



European Social Charter
Charte Sociale Européenne



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EUROPEAN SOCIAL CHARTER

9th National Report on the implementation of
the European Social Charter

submitted by

THE GOVERNMENT OF CYPRUS

(Articles 1, 9, 10, 15, 18, 20 and 24
for the period 01/01/2007 – 31/12/2010)

Report registered by the Secretariat on 26 March 2012

CYCLE 2012

GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF CYPRUS

Report on Article 1 of the Revised European Social Charter

THE RIGHT TO WORK

(Reference Period 01.01.2007 – 31.12.2010)

Article 1§1

1) Please describe national employment policy and the general legal framework. Please specify the nature of, reasons for and extent of any reforms.

No change.

2) Please indicate the measures taken (administrative arrangements, programmes, action plans, projects, etc.) to implement the legal framework.

- *Enhancement of Employment*

This Scheme aims to counteract the effects of the international economic crisis on employment by enhancing the ability of enterprises to retain and employ personnel through the improvement of their competitive advantage and competitive ability.

The Scheme, which is co funded by the European Social Fund and has a budget of €8.000.000, provides for subsidies to enterprises for the development and implementation of a specific business plan that will lead to the improvement of their competitive advantage and competitive ability, and through this improvement to the quantitative and or qualitative enhancement of employment within the specific enterprise. Subsidies are given to businesses whose proposals are approved through a comparative assessment procedure and refer to specific eligible expenses.

- *Subsidy Scheme to promote the employment and in-company training of Apprenticeship students in the Private Sector*

The Scheme for Promotion of Employment is a subsidy Scheme to promote the employment and in-company training of Apprenticeship students in the Private Sector.

The objective of the Scheme is to facilitate the recruitment of Apprenticeship students by employers who have available jobs in the specialisations which the apprentices have chosen, and the provision to them of satisfactory in-company training.

The Scheme subsidises eligible employers with a percentage of the monthly salary of the in-company trainer as well as with the full amount of the employers' social insurance contributions for the apprentice(s) recruited.

Information regarding beneficiaries and expenditure are available in Appendix I of Article 10.

- *Flexible forms of employment*

This Scheme was launched in February 2007 with the objective of encouraging economically inactive women to participate into the labour market. In 2008 the project continued to operate with the implementation of a subsidy scheme for companies and organizations to create new jobs based on flexible work practices and recruit unemployed women.

The Scheme was completed by August 2008. Through it, 195 women were employed, thus exceeding the original goal of placing 60 women in jobs with some aspect of flexibility.

In the programming period 2007-2013 the promotion of flexible forms of employment will become accessible to a wider public, embracing groups at risk of social and economic exclusion. The new Scheme was launched in 2010. Under the new scheme, 140 persons were employed and 43 agreements with employers were signed.

Schemes providing employment incentives

- *Scheme providing incentives for employment of the unemployed*

This scheme is about providing incentives for hiring unemployed individuals in the private sector. Financial aid of 60% of the yearly wage cost with maximum amount of €7.200 per person per semester is provided. The subsidy is granted only for the first 6 months of employment. The aim of this scheme is to alleviate the effects that the financial crisis has induced on the labour market.

The implementation period was from 27/11/2009 until 30/06/2011. Last applications were received in December 2010. The Scheme is co-financed by the European Social Fund and the Republic of Cyprus, within the framework of the Operational Programme "Employment, Human Capital and Social Cohesion" 2007-2013.

The approved budget of the scheme was €6.000.000. About 1.700 unemployed persons have benefited from this Scheme.

- *Scheme providing incentives for hiring individuals with disabilities*

This Scheme is about providing incentives for hiring individuals with disabilities in the private sector and Local Authorities. Financial aid of 75% of the annual wage cost

with a maximum amount of €15.000 per person per year is provided for the first 24 months of employment. Additionally financial aid up to 25% of the eligible costs with a maximum amount of €5.000 per person, for adapting premises, adapting or acquiring equipment, or acquiring and validating software for use by disabled workers, where the beneficiary provides sheltered employment, the costs of constructing, installing or expanding the establishment concerned, and any costs of administration and transport which result directly from the employment of disabled workers.

The aim of this scheme is to encourage employers to hire individuals with disabilities and the implementation period is from 29/09/2009 until 30/06/2014.

The Scheme is co-financed by the European Social Fund and the Republic of Cyprus within the framework of the Operational Programme "Employment, Human Capital and Social Cohesion" 2007-2013, under Priority Axis 2 «Expansion of the Labour Market and Social Cohesion».

The approved budget of the scheme is €1.000.000. Until the end of 2010, 89 persons with disabilities have benefited from this Scheme.

- *Scheme providing incentives for hiring disadvantaged individuals*

This scheme is about the provision of incentives for hiring disadvantaged individuals in the private sector and Local Authorities. Financial aid of 65% of the annual wage cost, with a maximum amount of €13.000 per person per year, is provided for the first 12 months of employment. Additionally an allowance for transportation costs to and from the workplace will be offered to employees.

The aim of this scheme is the full time employment of disadvantaged individuals and the implementation period is from 19/03/2010 until 30/06/2014.

The Scheme is co-financed by the European Social Fund and the Republic of Cyprus within the framework of the Operational Programme «Employment, Human Capital and Social Cohesion» 2007-2013, under Priority Axis 2 «Expansion of the Labour Market and Social Cohesion».

The approved budget is €9.000.000. About 878 unemployed disadvantaged individuals have benefited from this Scheme by the end of 2010.

For the purpose of this scheme, disadvantaged individuals are considered those who: have not completed the upper secondary education or vocational training (ISCED level 3), aged 15-24, aged 50 and more, live alone and have one or more dependents under their care (single parent families), are members of a national minority of Cyprus who need to develop their language skills, vocational training or professional experience in order improve their chances in having easier access to stable employment, receive public aid, are/were under the care/supervision of the Social Welfare Department's Director, are members of families with mental problems, are ex-prisoners, are ex-users of drug substances, are people with disabilities and are recognized victims of human trafficking.

Please see also information given under Article 10, regarding training schemes.

3) Please provide pertinent figures, statistics (for example Eurostat data) or any other relevant information, in particular: the GDP growth rate; trends in employment covering all sectors of the economy: employment rate (persons in employment as a percentage of the population aged 15-64 years), youth employment rate; activity rate (total labour force as a percentage of the population aged 15 years and over); unemployment rate, long-term unemployment rate, youth unemployment rate; employment status (employed, self-employed); all figures should be broken down by gender; employment policy expenditure as a share of GDP, including the relative shares of 'active' (job creation, training, etc.) and 'passive' (financial compensation, etc.) measures.

Growth (%)	
Year	Growth
2007	
2008	3,6 %
2009	-0,5 %
2010	0,5 %

Participation in Labour Force Rate (%)				
Year	Total (15-64 years old)	Men	Women	Young Persons (15-24 years old)
2007	64,4	73,6	55,8	41,7
2008	64,2	73,1	55,8	41,7
2009	64,4	72,7	56,4	41,1
2010	64,8	72,6	57,3	40,6

Source: Labour Force Survey

Labour Force				
Year	Total (15-64 years old)	Men	Women	Young Persons (15-24 years old)
2007	393.377	216.805	176.572	39.040
2008	397.374	219.184	178.191	38.978
2009	402.590	221.646	180.944	38.121
2010	410.465	224.128	186.337	38.007

Source: Labour Force Survey

Labour Force by Nationality				
Year	Total	Cypriots	EU Nationals	Non EU Nationals
2007	393.377	336.329	28.715	28.332
2008	397.374	329.065	37.442	30.888
2009	402.590	330.801	42.086	29.702
2010	410.465	324.026	51.740	34.700

Source: Labour Force Survey

Employment and Employment Rate (%)								
Year	Total (15-64 years old)		Men		Women		Young Persons (15-24 years old)	
2007	377.948	61,9%	209.457	71,1%	168.492	53,2%	35.074	37,4%
2008	382.852	61,9%	212.218	70,8%	170.634	53,5%	35.454	38,0%
2009	381.265	61,0%	210.237	68,9%	171.028	53,4%	32.876	35,5%
2010	385.093	60,8%	210.702	68,3%	174.391	53,6%	31.675	33,8%

Source: Labour Force Survey

Employment by Nationality				
Year	Total	Cypriots	EU Nationals	Non EU Nationals
2007	377.948	324.121	26.633	27.194
2008	382.852	318.213	34.935	29.703
2009	381.265	315.269	38.464	27.531
2010	385.093	306.122	46.604	32.367

Source: Labour Force Survey

Employment (Full-time/ Part-time) (%)						
Year	Full-time			Part-time		
	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women
2007	92,74	95,62	89,14	7,26	4,38	10,86
2008	92,25	95,21	88,56	7,75	4,79	11,44
2009	91,57	94,85	87,53	8,43	5,15	12,47
2010	90,70	93,51	87,32	9,30	6,49	12,68

Source: Labour Force Survey

Unemployment and Unemployment Rate (%)								
Year	Total (15+ years old)		Men		Women		Young Persons (15-24 years old)	
2007	15.428	3,9%	7.348	3,4%	8.080	4,6%	3.967	10,2%
2008	14.523	3,7%	6.966	3,2%	7.557	4,2%	3.523	9,0%
2009	21.325	5,3%	11.409	5,1%	9.916	5,5%	5.245	13,8%
2010	25.372	6,2%	13.425	6,0%	11.946	6,4%	6.331	16,7%

Source: Labour Force Survey

Unemployment by Nationality				
Year	Total	Cypriots	EU Nationals	Non EU Nationals
2007	15.428	12.209	2.082	1.138
2008	14.523	10.852	2.487	1.184
2009	21.325	15.531	3.622	2.171
2010	25.372	17.903	5.136	4.966

Source: Labour Force Survey

Unemployment by duration				
Duration	2007	2008	2009	2010
Less than 1 month	1.990	2.292	3.662	3.524
1 – 2 months	3.551	3.793	5.443	5.106
3 – 5 months	4.253	4.065	5.839	5.859
6 – 11 months	2.766	2.399	4.169	5.698
12 – 17 months	1.437	1.360	1.387	3.087
18 – 23 months	610	233	497	1.269
24 – 47 months	650	293	224	794
4 years & more	172	89	104	34
Total	15.428	14.523	21.325	25.372

Source: Labour Force Survey

Unemployment of Persons with Disabilities	
Year	Total
2007	295
2008	315
2009	462
2010	557

Source: District Labour Offices

Unemployment Benefit	
Year	Total €
2007	54,8 m
2008	54,3 m
2009	77,9 m
2010	85,8 m

Source: Social Insurance services

Article 1§2

1) Please describe the general legal framework. Please specify the nature of, reasons for and extent of any reforms.

Article 11 of the Law on Equal Treatment in Employment [L. 58(I)/2004] was amended by Law 50(I) of 2007, to introduce a provision with regard to the burden of proof in Courts. The new provision provides that the burden of proof is reversed not only in civil procedures, but in all judicial proceedings except criminal ones. The same provision provides that the claimant, as soon as he/she introduces facts to the Court by which the violation of the law can be inferred, the burden of proof is automatically reversed.

The above mentioned provision has been also introduced in the Persons with Disabilities Law [L. 57(I)/2004], with amending Law 72(I) of 2007.

2) Please indicate the measures taken (administrative arrangements, programs, action plans, projects, etc.) to implement the legal framework.

The Department of Labour has appointed an officer for matters of equal treatment. Additionally, the Department prepared an action plan, with the aim to attain equality between men and women and to promote equal opportunities regardless of age, sexual orientation, ethnic or racial origin, religion or beliefs.

Labour Inspectors continue to inspect and monitor the implementation of the legislations on equal treatment and equal opportunities.

Article 1§3

1) Please describe the general legal framework. Please specify the nature of, reasons for and extent of any reforms.

No change.

2) Please indicate the measures taken (administrative arrangements, programs, action plans, projects, etc.) to implement the legal framework.

Public Employment Services

In 2005, a programme was launched to modernise the Public Employment Services (PES) aiming at increasing the labour market labour market flexibility by a better matching of demand for and supply of labour. The expenditure for this project reached the amount of €9.2 million and was co financed by the European Social Fund (50%). The main achievements of the project were:

(1) The geographical expansion of the local offices of PES, aiming to create a decentralized network and improve customer service. By the end of 2010, 14 Labour Offices were operating (4 District Offices and 10 Local Offices) throughout Cyprus.

(2) Personalised approach was provided to persons facing difficulties in joining the labour market. In 2008, the new Service of Vocational Guidance started to operate.

(3) Four studies have been conducted by external experts:

- «Operational development scheme for Private Labour Offices»
- «Development of encouragement policies in extending working life»
- «Modernisation of Public Employment Services to Employers»
- «Creation of an institutional framework for activating Social Partners and Local Authorities in the employment of target groups»

One more study, named «Development of targeted employment programmes for young persons» has been also assigned to external experts.

(4) Implementation of training programmes for all PES personnel, including seminars/ workshops in Cyprus and study visits in respective services abroad, aiming to upgrade the personnel's knowledge and skills.

(5) Publication and distribution of the Employment Guide, which provides information regarding employees' and employers' rights and obligations.

(6) Upgrade of PES's computerised system for placements of unemployed persons in employment and introduction of a new software and statistical system for monitoring labour market flows. Also in 2009, PES started the operation of a portal through which job seekers are able to search for vacancies and arrange, if they wish so, meetings/ interviews with the respective employers. Employers are able to notify to PES their vacancies and also search for candidates via the CV database, in which job seekers upload their CVs.

(7) Recruitment of 14 permanent Labour Counsellors, for the provision of personalised services to unemployed persons and other disadvantaged groups. Currently, the permanent Labour counsellors are 22.

(8) A series of publicity programmes/ actions aiming to provide information about the new and upgraded services provided by PES.

In 2010, the Department of Labour initiated the implementation of the programme «Further Reinforcement and Modernisation of PES». The programme aims to further reinforce and modernise PES, in order to become capable of supporting the modernised mechanism which has been developed, to respond more effectively to their role in the design, evaluation and application of employment policies and also to maintain the smooth operation of the labour market.

It is noted that all services provided by PES are free of charge.

3) Please provide indicators, estimated if necessary, on the functioning and the performance of the employment services in practice, including the number of vacancies registered by employment services; placement rate (placements made by the employment services as a share of notified vacancies).

Vacancies and placements (Public Employment Services)					
Year	Vacancies Total (1)	Placements			Placement Rate % (2) / (1)
		Total (2)	Men	Women	
2007	18.683	4.195	2.581	1.614	22 %
2008	17.370	4.247	2.675	1.572	24 %
2009	16.162	5.153	3.406	1.747	32 %
2010	20.632	7.860	4.435	3.425	38 %

Source: District Labour Offices

Article 1§4

1) Please describe the general legal framework. Please specify the nature of, reasons for and extent of any reforms.

No change.

2) Please indicate the measures taken (administrative arrangements, programs, action plans, projects, etc.) to implement the legal framework.

The Human Resource Development Authority (HRDA) of Cyprus is the national agency with mission to create the necessary prerequisites for the training and development of Cyprus' human resources at all levels and in all sectors, for meeting the economy's needs, within the overall national socio-economic policies.

The main strategic objectives of the HRDA for the planning period 2007-2013 are the following:

- Upgrading the country's human resources, through the systematic lifelong training of the employees, the new entrants in the labour market, the unemployed, the inactive females and the low skilled and older persons, in order to enhance their employability potential throughout the European Union.
- Improving the productivity and strengthening the competitiveness of Cypriot enterprises through the better utilisation of their human resources and the improvement of their adaptability potential.

The above strategic objectives are being pursued by the promotion of targeted actions, which are classified under the following five priority pillars:

- Training and Development of Human Resources: Targeted actions for the lifelong learning of the employees and for the integration / re-integration in the labour market of selected target groups.
- Support of Enterprises for upgrading their Human Resources: Various support actions in enterprises aiming at increasing human capital investments and improving the productivity of enterprises.
- Human Resource Development Infrastructure and Systems: Enhancement of the quality of training and development of human resources through strengthening the training infrastructure and establishing a national system of vocational qualifications.
- Research and Development: Promotion of research and development actions in areas of vital importance for the training and development of human resources.
- Effective Governance: Promotion of diverse actions for enhancing the Governance Systems and Processes at the HRDA and its main partners.

All of the HRDA activities are described in Article 10, Paragraph 1.

3) Please provide pertinent figures, statistics or any other relevant information, if appropriate

See information given under Article 10.

Additional Information with regard to Conclusions 2008

- Prison work

Prisoners in extra-institutional employment centre are required to work for private undertakings/ enterprises outside the prison, as part of their rehabilitation. They are not entitled to work for a public/state undertaking, due to the Public Service Legislation which requires a clear criminal record for employment purposes.

Work in closed prison for prisoners is obligatory, as part of their rehabilitation, except for persons with health problems and pensioners. Every effort is made to select the appropriate type of work for each prisoner, based on his speciality, his abilities and the opportunities for employment after his release from prison. Prisoners work under the supervision and guidance of instructors and are encouraged to specialise in one of the following professions: cook, smith, plumber, welder, painter, builder, electrician, book binder, barber, gardener and mechanic. For this purpose, special workplaces and equipped workshops operate in prison.

The conditions of employment inside the prison are determined by the Law for Prisons of 1996 until 2009 and the Prison Regulations. The conditions of

employment of prisoners who are employed in private enterprises are regulated by collective agreements, which cover all employers in the same undertaking or sector, or by the relevant employment laws.

- Service required to replace military service

«In its last two conclusions, the Committee maintained that the duration of the service that replaced compulsory military service, generally twice the length of the military service itself, was excessive.....»

In the new National Guard Law of 2011, which regulates the service in the National Guard, the term of office in general but especially the service for conscientious objectors has not changed.

In accordance with the provisions of the Article 48 of the above mentioned law, the length of alternative military service is 29 months and for alternative social service is 33 months. For the conscientious objectors who have reduced military obligations under any other provision of the referred law, the length of alternative military service or alternative social service is reduced accordingly.

The additional service of 5 or 9 months according to circumstances is not treated as a punishment for those who choose alternative service but as a necessary element for ensuring equal treatment of conscripts, taking into account the obligations and duties of those who perform military service in contrast to those perform alternative service.

- Concerning vocational training for workers the Committee holds that the situation is not in conformity with the Revised Charter on the grounds it has not been established that the right of an individual leave for training and the right to vocational training for the unemployed are effectively guaranteed.

Despite the fact that currently the right of an individual for training is legally guaranteed, is common practice among enterprises/ organizations to provide such opportunities to their employees, in order to enhance their competitiveness and productivity.

However, legislative arrangements on training leave exist in the Public Sector. According to the Public Service (Provision of Leave) Regulations of 1998 until 2005, public servants are entitled to take leave, upon approval, for vocational education for reasons of public interest.

GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF CYPRUS**Report on Article 9
of the Revised European Social Charter****THE RIGHT TO VOCATIONAL GUIDANCE****(Reference Period 01.01.2007 – 31.12.2010)**

4) Please describe the general legal framework. Please specify the nature of, reasons for and extent of any reforms.

Human Resource Development Authority

The general legal framework of the Human Resource Development Authority of Cyprus (HRDA) is described in Article 10, Paragraph 1. The Human Resource Development Law of 1999 [No 125(I)/1999] broadened the powers of HRDA and gave new impetus, amongst others, to the issue of vocational guidance. More specifically, the new law clearly places HRDA to provide counselling services on training and employment issues and the full utilisation of the human resources and to provide or help the provision of guidance services and awareness with regard to the choice of education and employment.

5) Please indicate the measures taken (administrative arrangements, programmes, action plans, projects, etc.) to implement the legal framework.

Human Resource Development Authority (HRDA)

The HRDA studies on anticipation of skill needs include the provision of 10-year forecasts of employment, expansion and replacement demand for 46 sectors of economic activity and for around 200 occupations, the identification of skill needs with the involvement of social partners on an annual basis, as well as the identification of green skill needs. The studies are used by people involved in counseling such as secondary education vocational guidance teachers and employment counselors and by the general public (more specifically parents and students wishing to choose an occupation or to pursue further studies). For this purpose, research studies upon completion are disseminated to a wide audience of prominent stakeholders. Special presentations are organized for secondary school guidance counselors and employment counselors, students and parents. Additionally, the HRDA maintains a website which contains the latest available occupational employment forecasts and all its research studies.

Furthermore, the HRDA systematically conducts informative meetings and awareness campaigns through the media, which target all employers, employees, the unemployed and the economically inactive, providing information and advice on approved training opportunities in all districts.

Counseling and Career Education Service (C.C.E.S.)

The Counseling and Career Education Service (C.C.E.S.) operates within the Public Secondary Education System of Cyprus and offers help to the students and other youngsters through the Counseling and Career Education Offices of the Schools and the Central Offices of the Service at the Ministry of Education and Culture (M.O.E.C).

School counselors have the official status of Secondary School Teacher for Counseling and Career Education. In order to be eligible for employment at the C.C.E.S. of the M.O.E.C. as a counselor (Secondary School Teacher for Counseling and Career Education) one needs to have a first university degree in a subject taught in secondary education and post-graduate degree (master and / or diploma) of at least one year duration, either in counseling or in careers education/career guidance. It must be noted that some of the counselors do hold a first degree in Psychology and a Master Degree in Counseling Psychology.

The goal of the C.C.E.S is the provision of specialized help to the students and other young people through the counseling technique in order to meet the general goals of the Ministry of Education and Culture, which are the following:

- The healthy development of the students' personality
- The development of problem-solving skills so as to effectively deal with their personal, educational, professional and social problems.

Specifically, the counselors offer help to the students and other young people in order to make effective personal, educational, and vocational choices. Emphasis is given on the following areas:

- self – knowledge
- self – approval and self – confidence
- self – actualization
- decision – making skills / problem – solving skills
- healthy adjustment to the school and social environment
- critical thinking and effective use of appropriate information

Due to the multiple socio – economic and cultural changes brought about with the advancement of technology all over the world, there is a complexity to all the matters young people are concerned with (eg. personal, educational, professional and social).

The Counselors help the students in order to acquire the necessary skills so as to make effective personal, educational and vocational choices through the following:

1. Personal, group, and family counseling
2. Administration of specialized tests which are offered during counseling sessions in order to help the interested persons to explore in depth their personality, interests, etc.
3. Teaching of the Career Education and Social Education course (it is offered at the 3rd grade of gymnasium)

4. Organization of seminars and Conferences on vocational, educational, social psychology, and other related subjects
5. Production of a career – education film

Additionally, C.C.E.S. participates at a strategic level in different Committees at the M.O.E.C., which have as major goal the empowering of students by developing the necessary decision and problem solving skills.

The inclusion of children with special needs in the mainstream Secondary Education constitutes the policy of the Ministry of Education and Culture.

Based on the principle of providing equal opportunities to the children with special needs to be educated along with other children of the same age in the Public Secondary Schools of their community / neighborhood, the counsellors provide personal and educational Counselling to the students with special needs and contribute to the development of individual educational programs for these students.

Additionally the C.C.E.S. publishes the following books:

- The Role of the Family in Pupils Educational Choices
- Post-Gymnasium Education in Cyprus
- Career and Social Education
- Scholarships for Post-Lyceum Education
- Brochure – The Counseling and Career Education Service
- Post-Secondary Education at Public Higher Education Institutions in Cyprus
- Pancyprian Exams Guide
- Course Selection at Unified Lyceum
- Professional Manual for School Counselors

The professional development of the counselors, is one of the main goals of the C.C.E.S. and is promoted through specially designed seminars, and training programmes.

The Guidance services provided by the C.C.E.S. aim to:

- Enable students and the general public to manage and plan their learning and work pathways in accordance with their life goals, relating their competences and interests to education, training and labour market opportunities and to self-employment, thus contributing to their personal fulfilment.
- Assist and motivates students to take responsibility for their own learning and set their own goals for achievement.
- Support local, regional, national and European economies through workforce development and adaptation to changing economic demands and social circumstances. This is done through valid information that is given through lectures, books and presentations and it is updated every school year.

The following principles underlie the provision of guidance:

Centrality of the beneficiary

- Independence – the guidance provided respects the freedom of the career choice and personal development of the final user.
- Impartiality – the guidance provided is in accordance with the student's interests only, is not influenced by provider, institutional and funding interests, and does not discriminate on the basis of gender, age, ethnicity, social class, qualifications, ability etc.
- Confidentiality – citizens have a right to the privacy of personal information they provide in the guidance process.
- Equal opportunities – the guidance provided promotes equal opportunities in learning for all citizens.
- Holistic approach – the personal, social, cultural and economic context of a citizen's decision-making is valued in the guidance provided.

Enabling Students

- Active involvement – guidance is a collaborative activity between the citizen and the provider and other significant actors (e.g. learning providers, enterprises, family members, community interests) and builds on the active involvement of the citizen;
- Empowerment – the guidance provided assists citizens to become competent at planning and managing their learning and career paths and the transitions therein.

Improving access

- Transparency – the nature of the guidance service(s) provided is immediately apparent to the students.
- Friendliness and empathy – guidance counsellors provide a welcoming atmosphere for the students.
- Continuity – the guidance provided supports students through the range of learning, work, societal and personal transitions they undertake and/or encounter.
- Availability – all students have a right to access guidance services at any point in their lives.
- Accessibility – the guidance provided is accessible in a flexible and user friendly way such as face to face, telephone, e-mail, outreach, and is available at times and

in places that suit citizens' needs. For this reason we operate for the last three years district offices in three major districts.

- Responsiveness – guidance is provided through a wide range of methods to meet the diverse needs of students. Emphasis is given to the psychometric testing and major steps have been made to that direction.

Assuring quality

- Appropriateness of guidance methods – the guidance methods used have a theoretical and/or scientific basis, relevant to the purpose for which they are used.
- Continuous improvement – guidance services have a culture of continuous improvement involving regular student's feedback and provide opportunities for counsellors for continuous training. Every year Counsellors attend at least ten days of seminar.
- Competency – Counsellors providing guidance have nationally accredited competences to identify and address the student's needs, and where appropriate, to refer them to more suitable provision/service. They all hold a Master's degree or a post graduated diploma in Counselling (Career, Educational, etc.)

6) Please supply any relevant statistics or other information on public spending on vocational guidance services, their geographical distribution and the institutions that provide them, their staffing levels and the qualifications of those staff, and the number of persons served and their characteristics, in terms of age, sex, educational level and occupation.

Public Employment Services (PES)

The number of recipients of vocational guidance corresponds more or less to the number of jobseekers, who are registered at the District Labour Offices. The numbers are shown in the following table:

Registered Unemployment			
Year	Total (15+ years old)	Men	Women
2007	12.017	5.209	6.808
2008	11.541	4.929	6.612
2009	17.505	8.563	8.942
2010	22.842	11.363	11.479

Vocational guidance services are integrated in District and Local Labour Offices. Currently, 14 Labour offices operate throughout Cyprus (4 District and 10 Local Offices). The number of permanent vocational counsellors is currently 22.

C.C.E.S. of the Ministry of Education and Culture

The public spending on Guidance sums up to €3,750,000 per year and represents the cost of salaries of 125 counsellors. An amount of approximately €150,000 covers the cost of psychometric tools, publications and various other expenses related to Guidance services.

All students and adults in all districts have access to guidance services that are provided by secondary education schools and the district offices.

GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF CYPRUS**Report on Article 10
of the Revised European Social Charter****EVERYONE HAS THE RIGHT TO APPROPRIATE FACILITIES FOR
VOCATIONAL TRAINING****(Reference Period 01.01.2007 – 31.12.2010)****Article 10§1**

7) Please describe the general legal framework. Please specify the nature of, reasons for and extent of any reforms.

The Human Resource Development Authority of Cyprus (HRDA) was originally established in 1974 (Law 21/1974), under the name Industrial Training Authority (ITA). Subsequent Laws (L. 6/1975, 17/1980, 53/1980 and 94/1988) regulated the operation, objectives and activities of the ITA. The Human Resource Development Law of 1999 [L. 1259(I)/1999], which changed the name of the ITA to Human Resource Development Authority (HRDA), broadened its scope so that it would better reflect the aims and objectives of the organisation.

All training schemes of the HRDA have been revised in order to comply with the State Aid Regulation of the European Union (EC No. 68/2001) and the relevant Cyprus legislation.

The HRDA is a semi-government organisation governed by a 13-strong Board of Governors. Five members represent the Government and the other eight members represent the Employers' Organisations and the Trade Unions. The tripartite Board of Governors is by Law vested with the responsibility of formulating and implementing policies to promote the training and development of the country's human resources.

The mission of the HRDA is to create the necessary prerequisites for the planned and systematic training and development of Cyprus's human resources, at all levels and in all sectors, for meeting the needs and demands of economy, within the overall national socio-economic policies.

The HRDA's main source of income comes from the Human Resource Development levy paid by all companies in the private sector and semi-government organisations. The levy corresponds to 0,5% of the payroll of each contributing company. Civil servants and the self-employed are excluded from the HRDA's sphere of competence.

8) Please indicate the measures taken (administrative arrangements, programmes, action plans, projects, etc.) to implement the legal framework.

The widening access of all citizens (students, parents, adults) to the guidance services is of highly importance and more specifically:

- Access to lifelong guidance services is sufficiently developed for a wide range of particular groups of students. These groups include young people at risk of early school-leaving, VET and tertiary students, employed adults, the ageing population, and people with disabilities. More robust policy frameworks though are needed to provide adequate services and to motivate and inspire individuals to make use of them at different ages and stages in their life course. This can be accomplished by employing one counsellor in every Gymnasium and two in every Lyceum and Vocational Technical School.
- Regardless of the need and value of face-to-face interventions for personal assistance, the new technologies have great potential for making access more feasible and cheaper. However, it is still a challenge to create innovative and flexible service delivery linked to self-access and self-help modes, and to develop integrated all-age services. In many cases, this demands new institutional contexts and a new mentality and culture. At this stage all the necessary information's that a student needs to make a decision is updated and delivered through the web and it is used by the Counsellors, the students and their parents.
- An important policy issue is to employ a systems approach in developing proactive services, life-wide and in all sectors. These may include approaches such as 'reaching out rather than waiting for people to come', 'building a culture of learning by raising awareness', and encouraging individuals to invest in their own skill development and to manage their motivation and self-confidence. This approach to widening access is not widely developed even though for the last twenty years Counselling services are offered in all secondary schools.
- Guidance provisions within the process of validation of non-formal and informal learning are not well-developed. The role of validation is now widely recognised, and there is a widespread commitment to introducing, implementing and consolidating systems of validation. However, the actual scale of implementation varies. Although the need for guidance services is well understood, the guidance support within the validation process seems in many cases to be not well-developed, but at best in progress. The involvement of a Counsellor at the decision taking bodies will improve this provision.
- Guidance services are delivered in schools through a variety of face-to-face provisions and ICT tools to contribute to the career development as well as personal and social development of the students, within a holistic approach. The role of guidance is to support students' career choices and transitions.
- As parents often play an important role in their children's career decision, it is important to support initiatives designed to provide them with the basic skills to use ICT tools so that they are able to support their children.

- To reduce early school-leaving, support should be provided for students at risk, especially at key transitions.
- Wherever possible, schools should work in co-ordination and collaboration with the Public Employment Services (PES) to support the career development of students.
- Access can be extended through initiatives within the curriculum.

Human Resource Development Authority (HRDA)

The training activities of the HRDA respond to the training needs of the economy as a whole, of enterprises and of the labour force. These needs are identified through research studies conducted by the HRDA, as well as through enterprises regarding their own needs. Training is provided, after the approval of the HRDA, by private and public training institutions and by enterprises.

In order to meet the wide range of training and development needs of the country's human resources, the HRDA promotes specific schemes, each with its own aims and targets: initial training programmes, continuing training programmes and other developmental activities. All these activities and the conduct of research studies in issues of strategic importance to the development of Cyprus's human resources and the evaluation of the HRDA's work are analysed below.

Furthermore, the HRDA, in cooperation with the Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance, aiming to minimise the effects of the economic crisis, put forward a Special Prevention – Action Plan, as indicated below:

Training and Development of Human Resources:

Initial Training Programmes

- *Single-Company Initial Training Programmes*

The aim of these programmes is the provision of initial in-company training to newly recruited employees who do not have an other previous experience on their job, in order to meet the specific needs of the enterprise for the effective utilisation of its personnel through its appropriate training and development.

- *Accelerated initial training of newcomers and the unemployed persons*

The scheme aims to provide theoretical and practical training in occupation which are currently in demand.

- *Job placement and training of unemployed tertiary education young graduates*

The scheme aims at strengthening the management capacity of enterprises and organisations through the employment and training of young university and the other tertiary education graduates.

- *Apprenticeship System*

The HRDA subsidises employers for wages paid to apprentices, for the two days of the week when they attend classes in technical schools.

- *Practical training of students of the Practical Direction of Technical Schools*

The HRDA subsidises the enterprise-based practical training of students of the Higher Hotel Institute of Cyprus (HHIC). The selection of companies and the placement of students for practical training as well as the follow-up and evaluation for their progress are done by organisers of the programmes, in consultation and with the HRDA's subsidisation.

- *Scheme for the improvement of the employability of economically inactive women (co-financed by the European Social Fund during the period 2007-2013)*

The scheme aims at the improvement of the employability of the economically inactive women, by offering opportunities for participation in training and work experience programmes.

- *Scheme for the improvement of the employability of the unemployed (co-financed by the European Social Fund during the period 2007-2013)*

The scheme aims at the improvement of the employability of the unemployed (including young secondary education graduates), by offering opportunities for participation in training and work experience programmes.

Continuing Training Programmes

- *Single-company Continuing Training Programmes in Cyprus*

They aim at the provision of in-company training to the employees, in order to meet the specific needs of the enterprise for the effective utilisation of its personnel through appropriate training and development.

- *Single-company Continuing Training Programmes Abroad*

The aim is the training and development of employees of an enterprise abroad

- *Standard Multi-company Continuing Training Programmes*

Continuing training through participation in training programmes, implemented by public or private training institutions and organisations.

- *High-Priority Multi-company Continuing Training Programmes*

Continuing training through participation in training programmes, implemented by public or private training institutions and organisations on specific high-priority issues.

- *Multi-company Continuing Training Programmes to Trade Union Executives*

Participation of trade union executives in training programmes implemented by Trade Union Training Centres in subjects related to their trade union tasks.

- *Multi-company Continuing Training Programmes organised by the HRDA*
Group participation in training programmes organised by the HRDA of businesses' / organisations' executives and human resource development executives (such as young entrepreneurs, trainers, directors of vocational training centres, consultants) who belong to the same sector of the economy or have common needs.
- *Multi-company Continuing Training Programmes Abroad*
Improvement and enrichment of knowledge and skills of senior personnel of the enterprises through the transfer of know-how and by obtaining practical knowledge and experience from equivalent units abroad.
- *Health and Safety at Work*
The HRDA supports financially a large number of training programmes which are delivered by training institutions and companies on health and safety at work issues.

Support of enterprises for upgrading their Human Resources

- *Scheme for the enhancement of the competitiveness of micro-enterprises employing 1-4 persons (co-financed by the European Social Fund during the period 2007-2013).*
The scheme involves the provision of specialised guidance and training to micro enterprises (MEs) that employ 1-4, to enhance their competitiveness.
- *Scheme for the improvement of the productivity of small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) that employ 5-249 persons, to improve their productivity (co-financed by the European Social Fund during the period 2007-2013).*
The scheme involves the provision of specialised guidance and training to small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) that employ 5-249 persons to improve their productivity.

Other Developmental Activities

- *Assessment and Certification of training providers*
The measure aims to establish a system for the assessment and certification of training providers including trainers and is expected to be completed in 5 stages throughout a period of 3 years.
- *Development of a Competence-Based System of Vocational Qualifications*
The system of vocational qualifications is being established and implemented in 2 phases (1st phase: 2006 – 2008 and 2nd phase, co-financed by European Social Fund: 2007- 2013). It is expected that 7.000 persons will be assessed through the system against 77 standards of vocational qualifications.
- *Scheme for the support of Infrastructure and Systems for the Development of Human Resources*
This scheme aims to provide incentives to enterprises and training centres for developing infrastructures and systems.

- *Scheme for the promotion of innovation in training and development of the human resources*

This scheme aims to encourage enterprises and organisations to prepare and implement proposals which include research and development of innovative ideas for the training and development of human resources.

Research and Development

HRDA conducts research studies in issues of strategic importance to the development of Cyprus' s human resources and the evaluation of the HRDA' s work and its effectiveness. Specifically, the following research studies are highlighted:

- *Long term employment trends and forecasting in Cyprus*

The HRDA provides 10-year employment forecasts on a regular basis every 2-3 years. The latest set of employment forecasts for Cyprus has been completed in 2010 and cover the period 2010 – 2020. Thus, forecasts of employment, expansion and replacement demand are provided for 46 sectors of economic activity and for around 200 occupations, which cover the whole spectrum of the Cyprus Labour Market.

- *Study on the identification of green skill needs*

The study "Identification of Green Skill Needs in the Cyprus Economy 2010 – 2013" conducted by the HRDA in 2010 outlines the green economy of Cyprus, provides employment needs forecasts for sectors of economic activity and occupations of the green economy and identifies green skill needs for the period 2010 – 2013.

Based on the findings of the study, the HRDA, in close cooperation with the Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance, put forward a Special Scheme for Promoting Green Skills in the Cyprus economy, which includes a variety of targeted measures that are directed towards enterprises, employees and the unemployed. Furthermore, the HRDA has declared the year 2011 as the Year of Green Skills with the aim to effectively promote and publicise the importance of the acquisition of green knowledge and skills.

- *Comprehensive system evaluating the impact of HRDA on the economy of Cyprus*

Based on a study conducted by external consultants for the design of a comprehensive system evaluating the impact of the HRDA on the economy of Cyprus, the system has been set up. Within this system, 5 evaluation studies, which will include field and desk research, have been conducted by independent consultants.

- *Training of the self-employed*

The self –employed are excluded from the sphere of competence of the HRDA. This is considered as a major drawback for the training of human resources in Cyprus. The HRDA has therefore assigned to external consultants the task of conducting a study on the issue of "Creation of an effective mechanism for the training of the self-employed - The possible role of the HRDA". Based on the results of the study, policy decisions will be taken, as appropriate.

Special Prevention – Action Plan to deal with the effects of the economic crisis

The contribution of the HRDA towards minimising the effects of the world economic crisis on Cyprus' labour market is significant. The HRDA in cooperation with the Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance, put forward a Special Prevention-Action Plan, comprising mainly the following measures:

- *In-company / On-the-job training programmes*

Under this measure HRDA helps employers to retain their employees instead of laying them, by participating in training. In particular, HRDA helps employers to design and implement training programmes that meet their specialised needs and subsidises their eligible costs, including wages of the participants for the duration of the training,

- *Training programmes for upgrading the skills of unemployed persons*

The HRDA in partnership with the Public Employment Service (PES), the Cyprus Productivity Centre (CPC) and the Higher Hotel Institute of Cyprus (HHIC), organises upgrading training programmes for unemployed persons which are being implemented as from May 2009, in order to deal with the effects of the crisis. These programmes cover important horizontal as well as job specific skills, which will help people to return to productive employment. They are offered free of charge to unemployed persons.

- *Accelerated initial training programmes for newcomers and other unemployed persons in occupations which are in demand*

Under this measure, HRDA organises accelerated initial training courses, implemented by the Cyprus Productivity Centre and Higher Hotel Institute of Cyprus, which aim at giving theoretical and practical training in occupations which are currently in demand. The participants of the programmes receive training allowances from the HRDA.

- *Job placement and training of unemployed tertiary education graduates*

This measure aims at strengthening the management capacity of enterprises and organisations through the employment and training of young university and other tertiary education graduates. The measure provides incentives to enterprises to provide employment, practical training and work experience to graduates.

9) Please supply statistics or any other relevant information to show how this provision is applied in practice. The main indicators of compliance with this provision are: the total amount of public expenditure devoted to vocational training; the number of vocational and technical training institutions and types of education and training provided; number of teachers and pupils.

Overall expenditure by the HRDA on human resource training and development activities over the period 2007-2010 amounted to about €60m. Annual expenditure for the period 2007 – 2010 is shown in the table below.

YEAR	EXPENDITURE (€)
2007	13.968.700
2008	14.926.780
2009	12.642.260
2010	17.961.272

Source: Human Resource and Development Authority

Training activities approved and subsidised by the HRDA, with numbers of participants, distributed by gender for the years 2007-2010 are shown in **Appendix I**.

Secondary Technical and Vocational Education

	2006/2007	2007/2008	2008/2009	2009/2010
Schools	14	14	14	14
Students	5991	5794	5485	5740
Teachers	498 (full time) 109 (part time)	511 (full time) 120 (part time)	509 (full time) 115 (part time)	475 (full time) 114 (Part time)

Source: Annual Reports, Ministry of Education and Culture

Programme	2006/2007	2007/2008	2008/2009	2009/2010
Formal technical and vocational programmes	4.258	4129	4101	4249
Apprenticeship	373	295	234	239
Afternoon and evening classes	1.360	1370	1150	1252
TOTAL	5.991	5794	5485	5740

Source: Annual Reports, Ministry of Education and Culture

Article 10§2

1) Please describe the general legal framework. Please specify the nature of, reasons for and extent of any reforms.

Information is given under Article 10, paragraph 1.

2) Please indicate the measures taken (administrative arrangements, programmes, action plans, projects, etc.) to implement the legal framework.

The HRDA subsidises employers for wages paid to apprentices during the two days per week when they attend classes at Technical Schools.

The proposal for establishing a New Modern Apprenticeship (NMA) was approved by the Council of Ministers in November 2007 and in August 2010 it was included in the projects to be co-financed by the European Social Fund and the government budget. The implementation of the NMA during the current programming period will include only the preparatory apprenticeship level and the core apprenticeship level.

In July 2010, a Subsidy Scheme was launched by the Cyprus Productivity Centre to promote the employment and in-company training of Apprenticeship students in the private sector. The objective of the scheme, which is co-financed by the ESF and the government budget, is to facilitate the recruitment of apprentices by employers who have available jobs in the specialisations which the apprentices have chosen and, and the provision to them of satisfactory in-company training. The scheme subsidises eligible employers with a percentage of the monthly salary of the in-company trainer as well as with the full amount of the employer's social insurance contribution for the apprentice(s) recruited.

The number of registrations to the apprenticeship scheme in 2006/2007 reached 370, in 2007/2008 was 207 and in 2008/2009 was 262. Of those registered, only 128, 100 and 76 respectively were granted a certificate after successful completion of their apprenticeships.

Article 10§3

1) Please describe the general legal framework. Please specify the nature of, reasons for and extent of any reforms.

Information is given under Article 10, paragraph 1.

2) Please indicate the measures taken (administrative arrangements, programmes, action plans, projects, etc.) to implement the legal framework.

The HRDA continuing activities for vocational training and retraining of adult workers are described under Article 10, paragraph 1.

Equality of access for all the HRDA's training and development activities is ensured by both the law governing the operations of HRDA and the policies for each specific activity. Thus, participation in training and development activities approved and subsidised by the HRDA is effectively open to all persons eligible to participate in each scheme, irrespective of their characteristics such as gender, age, and nationality.

The right to vocational training for the unemployed is effectively guaranteed through several schemes of the HRDA, and mainly through the following schemes, which are described under Article 10, paragraph 1:

- Training programmes for upgrading the skills of unemployed persons
- Accelerated initial training of newcomers and other unemployed persons
- Job placement and training of unemployed tertiary education graduates
- Scheme for the improvement of the employability of the unemployed, co-financed by the European Social Fund

3) Please supply statistics or any other relevant information to show how this provision is applied in practice. The main indicators of compliance with this provision are: the existence of facilities for training and retraining of adult workers, in particular the arrangements for retraining redundant workers and workers affected by economic and technological change; the approximate number of adult workers who have participated in training or retraining measures; the activation rate – i.e. the ratio between the annual average number of previously unemployed participants in active measures divided by the number of registered unemployed persons and participants in active measures; equal treatment of non-nationals with respect to access to continuing vocational training.

The percentage of the unemployed participating in training activities for the period 2007- 2010 is presented in the Table below:

YEAR		UNEMPLOYED
2007	No. of participants	704
	Total No.	15.428
	Training Participation rate	4,6%
2008	No. of participants	481
	Total No.	14.523
	Training Participation rate	3,3%
2009	No. of participants	700
	Total No.	21.325
	Training Participation rate	3,3%
2010	No. of participants	918
	Total No.	25.372
	Training Participation rate	3,6%

Source: Labour Force Survey

Article 10§4

1) Please describe the general legal framework. Please specify the nature of, reasons for and extent of any reforms.

Information is given under Article 10, paragraph 1.

2) Please indicate the measures taken (administrative arrangements, programmes, action plans, projects, etc.) to implement the legal framework.

All of the HRDA schemes described under Article 10, paragraphs 1 and 3, targeting the unemployed are fully applied to the long-term unemployed as well. It is noted that priority for participation is given to the long-term unemployed in the following schemes:

- Training programmes for upgrading the skills of unemployed persons
- Accelerated initial training of newcomers and other unemployed persons
- Scheme for the improvement of the employability of the unemployed, co-financed by the ESF.

3) Please supply statistics or any other relevant information to show how this provision is applied in practice. The main indicators of compliance with this provision are: types of training and retraining measures available; the number of persons in this type of training and the impact of the measures on reducing long-term unemployment; equal treatment of non-nationals with respect to access to training and retraining for long-term unemployed persons.

The percentage of the long-term unemployed participating in training activities for the period 2007-2010 is presented in the Table below:

YEAR		LONG-TERM UNEMPLOYED
2007	No. of participants	213
	Total No.	3.025
	Training Participation rate	7,0%
2008	No. of participants	75
	Total No.	2.260
	Training Participation rate	3,3%
2009	No. of participants	102
	Total No.	2.499
	Training Participation rate	4,1%
2010	No. of participants	212
	Total No.	5.597
	Training Participation rate	3,8%

Source: Labour Force Survey

Article 10§5

1) Please describe the general legal framework. Please specify the nature of, reasons for and extent of any reforms.

Information is given under Article 10, paragraph 1.

2) Please indicate the measures taken (administrative arrangements, programmes, action plans, projects, etc.) to implement the legal framework.

The following HRDA schemes aiming at the unemployed and the economically inactive women are offered free of charge and in addition, training allowances are provided to the participants.

- Training programmes for upgrading the skills of unemployed persons
- Accelerated initial training of newcomers and other unemployed persons
- Scheme for the improvement of the employability of the unemployed, co-financed by the ESF
- Scheme for the improvement of the employability of economically inactive women, co-financed by the ESF.

The HRDA approves and subsidises training programmes implemented by public and private institutions and enterprises, offered to employers. In general, for enterprises with more than 250 employees, the subsidisation by the HRDA covers 60% of the eligible total cost of the proposed training programmes, for enterprises that employ 50 – 249 persons the subsidisation is 70% and for enterprises that employ 1 – 49 persons the subsidisation is 80%. Depending on the scheme, eligible costs include fees paid to training providers, training costs directly spent by the employer and salaries of employees while training.

The HRDA ensures the efficiency of the programmes it subsidises by setting specific criteria, which are mentioned in the Guide for policies and procedures of each scheme and by carrying out selective site inspections at the enterprise and /or training institution.

Additionally, the HRDA carries out evaluation studies on the effectiveness and impact of its activities. To this end, a comprehensive system evaluating the impact of HRDA on the economy of Cyprus has been set up. Within this system, 5 evaluation studies, which include field and desk research, have been conducted by independent consultants. These studies are the following:

- Panorama of the Impact of the HRDA on the Human Resources of Cyprus 2007-2009
- Panorama of the Impact of the HRDA on the Enterprises of Cyprus 2007-2009
- Panorama of the Impact of the Schemes Co-financed by the ESF on the Human Resources and the Enterprises of Cyprus 2006 - 2009
- Panorama of the Impact of the System of Vocational Qualifications on the Human Resources and the Enterprises of Cyprus 2006-2009
- Panorama of the Impact of the Special Prevention – Action on the Human Resources and the Enterprises of Cyprus 2009 – 2010

The results of the evaluation studies were presented to the Board of Governors of the HRDA, in which Employers' organisations and Trade Union representatives participate. Based on the evaluation studies results, the Board will take policy decisions, as appropriate, for modifying and enriching the HRDA's training and development activities and thus, improving the efficiency and effectiveness of vocational training in Cyprus.

Supervision of in-company training of apprentices is undertaken by Technical School inspectors. Within the context of the Subsidy scheme to promote employment and in-company training of apprenticeship students in the private sector, Cyprus Productivity Centre officers carry out visits to the premises of employers participating in the scheme to make sure that the provisions of the scheme regarding training,

health and safety, social insurance, terms of employment and pay of apprentices are adhered to.

3) Please supply statistics or any other relevant information to show how this provision is applied in practice. The main indicators of compliance with this provision are: whether the vocation training is provided free of charge or that fees are reduced; existing system for providing financial assistance (allowances, grants, loans, etc.); measures taken in consultation with social partners to ensure the efficiency of apprenticeship for young workers.

Information is given under question 2 above.

APPENDIX I

TRAINING ACTIVITIES IN <u>2007</u>	Programmes (*)	TRAINEES		
		Male (**)	Female (**)	Total
INITIAL TRAINING	356	1.186	1.132	2318
Single-company programmes	90	143	162	305
• Standard training	14	102	136	238
• Management training of tertiary education graduates	76	41	26	67
Multi-company programmes	266	1.043	970	2.013
• Apprenticeship system	35	196	-	196
• Practical training of secondary school hotel-section students	16	161	87	248
• Practical training of HHIC students	7	104	92	196
• Practical training of HTI students	4	46	11	57
• Mediterranean Institute of Management (MIM)	2	3	1	4
• Accelerated Training Programmes	37	417	10	427
• Schemes co-financed – Unemployed	76	33	207	240
• Schemes co-finances – Inactive Women	58		171	171
• Schemes co-financed – Young secondary education school leavers	2	1	1	2
• Schemes co-financed – Computer literacy of Unemployed	29	82	390	472
CONTINUING TRAINING	4.919	32.445	22.815	55.260
Single-company programmes	3.605	19.987	15.142	35.129
• Standard training programmes in Cyprus	2.950	19.480	14.994	34.474
• Training abroad	655	507	148	655
Multi-company programmes	1.314	12.458	7.673	20.131
• Standard training programmes	1.120	8.887	6.193	15.080
• High-priority training programmes	59	642	294	936
• Trade Union Programmes	131	2.877	1.161	4.038
• HRDA Direct Involvement Programmes	2	20	18	38
• Training abroad	2	32	7	39
TOTAL	5.275	33.361	23.947	57.578

* Figures for 2007 refer to programmes for which subsidies were paid during the year

** Figures for male and female trainees are estimates

TRAINING ACTIVITIES IN <u>2008</u>	Programmes (*)	TRAINEES		
		Male (**)	Female (**)	Total
INITIAL TRAINING	653	851	1.591	2.442
Single-company programmes	140	73	63	136
• Standard training	1	5	5	10
• Management training of tertiary education graduates	139	68	58	126
Multi-company programmes	513	778	1.528	2.306
• Apprenticeship system	31	158	-	158
• Practical training of secondary school hotel-section students	14	138	39	177
• Practical training of HHIC students	4	52	39	91
• Practical training of HTI students	4	58	6	64
• Accelerated Training Programmes	37	238	200	438
• Health and Safety Training of new entrants in employment	3	16	30	46
• Schemes co-financed – Unemployed	176	77	483	560
• Schemes co-finances – Inactive Women	209		611	611
• Schemes co-financed – Young secondary education school leavers	31	30	66	96
• Schemes co-financed – Computer literacy of Unemployed	4	11	54	65
CONTINUING TRAINING	4.779	30.595	21.124	51.719
Single-company programmes	3.746	20.754	15.815	36.569
• Standard training programmes in Cyprus	3.163	20.328	15.658	35.986
• Training abroad	583	426	157	583
Multi-company programmes	1.033	9.841	5.309	15.150
• Standard training programmes	843	6.468	4.043	10.514
• High-priority training programmes	47	636	204	840
• Trade Union Programmes	138	2.646	1.055	3.701
• Training abroad	5	91	4	95
TOTAL	5.432	31.446	22.715	54.161

* Figures for 2008 refer to programmes for which subsidies were paid during the year

** Figures for male and female trainees are estimates

TRAINING ACTIVITIES IN <u>2009</u>	Programmes (*)	TRAINEES		
		Male (**)	Female (**)	Total
INITIAL TRAINING	253	1.205	835	2.040
Single-company programmes	105	91	129	220
• Standard training	23	49	89	138
• Management training of tertiary education graduates	82	42	40	82
Multi-company programmes	148	1.114	706	1.820
• Apprenticeship system	25	128	-	128
• Practical training of secondary school hotel-section students	14	131	45	176
• Practical training of HHIC students	3	31	17	48
• Practical training of HTI students	4	42	7	49
• Accelerated Training Programmes	28	342	17	359
• Emergency Scheme for Training the Unemployed	74	440	620	1.060
CONTINUING TRAINING	4.938	29.976	22.298	52.274
Single-company programmes	3.770	19.870	16.844	36.714
• Standard training programmes in Cyprus	3.205	19.454	16.695	36.149
• Training abroad	565	416	149	565
Multi-company programmes	1.168	10.106	5.454	15.560
• Standard training programmes	919	6.396	3.917	10.313
• High-priority training programmes	39	502	148	650
• Trade Union Programmes	135	2.820	1.289	4.109
• Training abroad	2	41	2	43
• Organised by HRDA	2	15	14	29
• Improvement of Health and Safety	71	332	84	416
TOTAL	5.191	31.181	23.133	54.314

* Figures for 2009 refer to programmes for which subsidies were paid during the year

** Figures for male and female trainees are estimates

TRAINING ACTIVITIES IN <u>2010</u>	Programmes (*)	TRAINEES		
		Male (**)	Female (**)	Total
INITIAL TRAINING	413	1.672	1.546	3.218
Single-company programmes	214	119	144	263
• Standard training	16	25	40	65
• Management training of tertiary education graduates	198	94	104	198
Multi-company programmes	199	1.553	1.402	2.955
• Apprenticeship system	24	131	3	134
• Practical training of secondary school hotel-section students	7	111	44	155
• Practical training of HHIC students	3	48	25	73
• Practical training of HTI students	4	14	2	16
• Accelerated Training Programmes	36	434	32	466
• Schemes co-financed - Unemployed	22	350	79	429
• Schemes Co-finances – Inactive omen	23	-	369	369
• Emergency Scheme for Training the Unemployed	80	465	848	1.313
CONTINUING TRAINING	5.311	28.185	22.198	50.383
Single-company programmes	4.401	19.146	16.999	36.145
• Standard training programmes in Cyprus	3.528	18.605	16.667	35.272
• Job placement and training of unemployed	400	180	220	400
• Training abroad	473	361	112	473
Multi-company programmes	910	9.039	5.199	14.238
• Standard training programmes	684	4.623	3.264	7.887
• High-priority training programmes	41	599	220	819
• Trade Union Programmes	183	3.793	1.708	5.501
• Training abroad	2	24	7	31
TOTAL	5.724	29.857	23.744	53.601

* Figures for 2010 refer to programmes for which subsidies were paid during the year

** Figures for male and female trainees are estimates

GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF CYPRUS**Report on Article 15
of the Revised European Social Charter****THE RIGHT OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES TO INDEPENDENCE, SOCIAL
INTEGRATION AND PARTICIPATION IN THE LIFE OF THE COMMUNITY****(Reference Period 01.01.2007 – 31.12.2010)****Article 15§1**

10) Please describe national employment policy and the general legal framework. Please specify the nature of, reasons for and extent of any reforms.

The Law providing for persons with Disabilities was amended in 2007 [L. 72(I)/2007], and the Law was fully harmonised with the provisions of the Directive 2000/78/EC.

11) Please indicate the measures taken (administrative arrangements, programmes, action plans, projects, etc.) to implement the legal framework.

As from 1 January 2009, a new Department was established under the Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance, named Department for Social Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities. The Department is responsible for the formulation, coordination, and implementation and monitoring of the policies for persons with disabilities, in cooperation and in consultation with the co-responsive Ministries and Services, as well as the Pancyprian Confederation of Organisations of Persons with Disabilities. One of the main responsibilities of the Department is the promotion and monitoring of implementation of the UN Convention for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the European Disability Strategy 2010-2020 and the general legal framework regulated by the Persons with Disabilities Laws. During 2010, the Department took all the necessary measures for the ratification of the UN Convention for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, including its translation in Greek.

Under the new Department, operates the Centre for the Vocational Rehabilitation of Persons with Disabilities, which provides training and sheltered employment in the specialisations of shoemaking, furniture industry and carpentry, in three sheltered workshops.

The Department operates also the Vocational Training Scheme for specialties not offered by the Centre for the Vocational Rehabilitation of Persons with Disabilities, which funds persons with disabilities in order to attend training courses of their own choice. The scheme aims to broaden the opportunities of training for the persons with disabilities based on personalised programmes in training institutions or in undertakings of the private or public sector, which aim to facilitate the inclusion in employment or professional development.

Recognising the need for the Centre's upgrade in order to have the capacity to design and offer new and modern training and employment programmes for persons with disabilities, the Council of Ministers decided in 2009 for a reorganisation of the vocational training and employment sector. In 2009 a proposal of the Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance regarding the creation of an Organisation for the training and rehabilitation of persons with disabilities, was approved by the Council of Ministers. The proposal came after a study of the current situation in the field of training and rehabilitation of persons with disabilities and all alternative scenarios for the future status of Christos Stelios Ioannou Foundation and of the Center for Vocational Rehabilitation of Disabled Persons, which deserve further exploitation. The idea is their merger and transformation into a public corporation with the aim to create new prospects for vocational training and rehabilitation of persons with disabilities. The organisation will be an enhanced governance structure which will operate as the executive arm for the implementation of training and rehabilitation of persons with disabilities. It will design, implement and fund or subsidise employment and training programs, monitor and coordinate the voluntary organisations working in the sector, set standards and certify the training and employment programmes, cooperate with the Department of Labour for the placement of unemployed in the private sector and will operate sheltered employment workshops only for persons who will not be able to join employment programmes in the open labour market. The project is in progress.

12) Please provide pertinent figures, statistics or any other relevant information to demonstrate effective access to education and vocational training for persons with disabilities (total number of persons with disabilities, number of persons with disabilities of 0-18 years of age, number of persons with disabilities in mainstreaming and special education and vocational training, including higher education; number of integrated classes and special education institutions, basic and in-service training for teachers).

Training Schemes	Number of Beneficiaries / Expenditure			
	2007	2008	2009	2010
Vocational Training Scheme for specialties not offered by the Centre for the Vocational Rehabilitation of Persons with Disabilities	7 €21.618	1 €546,75	8 €7.236	36 €27.043
Sheltered Employment in the Centre for the Vocational Rehabilitation of Persons with Disabilities	36	34	33	33

Schools / Units	Number of pupils			
	2006/2007	2007/2008	2008/2009	2009/2010
Nursery Schools	224	139	237	366
Mainstream education classes	2.724	2.328	2.232	2.401
Special units integrated in mainstream education schools	268	291	343	391
Special schools	279	276	293	283

Source: Annual Reports, Ministry of Education and Culture

Schools / Units	Number of schools/ units			
	2006/2007	2007/2008	2008/2009	2009/2010
Special units integrated in mainstream education schools	59	60	68	73
Special schools	9	9	9	9

Source: Annual Reports, Ministry of Education and Culture

Schools / Units	Number of teachers			
	2006/2007	2007/2008	2008/2009	2009/2010
Special units integrated in mainstream education schools	340	350	344	376
Special schools	109	118	137	141

Source: Annual Reports, Ministry of Education and Culture

Article 15§2

3) Please describe the general legal framework. Please specify the nature of, reasons for and extent of any reforms.

In 2009, the Recruitment of Persons with Disabilities in the Wider Public Sector (Special Provisions) Law [L.146(I)/2009] was enacted, which provides that 10% of current vacancies in the wider public sector will be covered by persons with disabilities, who meet specified objective criteria. The main purpose of the Law is to promote employment opportunities for persons with disabilities, offsetting the

reduced opportunities because of their disability, by creating a positive measure to integrate disabled people into employment.

4) Please indicate the measures taken (administrative arrangements, programs, action plans, projects, etc.) to implement the legal framework.

The Department for Social Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities has established the necessary mechanisms for the implementation of the above mentioned Law. Specifically, it has created internal regulations for the operation of multidisciplinary committees, which assess whether a person fulfils the provisions of the Law and advise the Recruiting Bodies accordingly.

Employment opportunities for persons with disabilities are also provided through the operation of the following Schemes under the Department for Social Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities:

- Self-Employment Scheme which funds Persons with Disabilities, who face difficulties in joining the labour market, in order to set up their own businesses.
- Supported Employment Scheme, which funds Organisations for persons with disabilities to get and maintain a job position in the open labour market. These persons are individually supported in the work place by a special job coach, who is responsible to find the work position for each person in this programme, to train and support him/her and deal with any issue between the person, his/her family and the employer.
- Scheme for Setting Up Small Business Units, which funds persons with disabilities in order to set up their own businesses.

5) Please provide pertinent figures, statistics or any other relevant information on the number of persons with disabilities in working age, in ordinary employment and in sheltered employment (estimated, if necessary). Please, also indicate whether the basic provisions of labour law apply to persons working in sheltered employment where production is the main activity.

The number of persons with disabilities recruited under the provision of the Law on the Recruitment of Persons with Disabilities in the Wider Public Sector (Special Provisions) in 2010 was 28.

The number of persons that benefited from the employment schemes mentioned above and the relevant expenditure are shown in the Tables below:

Employment Schemes	Number of Beneficiaries			
	2007	2008	2009	2010
Self-Employment Scheme	1	0	3	0
Supported Employment Scheme	192	198	200	228
Scheme for Setting Up Small Business Units	4	5	5	0

Employment Schemes	Expenditure €			
	2007	2008	2009	2010
Self-Employment Scheme	3.420	0	10.252	0
Supported Employment Scheme	191.520	203.323	203.323	239.204
Scheme for Setting Up Small Business Units	27.105	29.893	42.715	0

Article 15§3

4) Please describe the general legal framework. Please specify the nature of, reasons for and extent of any reforms.

The amended Law on Persons with Disabilities introduced a provision which entitles persons with disabilities to own a parking card for privileged parking.

5) Please indicate the measures taken (administrative arrangements, programs, action plans, projects, etc.) to implement the legal framework.

The Department for Social Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities is providing the necessary benefits and services in order to promote and facilitate the integration and participation of persons with disabilities in the life of the community:

- Severe motor disability allowance: Persons with severe motor disabilities are entitled a monthly allowance of €319, 38.
- Care allowance for persons with paraplegia of €350 per month.
- Care allowance for persons with quadriplegia of €854, 30 monthly.
- Financial assistance for the provision of technical aid and wheelchairs.
- Management/ lending of technical aid and wheelchairs
- Subsidisation of vacations.
- Financial assistance to the organisations of persons with disabilities.
- Issue of parking cards for privileged parking.

Assessing Disability and Functionality

The Department has designed and planned the implementation of a system for assessing disability and functionality, based on the scientific tool of the World Health Organisation, which will lead, through scientific evaluation, documentation and classification of disability and functionality of the individual, in the enforcement and support of the possibilities and prospects for social inclusion and social integration of the persons with disabilities. The estimated cost of the project is €6,4 million and is co financed by the European Social Fund by 70% and includes the establishment and operation of centers for assessing disability and functionality across Cyprus, the design and publication of manuals and evaluation protocols evaluation, lease and purchase services of doctors and other health professionals, education, etc. The project will run from 2010 until 2013.

6) Please provide pertinent figures, statistics or any other relevant information on persons with disabilities' access to housing, transport, telecommunications and cultural and leisure activities.

The number of beneficiaries and expenditure in regards to above benefits and services is shown in the Table below:

Benefits/ Services	Number of Beneficiaries / Expenditure			
	2007	2008	2009	2010
Severe motor disability allowance	1.253 €4.710.793	1.330 €5.023.628	1.473 €5.632.590	1.548 €5.997.300
Care allowance for persons with paraplegia & quadriplegia	50 No info	320 €3.290.718	613 €6.068.900	804 €7.167.883
Financial assistance for the provision of technical aid	454 €487.061	283 €508.984	396 €641.681	531 €899.665
Financial assistance for the provision of wheelchairs	128 €153.813	100 €274.042	152 €213.343	250 €361.745
Subsidisation of vacations	260 €124.184	242 €149.019	684 €481.058	620 €315.547
Financial assistance to the organisations of persons with disabilities	€110.979	€120.000	€132.400	€172.000
Management/ lending of technical aid and wheelchairs	80 No info	42 €8.398	45 €8.505	44 €8.316

Additional Information with regard to Conclusions 2008

Communication

Sign language has been recognised as an official language in Cyprus in 2011. It has also been recorded in three different products, in DVDs and books. The Traditional Type Grammar which was delivered in 2009, is an educational tool describing and interpreting with a systematic, plain and strictly supervisory manner the Cyprus Sign Language. The Communication Grammar is the educational tool which through a live, communicative manner in the form of theatrical dialogue, was delivered in 2010. The Conceptual Dictionary presents in a conceptual thematic manner the basic dictionary of Cyprus Sign Language and was introduced in 2011.

2011 was the year of the Cyprus' channels transition from analogue to digital signal. The Cyprus Broadcasting Corporation is currently studying further exploitation of the digital television, including the provision of special services to persons with disabilities.

Mobility and transport

In 2010, a campaign began to replace old buses with new ones, which are, among others, suitable for use from persons with disabilities and can accommodate wheelchairs. All the major bus transport corporations have already replace their buses. Transportation fees however are not free for persons with disabilities and they are subject to each corporation. The Grants and Benefits Service of the Ministry of Finance, provides a monthly transportation benefit to working persons with disabilities, students with disabilities and or persons studying with the aim to attain vocational education.

Culture and leisure

Free access or reduced rate access to facilities offering cultural and recreational activities is not legally mandatory and is subject to each organisation offering these services.

GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF CYPRUS**Report on Article 18
of the Revised European Social Charter****THE RIGHT TO ENGAGE IN A GAINFUL OCCUPATION
IN THE TERRITORY OF OTHER PARTIES****(Reference Period 01.01.2007 – 31.12.2010)****Article 18§4**

13) Please describe national employment policy and the general legal framework. Please specify the nature of, reasons for and extent of any reforms.

No change.

14) Please indicate the measures taken (administrative arrangements, programmes, action plans, projects, etc.) to implement the legal framework.

No change.

Additional Information with regards to Conclusions 2008

«In addition, male persons planning to leave the country, even for a short period, are obliged to obtain a special licence from the Ministry of Defence, if they are under 21. The Committee asks what conditions govern the granting of this authorisation, how long it takes and the procedure to be followed. It also wishes to know whether persons whose request for authorisation has been rejected can appeal against the decision, and if so to what body. »

Pursuant to the provisions of the National Guard Law 2011, all male citizens between 16 – 26 years of age need special permission to travel outside Cyprus. The applicant who wishes to travel outside Cyprus, submits an application to the Ministry of Defense. Upon receipt of the application, the Ministry of Defense examines the applicant's military service records and accordingly rejects or grants the authorization, immediately and without any delays. In the event that the application for exit permit is rejected, the applicant may appeal against the decision directly to the Minister of Defense.

GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF CYPRUS**Report on Article 20
of the Revised European Social Charter****THE RIGHT TO EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES AND EQUAL TREATMENT IN
MATTERS OF EMPLOYMENT AND OCCUPATION WITHOUT DISCRIMINATION
ON THE GROUNDS OF SEX****(Reference Period 01.01.2007 – 31.12.2010)****1) Please describe the general legal framework. Please specify the nature of, reasons for and extent of any reforms.**

In 2009, a new amended Law was enacted (L. 38(I)/2009), transposing into national law the new Directive 2006/54/EC of the European Commission on the implementation of the principle of equal opportunities and equal treatment of men and women in matters of employment and occupation (recast). The new Law includes an amendment, through which, the comparison of wages between employees was extended to enterprises of the same group of companies.

In 2009, the Law on the Implementation of the Principle of Equal Treatment for Men and Women in Occupational Social Security Schemes (L. 133(I)/2002) was amended. The amendments concern extrajudicial protection for victims of gender discrimination via the Ombudsman, the provision of independent assistance to victims of discrimination by the Committee of Gender Equality in Employment and Professional Training as well as giving the possibility to NGOs to institute statutory judicial or extrajudicial proceedings on behalf or in support of victims of discrimination.

Maternity Protection

An amendment to the Maternity Protection Law was put forward in late 2010, in order to ensure additional protection to the pregnant worker. The Law was enacted in 2011. The provisions of the amending legislation included the following:

- Dismissal or notice of dismissal to a pregnant worker is prohibited, provided that the said worker has notified her pregnancy to her employer in writing. The term “in writing” includes producing a written letter, email, fax or similar notification and/ or a medical certificate stating the fact of the pregnancy. The said prohibition commences upon receipt of the written notification and is extended for three months after the end of the maternity leave. During this period, dismissal, notice of dismissal or any action to replace the pregnant worker is prohibited.
- The employer may, if he/she considers it as necessary, to request a medical certificate confirming the worker’s pregnancy.

- If an employer is informed of a worker's pregnancy orally by any person, or if he/she was not aware of the pregnancy and proceeds to a dismissal, the pregnant worker is entitled, within 5 days of her dismissal or the receipt of notice of dismissal, to notify her pregnancy to her employer with a medical certificate. The employer must then repeal the dismissal or notice of dismissal.
- Dismissal or notice of dismissal to a woman who intends to adopt a child is also prohibited, provided that the worker has notified her employer with a certification of the Department of Social Welfare Services, which states her intention to adopt. The said prohibition starts upon receipt of the notification by the employer and is extended for the three months after the end of maternity leave.
- The employer may dismiss a pregnant worker only when the following cases apply:
 - (a) The employee is found guilty of a misdemeanour or her behaviour justifies the severance of the employment relation
 - (b) The business at which she is employed ceases to exist
 - (c) Her contract has expired, but the non-renewal must not be associated in any way to her pregnancy.

It is noted that even if the dismissal of a pregnant worker is considered to fall within the exceptions above, the employer has to prove the reasons of the dismissal in writing.
- In cases of premature labour or in any other case where the infant is hospitalised right after birth for health reasons, the mother is entitled to additional maternity leave as follows: for the first 21 days of the infant's hospitalisation in an incubator, the worker is entitled to an extension of 1 week. If the infant continues to be hospitalised the worker is entitled to an additional week for every 50% of the 21 days, with a maximum of 6 weeks in total. The worker, in order to be granted with the additional leave must provide her employer with a written certification from the hospital and a doctor whose speciality is relevant to the infant's condition.

2) Please indicate the measures taken (administrative arrangements, programmes, action plans, projects, etc.) to implement the legal framework.

In 2007, the Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance prepared a study regarding the pay gap in Cyprus. The study revealed that gender stereotyping, the over-representation of women in non-skilled occupations and low-wage sectors (labour market segregation) and the under-representation of women in collective bargaining, are the main causes of pay gaps. Moreover, the shorter periods of accumulated professional experience of women, caused by more frequent interruptions to their career paths due to family related leave, also contribute in wage gaps. Lastly, the greater presence of women in temporary and part-time employment also explains part of the pay gap between employed men and women.

Drawing on the results and suggestions of the above mentioned study, the Ministry has promoted the implementation of a comprehensive set of measures aiming at reducing the gender pay gap. The Project «Actions for reducing the gender pay gap» was officially approved for co-financing by the European Social Fund and introduced in the national Operational Programme «Employment, Human Capital and Social Cohesion for the period 2007-2013», in July 2010. The programme consists of a broad mix of measures, and includes specialized training programmes for inspectors, with the purpose of establishing an effective inspection mechanism for the enforcement of equal pay legislation, the establishment of a gender equality Certification Body, as well as measures for eliminating occupational and sectoral segregation which include interventions in education issues. Lastly, the programme includes campaigns for raising awareness on equal pay, training programmes for trade unions and employers associations, and also the development of manuals, guides, self-assessment tools, codes of practice and job evaluation tools for managers/ human resource professionals. A technical consultant was appointed for assisting in project management issues by the end of 2010, and the implementation of the first actions was promoted in 2011.

Continuous annual increases of the minimum wage during the last years, have significantly contributed to the reduction of the pay gap, since the Minimum Wage Order covers occupational categories in which women are over-represented. Further reduction of the gap will be accomplished through the implementation of the above mentioned co-financed programme.

The Department of Labour's Equality Inspectors continued to examine complaints of discrimination on the grounds of sex throughout 2010. Furthermore, within the same year the Department of Labour published the «Manual on matters of sex discrimination in employment and vocational training», which provides guidance to those who are actively involved with victims of discrimination on the grounds of sex through counselling and examination of complaints, on how to deal with a case of discrimination. The manual was distributed to all Equality Inspectors and the Social Partners. Furthermore, the Guide «Pregnancy and Equal Treatment in Employment and Vocational Training – The rights and obligations of employers and working women» was also published. The Guide provides information on the relevant legislation, along with a selection of the ECJ's most important case law on the matter. It was widely distributed to the general public, the Equality Inspectors and the Social Partners.

3) Please provide pertinent figures, statistics or any other relevant information, in particular in employment and unemployment rates by sex and percentage differences in earnings.

The gender pay gap in Cyprus, has decreased significantly since 1995 (29%) and keeps following a downward trend, from 25% in 2005, to 24% in 2006 and further reduced to 21,8% and 21,3% in 2008 and 2009 respectively. Continuous annual increases of the minimum wage during the last years, have significantly contributed to the reduction of the pay gap, since the Minimum Wage Order covers occupational categories in which women are overrepresented. Further reduction of the gap will be

accomplished through the implementation of the above mentioned co-financed programme.

Statistics on employment and unemployment by sex are available under Article 1.

Additional Information with regards to Conclusions 2008

- *«In Conclusions XVI-1 (under Article 1§2), the Committee noted that that under the collective agreement for the construction Industry there were two job categories with different pay and men were automatically included in the higher paid one. According to the report (under Article 1§2), this collective agreement was scheduled to be amended as of 1 January 2006, The Committee asks what amendments have been made to the agreement. »*

The collective agreement in the construction industry was amended in 2007 to eliminate the former categories “worker A” and “worker B” and to introduce instead, four (4) categories of employees namely technicians, specialised workers, labourers and trainees, based on skills and duties.

- *«The Committee asks which are the concrete occupational activities that can only be entrusted to persons of one sex and are thus excluded from the law.»*

The occupational activities which are excluded from the scope of the Law on Equal Treatment of Men and Women in Employment and Vocational Training, are listed in the Annex of the above mentioned Law and are the following:

- Occupational positions where physiology (excluding physical strength and stamina) would cause major alteration of the position itself, as in artistic shows.
- Employment in a position, the duties of which include delivery of services outside Cyprus, in a country whose legislation and customs do not allow services to be delivered by persons of one sex.
- Employment in a specific position, the duties of which include personal services and is mandatory to be carried out by persons of both sexes.
- Employment in a specific position, when the position refers to services of personal nature, such as house care of elderly and disabled persons.
- Employment of men as security officers in women’ s prison or of women security officers in men’ s prison.
- Employment in Security Forces or in private security bodies:
 - (a) In special forces, the mission of which includes controlling and disarming violent persons, uproar repressing and hostage release.
 - (b) In positions where the employment of a man or a woman is necessary for ethical reasons or in respect of the person’s personality.
- Employment of women for underground work in mines.

It is noted that Article 4(2) of the referred Law provides that the above mentioned exceptions only apply when they serve a legal purpose and when this demand

corresponds to the Principle of Proportionality. Article 4(3) also provides that those exceptions are re-examined by the Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance in consultation with the Labour Counselling Body, in time periods no longer than five years, to decide whether they are still justified based on social situation. The results of the examination are also forwarded to the Committee of European Communities occasionally, at least every eight (8) years.

- *«The Committee notes from another source that although no study has been conducted it appears that the content of collective agreements at sectoral and company level do not take gender into account in the setting of terms and conditions of employment.....and therefore requests the next report contain information on any developments on this aspect »*

Article 4(3) of the Employer's Obligation to Inform Employees of the Particulars of their Contract of Employment or their Employment Relationship Law of 2000 provides that the terms of the contract of employment or the employment relationship shall not be less favourable for the employee than provided by relevant legislation.

Furthermore, since the admission of Cyprus in the European Union, most collective agreements were amended in order to be compliant with the European aquis and the provisions of European directives.

GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF CYPRUS**Report on Article 24
of the Revised European Social Charter****RIGHT OF WORKERS TO PROTECTION IN CASES OF
TERMINATION OF EMPLOYMENT****(Reference Period 01.01.2007 – 31.12.2010)**

15) Please describe the general legal framework, including decisions by courts and other judicial bodies, if possible. Please specify the nature of, reasons for and extent of any reforms.

No change.

16) Please indicate the measures taken (administrative arrangements, programmes, action plans, projects, etc.) to implement the legal framework.

No change.

17) Please provide pertinent figures, statistics or any other relevant information, if appropriate.

No information available.

Additional Information with regards to Conclusions 2008

- *Summary of case law showing how grounds of termination of employment under section 5 of the Termination of Employment Law is interpreted by the competent courts in practice. In particular, under which conditions an employee may be made redundant for economic reasons pursuant to Section 18 of the said law and whether courts are empowered to review the facts underlying the economic reasons invoked by the employer.*

According to Article 18 of the Termination of Employment Law, an employee may be made redundant due to decrease of a company's turnover, restructuring due to decrease of turnover, abolition of the employees work position, credit difficulties, close down or intention to close down e.t.c.

However, no reason for redundancy stands alone as a reason for redundancy, but it has to be proved that the circumstances that led to the cited redundancy reason are covered under Article 18 of the Law.

It is established case law that courts are empowered to review the facts underlying the economic reasons invoked by the employers. For example, in the case *A. Iasonos Ltd Vs Christou and others* (1994)1 AAD 703, the Supreme Court decided that seasonal or periodical reduction of a company's turnover does not constitute a reason for dismissal due to redundancy reasons, since the turnover has not only seasonal, but also daily fluctuations. This means that the Court has to ascertain whether there was significant reduction of the usual turnover at the time of dismissal, comparing turnover during the recent years and then decide whether there was such a reduction that would justify the employee's dismissal due to redundancy.

It is important to note that when an employee made redundant applies to Industrial Disputes Court, the proof that the employee was dismissed due to redundancy reasons burdens the employer.

- *The Committee concludes that the situation in Cyprus is not in conformity with Article 24 of the Revised Charter on the grounds that:*
 - *employees who have not been employed with their employer for a continuous period of 26 weeks are not entitled to protection against dismissal regardless of their qualifications, and*
 - *compensation for unlawful termination of employment is subject to a ceiling.*

The Appendix of Article 24 states that a Party may exclude of its protection workers undergoing a period of probation or a qualifying period of employment provided that this is determined in advance and is of a reasonable duration. Cyprus reiterates its opinion that the probationary period of six months is not excessive and is of reasonable duration.

In its last report, Cyprus also stated that if a dismissed employee resorts to a District Court instead of the Industrial Disputes Court, the District Court may order a larger compensation than the maximum compensation ordered by the Industrial Disputes Court.