialized countries can yield results, but it may fail in countries like Greece with a very different socio-economic environment. Still, some recommendations can be formed for a variant of apprenticeship more attuned to such cases.

INTRODUCTION

The labour market has never been static but moved by economy and technology. The labour force has continually adapted to changing demands. Nowadays, the challenge is the speed of change: the mobile phone has 2 billion users after 20 years when the telephone had just 50 million after 75 years of usage (Cedefop, 2017, p. 1). According to the World Economic Forum (henceforth WEF), two thirds of children that enter primary education today will work in jobs that do not exist yet. Both people and enterprises are in danger of being left behind without updated skills. The European policies for vocational education and training (VET) have adapted to provide the required by the stakeholders skills. Fewer people leave school early, since educational attainment is rising. The European Union (EU) Member States aim at reaching two relevant targets by 2020:

- 40% of 30 to 40 year-old adults to have completed tertiary level education;
- school dropout rates to be reduced below 10%.

Yet, regarding lifelong learning, EU remains some way off reaching its target of 15% of participating adults. Moreover, there are not enough graduates from upper secondary and tertiary education in sciences, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM), Youth unemployment remains high in many Member States, while skill mismatch has also increased (WEF, 2014), thus determining the crucial subjects to meet demand.

Besides the previous figures, in some occasions the overall participation of EU in global economic and demographic factors is decreasing (EC, 2017a):

- the position of Euro, as a global reserve currency, is 30% (2017) compared to 33% in 2015;
- the share of EU in the global GNP has decreased to 22% in 2015 from 26% in 2004;

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