The (re-)allocation of academic time: the case of Departments of Primary Education in Greece

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Abstract

The transformation of the university in recent years has been rapid and posed unprecedented challenges to the institution as a whole. One of them concerns faculty members and the (re-)allocation of academic time. In this paper we focus on the faculty members of the Pedagogic Departments of Primary Education in Greece. We attempt to capture the more visible part of their academic time related to their pedagogical activity and highlight the volume of their, visible administrative obligations -participation in committees, assemblies, the Erasmus+ program. After discussing the issue of the evolution of the university in the contemporary context, we will focus on the growth of Pedagogic Departments. On this basis, we will present our conclusions. In the background, our concerns relate to the room available in academic time for the production of new knowledge - the research produced in the university.

Keywords
Academic time, access to the university, European Higher Education Area.

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Introduction

Higher education (HE) has changed significantly in recent decades from elite, mass, to universal (EUA, 2008; Isanović Hadžiomerović, 2016). Indeed, elite university systems dominated the higher education (HE) landscape until the mid-20th century. The demand for widening participation in HE emerged at the end of the WWII with the aim, initially, to strengthen national state (Gumport, 2007). The development of the public sector, the growing industrial economy, and, consequently, the demand for skilled and trained human resources, were some of the incentives that led to the massification of HE (Gibbons, 1998). The intense demand for admission to HE was not only a simple response to the increasing employment options offered by university education, but also the result of higher social and cultural expectations of the population (Vassilopoulos et al., 2020).

In this context, access to university gradually became one of the basic organizing principles of HE affecting all relevant policies (Scott, 2023). Firstly, the Bologna Process established the three-cycle structure, comprising the undergraduate (1st cycle, 180-240 ECTS), postgraduate (2nd cycle, 60-120 ECTS) programs of study and doctoral studies (3rd cycle), in addition to intermediate (short) degrees (120 ECTS typically) (Commission/EACEA/Eurydice, 2020). Secondly, the Prague meeting acknowledged Lifelong Learning (LLL) as an essential element of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) (Prague Communiqué, 2001). In Berlin, ministers stressed the need to develop alternative LLL routes both to the HE and within the HE (Berlin Communiqué, 2003) while Louvain, six years later (Leuven/Louvain Communiqué, 2009), referred to the creation of flexible learning pathways in HE, including part-time studies as well as work-based pathways. The meeting in Rome (2020) stressed the importance of inclusion by developing policies promoting equity and diversity responding to the needs of the wider community (Rome Communiqué, 2020). Thirdly, mobility has been a standing objective of Bologna reaffirmed and re-formulated at almost every meeting within the Process: Bergen Comminique, 2005; Berlin Communiqué, 2003; Bologna Communiqué, 1999; Bucharest Communiqué, 2012; Leuven/Louvain Communiqué, 2009; London Communiqué, 2007; Prague Communiqué, 2001; Rome Communiqué, 2020. It has been linked from time to time to employability, the quality of HE, teacher training, transnational cooperation, internationalization and, of course, the recognition of periods of study abroad. Finally, alongside policies directly related to access to higher education in the context of the Bologna Process, other policies are also being developed pertaining

implicitly to it: quality assurance, student-centred learning and the social dimension of higher education are either the result of widening participation in university or related, *inter alia*, to retention.

Thus, today, access to the university refers to both teaching and research (Vassilopoulos, 2013, 2015) involving a wide range of population differentiated on the basis of gender, social or geographical origin, age, disabilities and their relationship with the university[2]. It is no coincidence that, in the contemporary context, access to HE is related to widening participation in HE, social inclusion, LLL, initial and continuing vocational education and training (Scott, 2023) but also the unmet[3] demand for democratization of HE (Stamelos, 2020). In the same context, it is not surprising that in its modern version references to access to HE also denotes completion of studies (retention) and progression to further education or employment (Allinson & Gabriels, 2021).

In Greece, and specifically in terms of access to the level of teaching, student population attending undergraduate and postgraduate levels of study has expanded significantly. At the same time, teaching at the university has been enriched by the development of a series of (professional) specialization programs or leisure activities offered mainly, but not exclusively, in the context of LLL provided in Higher Education Institutions (KEDIVIM in Greek). Additionally, various other opportunities exist for internationalized experience, such as the Erasmus student mobility program producing further changes to the curricula. These rapid and radical transformations pose unprecedented challenges to the university (Vassilopoulos et al., 2020).

One of these concerns faculty members and the (re-)allocation of academic time. This is described in this paper as the temporal and spatial framework within which all activities related to the production and exchange of knowledge within a HE institution are documented. Subsequently, in this paper we will focus on the faculty members of the Departments of Primary Education (DPEs). We attempt to capture the visible part of their academic time related to their pedagogical activity -involvement in the undergraduate and postgraduate programs of study and KEDIVIM- but also to highlight the volume of their,

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[2] Users of the services provided by the university and occasional employees, most commonly, of the university - administrative support, teaching or research services.

[3] The enlargement policies developed over almost half a century have led to quantitative but not qualitative democratization (Lapostolle, 2004; Merle, 2017; Prost, 1992). Differentiation, it seems, has been maintained and intensified in the context of HE in terms of social origin, gender and regional dimension (G. & Lempesi, 2021; Stamelos, 2021; Stamelos & Kavasakalis, 2016).

visible administrative obligations -participation in committees, assemblies, the Erasmus+ programme. The questions we want to raise are the following:

- How is the *visible part* of faculty members' academic time structured, especially in what concerns teaching?
- What is the extent of their involvement in administrative obligations?

Our main objective is to provoke a debate on the (re-)allocation of academic time in HE and raise the issue of the fragmentation of academic time and its effects on (academic) production, that is research produced at the university.

However, it is important to note, at this point, that this is not a research study. Rather, we attempt to capture the workload profile of faculty members in DPEs in order to highlight some aspects of this phenomenon and initiate a debate on the (re-) allocation of academic time in HE, mainly in Greece and from the standpoint of policies. Therefore, the following does not document, exhaustively, a phenomenon, but rather depicts a first impression on the basis of the available data from the *websites* of the Departments, accessed in September 2023. A cohort of studies addresses the particular issue from various standpoints and different parts of the world (Graham, 2015; Melin et al., 2014; Onyemah et al., 2023; Thriveni P & Souza, 2024; Whitsed et al., 2024).

1. Developments in (Greek) HE

The university has been under strong pressure in recent years to adapt to broader technological, economic, social and cultural changes. As a result, the university has expanded manifold and become a huge and multi-level organization (Stamelos et al., 2015). Initially, it was transformed from an institution for the elite to a universal and then to an institution for the provision of LLL services (Vassilopoulos et al., 2020). The process of consolidating LLL non-formal education brought university closer to the labor market provoking drastic effects on both the organization and content of studies (Vassilopoulos et al., 2020).

In terms of the organization, the three levels of study -undergraduate, postgraduate, doctoral– refer additionally to continuing (professional) education and even retraining or specialization. At the same time, KEDIVIM develop a number of programs involving vocational education or leisure activities. Indeed, these programs are most often distance learning, either synchronous or asynchronous. (Vassilopoulos et al., 2020).

In terms of content, it is clear that the trend towards the generalization of internships and various other opportunities for internationalized experience, e.g., under Erasmus+, are bringing about significant changes in curricula. Qualification accreditation policies (alongside quality assurance policies in European HE systems) have emphasized the development of students' skills for employability, and the tendencies towards 'vocationalizsation' of HE to respond to the needs of the market (Prokou, 2008). Policy tools (e.g. the European Qualifications Framework - EQF) have contributed to breaking down the boundaries between universities and other post-secondary education institutions, and have been associated with the promotion of LLL (Prokou, 2014; Prokou et al., 2023). Learning outcomes gradually took on a central role in the European reform agenda and became *the glue* that connects and activates a wide range of instruments that emerged from various policy initiatives and collaborative processes within the Bologna framework (for the formation of the European Higher Education Area) and more broadly (CEDEFOP, 2016) - ECTS, EQF, Diploma Supplement, Digital Certificate, etc. Through the adoption of learning outcomes, curricula, at HE level, have attempted to offer a framework for guiding teaching and learning process with the aim of reflecting the values and roles for which learners are prepared through education and training -which may ultimately mean a better match between qualifications and labor market expectations (https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/projects/learning-outcomes, accessed 17.08.2023). This, in turn, has an impact on the traditional constitution of university curricula based on the treatment of a science (Vassilopoulos et al., 2020). At the same time and inevitably, it changes the university, whose central role has historically been the promotion of science through the unity of research and teaching and the education of the citizen (Prokou, 2020).

2. Developments in the Departments of Primary Education

Governments in Greece, between 1984-1993, for specific reasons (Stamelos, 1999), which are not relevant to the discussion in this paper, proceeded to establish nine (9) Departments of Primary Education (DPEs) in respective administrative regions of the country (see Table 1, Figure 1).

Table 1: *Regional distribution of the DPEs*

University	Region	City
National Kapodistrian University of Athens (NKUA)	Attica	Athens
Aristotle University of Thessaloniki (AUTH)	Central Macedonia	Thessaloniki
University of Patras (UPatras)	Western Greece	Patras
University of Ioannina (UoI)	Epirus	Ioannina
University of Crete (UoC)	Crete	Rethymno
University of the Aegean (AegeanU)	South Aegean	Rhodes
University of Thessaly (UTH)	Thessaly	Volos
Democritus University of Thrace (DUTH)	Eastern Macedonia & Thrace	Alexandroupoli
University of Western Macedonia (UWM)	Western Macedonia	Florina
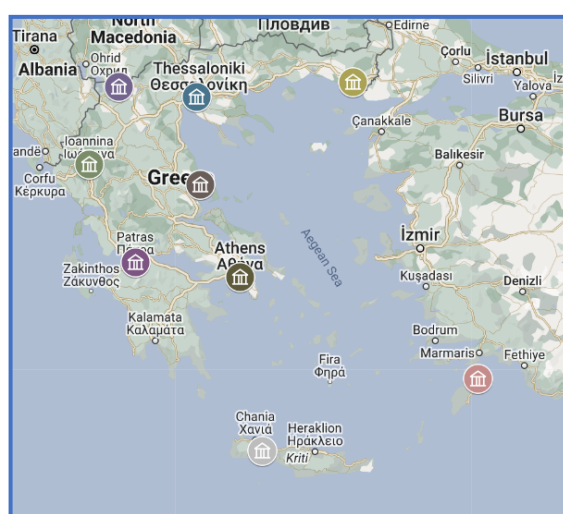
Figure 1: Geographical distribution of DPEs in Greece

Today, many years later, in 2024, DPEs have evolved!

Developments in the composition of their teaching staff, their organizational structure, but also their study programs will be elaborated in this section. The aim is to reflect on the most visible part of the academic time of faculty members related to their pedagogical activity. Also, highlight the volume of their visible administrative activities -participation in committees, assemblies, the Erasmus+ programme.

The distribution of faculty members in the individual DPEs and levels in 1995 and 2000 (Vasilopoulos, 2011; Stamelos, 1999) is presented in the following table (table 2).

Table 2: *Faculty Members distribution across Pedagogical Depts in Greece (1995-2000)*

Department of Education	Professors		Associate Professors		Assistant Professors		Lecturers	
	1995	2000	1995	2000	1995	2000	1995	2000
NKUA	12	17	11	7	10	3	3	7
AUTH	5	5	5	8	9	9	8	6
UPatras	4	4	4	12	15	6	3	1
UoI	-	3	3	7	10	4	1	6
UoC	6	7	3	8	7	8	5	2
AegeanU	1	2	-	3	5	6	-	4
UTH	-	4	3	2	4	4	2	2
DUTH	2	4	3	6	8	8	7	2
UWM	7	2	-	4	4	4	-	4

The corresponding numbers for 2024 are shown in Diagram 1. The study of the data allows us to make the following observations: a. the number of permanent teaching staff in the DPEs compared to 2000 has remained stable; b. the number of Associate Professors in all DPEs is less than the number of Professors in 2024; c. with the exception of the DPE of Patras and Thessaly, the number of Assistant Professors in the DPEs of the country is less than the number of Professors in 2024; d. in both cases (b & c) the opposite was the case in most cases in 2000 where the number of Professors was less than the number of Associate Professors and Assistant Professors and Lecturers[4] and, e. with the exception of the DPEs at the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki (30), the National Kapodistrian University of Athens (26), and the University of Western Macedonia (13), the remaining DPEs in the country have 18 - 22 permanent staff members.

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[4] This fact, however, should be expected given the fact that during the period of the economic crisis in the country, the recruitment of permanent staff at the university was minimal.
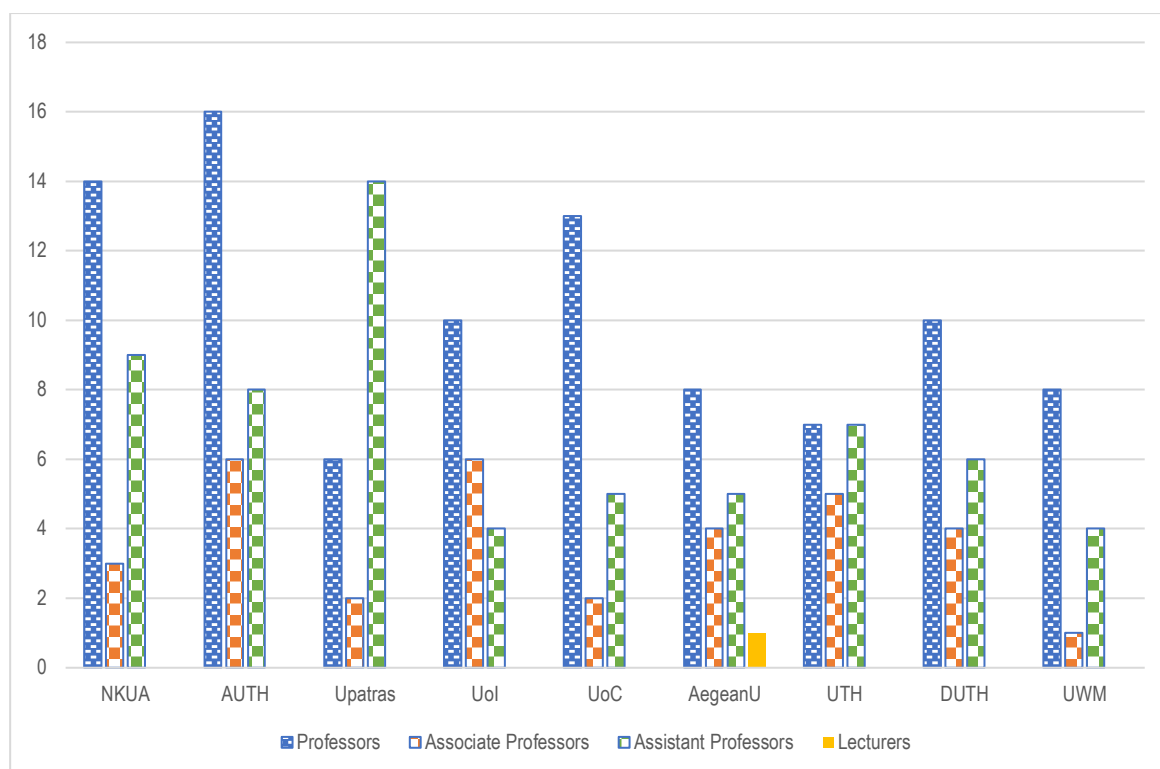
Diagram 1: *Faculty Members distribution across DPEs in Greece*

According to article 155, Law 4957/2022, faculty members are required to:

a. Provide teaching work of at least six (6) hours per week on average during the academic year in first, second cycle and/or short-term study programs of their Department. They may also teach in the first cycle of other Departments. Any teaching work offered in second-cycle study programs, as well as foreign language study programs, winter and summer schools, are not taken into account for the fulfillment of the minimum obligation to provide six (6) hours of teaching work,

b. Attend the university premises for at least twelve (12) hours per week, over a minimum of three (3) days, in addition to the six (6) hours of teaching work.

c. Provide all kinds of teaching, research, scientific, laboratory and administrative work. With regard to the second and, in particular, in what concerns, mainly, faculty members' laboratory and administrative work it is mainly divided as follows:

- Participation in the General Assembly of the Department (typically once a month) and in the meetings of the Department's sections,

- The administration of the Department - chairman or deputy chairman of the Department, departmental directorate (for Professors or Associate Professors),

- The management of the research laboratories of the Department,

- Coordination and/or participation in committees of the Department,

- Participation in or coordination of committees at university level,

- Coordinating the implementation of the Erasmus+ program at departmental level, and

- The coordination of the implementation of the Practical Training of teacher candidates in schools of the university's region.

The specific references bring the discussion to developments in the organizational structure of the DPEs. The number of sectors per DPE compared to 2000 (Stamelos, 1999) is reflected in the table below (Table 3).

Table 3: *Sectors in the country's DPEs (2000-2024)*

Department of Education	Sectors (2000)	Sectors[5] (2024)
NKUA	1. Sciences of Education 2. Special Pedagogy and Psychology 3. Humanities 4. Mathematics and Informatics 5. Natural Sciences, Technology and Environment	1. Sciences of Education 2. Special Pedagogy and Psychology 3. Humanities 4. Mathematics and Informatics 5. Natural Sciences, Technology and Environment
AUTH	1. Language and Culture 2. Gender and Education 3. Educational Policy, Training, Education and Training 4. Educational Technological - Education in Science and Mathematics 5. Education for Environment and Health 6. Philosophical Sociological and Historical Foundations of Teaching	1. Social and Cultural Studies 2. Pedagogy and Social Exclusion 3. Science and New Technologies 4. Minority Education
UPatras	1. Pedagogy 2. Psychology 3. Sociology of Education and Educational Policy 4. General Sciences	1. Psychology, Counselling and Social Services 2. Social and Educational Theory and Analysis 3. Science and Theoretical Sciences and their Teaching
UoI	-	-

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[5] Data drawn from the websites of the DPEs, accessed in September 2023

UoC	1. Pedagogical Psychology and Research Methodology 2. Humanities and Social Studies 3. Theory and Sociology of Education 4. Educational Programmes, Teaching Methodology and Educational Technology 5. Sciences	The Department is structured in 5 areas
AegeanU	-	-
UTH	-	-
DUTH	1. Pedagogy and Psychology 2. Sciences 3. Humanities and Social Sciences	1. Pedagogy and Psychology 2. Sciences 3. Humanities and Social Sciences
UWM	-	-

As was the case up to 1999, four DPEs in the country have not been subdivided into sectors and three retain the same sectors in 2024. Only two DPEs have changed and, namely, reduced existing sectors (UPatras & AUTH). On the other hand, conditions seem to have changed in the level of laboratories in DPEs (Stamelos, 1999). It is obvious that the existing laboratories have increased in number (64 versus 40), while their titles betray the fact that DPEs maintain the multidisciplinarity that characterizes them, the wide range of scientific fields in which faculty members are active, and that they follow developments in their respective scientific fields (Table 4).

Table 4: *Laboratories in the country's DPEs (2000-2024)*

Department of Education	Research Laboratories (2000)	Research Laboratories[6] (2024)
NKUA	1. Laboratory of Natural Sciences and Environmental Education 2. **Computer Science Laboratory**[7] 3. Laboratory of Psychology 4. **Laboratory of Experimental Pedagogy**	1. Laboratory of Social & Organizational Psychology 2. Laboratory of Psychology 3. Laboratory of Pedagogical Applications and Production of Educational Materials 4. Laboratory of Educational Design, Lifelong Learning and Communication 5. **Laboratory of Experimental Pedagogy** 6. Teaching & Learning Laboratory Science and Educational Technology

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[6] Data drawn from the websites of the PDs, accessed in September 2023
[7] Laboratories that have retained the same name are in bold letters.

		7. Art and Speech Workshop 8. Social Sciences Laboratory **9. Computer Science Laboratory** 10.Laboratory of Mathematics History, Philosophy and Teaching of Mathematics[8]
AUTH	1. Educational Technology Laboratory 2. Environment and Health Laboratory 3. Laboratory of Science Teaching 4. Art Workshop 5. Microteaching Laboratory 6. Laboratory of Ecology and Environmental Studies	1. The Study of Reading and Writing in Education and Society 2. Laboratory of Pedagogical Research and Applications in Education 3. Laboratory of Digital Analysis and Design of Learning Tools[9]
UPatras	**1. Pedagogical Research** **2. Laboratory of Relational Pedagogy and Counselling** 3. Laboratory of the Historical Archive of Modern Greek and International Education 4. Laboratory of Psychology **5. Laboratory for Educational Policy Analysis and Design, Sociological Analysis of Education Data, Documentation** 6. Continuing Education and Training Laboratory 7. Laboratory of Natural Sciences 8. Laboratory of Theoretical Sciences	**1. Laboratory of Relational Pedagogy and Counselling** 2. Laboratory for Cognitive Analysis of Learning, Language and Dyslexia 3. Laboratory of Basic and Applied Psychological Research 4. Laboratory of Psychology for the Analysis of Cognitive, Neuropsychological, Emotional and Social Parameters of Learning, Development and Relationships of the Normal and Deviant Individual, especially the child **5. Laboratory for Educational Policy Analysis and Design, Sociological Analysis of Education Data, Documentation** 6. Laboratory of Education Policy, Economics and Lifelong Learning 7. Computer and Educational Technology Laboratory 8. Laboratory of Natural Sciences **9. Laboratory of Pedagogical Research[10]**
UoI	**1. Laboratory of Educational Psychology, Counselling and Research** 2. Laboratory of Geography and Environment 3. Modern Greek Language Laboratory	1. Teaching & Learning Laboratory School Pedagogy 2. Laboratory for Education and Teaching of Physics 3. Laboratory of Virtual Reality Applications in Education

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[8] The responsibility for the management of these laboratories is shared by 6 Professors, 2 Associate Professors and 2 Assistant Professors

[9] The responsibility for the management of these laboratories is shared by 2 Professors and 1 Associate Professor

[10] The responsibility for the management of these laboratories is shared by 6 Professors and 2 Assistant Professors.

	4. Laboratory of Social Sciences and Education 5. Laboratory of Studies of Hellenism Abroad 6. Educational Laboratory of Informatics 7. Multimedia and Virtual Reality Laboratory 8. Mathematics Teaching Laboratory 9. Macro- and Micro-teaching Laboratory	**4. Laboratory of Educational Psychology, Counselling and Research** **5. Laboratory of Social Sciences and Education** 6. Laboratory of Special Education and Training 7. Laboratory of Geographical and Environmental Education 8. Laboratory of Studies of Hellenism Abroad and Intercultural Education 9. Research Laboratory in the Teaching of Mathematics[11]
UoC	1. Science Teaching **2. Laboratory for Research in Education and Audiovisual Media** **3. Laboratory of Intercultural and Migration Studies**	1. Laboratory of Psychology and Special Education **2. Laboratory for Research in Education and Audiovisual Media** 3. Laboratory of Science Teaching **4. Laboratory of Intercultural and Migration Studies** 5. Centre for the Study and Research of the History of Education and the Teaching Profession 6. Laboratory of Psychology and Special Education 7. Laboratory for the Study and Research of Language and Literature in Education[12]
AegeanU	**1. Artistic Education Workshop** **2. Laboratory of Linguistics** 3. Mathematics Laboratory	1. Laboratory of Mathematics, Teaching and Multimedia 2. Laboratory of History and Social Sciences 3. Laboratory of Psychology, Pedagogical Research and Media in Education **4. Artistic Education Workshop** **5. Laboratory of Linguistics** 6. Natural Sciences Laboratory[13]
UTH	1. Educational History Laboratory 2. Natural Sciences Laboratory 3. Laboratory of Educational Technologies and Informatics 4. Laboratory for the Study, Teaching and Dissemination of the Greek Language	1. Laboratory of Education and Communication in Multicultural Environments 2. Laboratory of Developmental and Educational Psychology 3. Laboratory for the Study, Teaching and Dissemination of the

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[11] The responsibility for the management of these laboratories is shared by 6 Professors and 3 Associate Professors. It is not specified who is in charge of the Department's Language, Language Teaching and Culture Laboratory.

[12] The responsibility for the management of these laboratories is shared by 5 Professors and 2 Associate Professors.

[13] The responsibility for the management of these workshops is shared by 6 Professors.

		Greek Language and Multilingualism 4. Mathematical Education Laboratory 5. Laboratory of Educational and Local History 6. Educational Technologies and Educational Software Development Laboratory 7. Laboratory of Science Teaching[14]
DUTH	1. **Laboratory of Teaching Methodology and Practical** Exercises 2. Special Pedagogy 3. Natural Sciences 4. **Environmental Research and Education Laboratory** 5. **Laboratory of Mathematics and Informatics**	1. Laboratory of Social Groups and Pedagogy of Theatre 2. Laboratory for Research and Teaching of the Greek Language 3. Laboratory of the History of Education and Education 4. **Environmental Research and Education Laboratory** 5. Laboratory of Educational Psychology and Special Educational Needs 6. Laboratory of Geology-Geography 7. **Laboratory of Mathematics and Informatics** 8. **Laboratory of Teaching Methodology and Practical Exercises**[15]
UWM	1. Computer laboratory	1. Local History Laboratory 2. Laboratory of Mathematics Teaching and New Technologies 3. Laboratory of Physics and Chemistry 4. Education Workshop for the Book - Bibliologion 5. Laboratory of Pedagogical Applications[16]

The organizational structure of the DPEs is complemented by Committees pertaining to developments related to the Bologna Process -Quality Assurance, Student-centred Learning, Mobility, Learning Outcomes, etc. (Table 5).

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[14] The responsibility for the management of these laboratories is shared by 4 Professors, 2 Associate Professors and 1 Assistant Professor.

[15] The responsibility for the management of these laboratories is shared by 4 Professors and 1 Assistant Professor.

[16] The Department's website does not specify who is in charge of the Laboratories

Table 5: *Committees distribution across DPEs17 (2024)*

Department of Education	Study Programs	Quality assurance	Students	Supplies - Equipment	Other
NKUA	-				
AUTH	Curriculum, Internship, Study Guide	Departmental Evaluation and Accreditation Committee (OMEA in Greek)	Committee on Integration Policy Erasmus+ Academic Coordinator	Equipment Committee	Ethics, Building installations
UPatras	Curriculum and Course and Examination Programme Committee, Doctoral Studies Programme Committee, Primary Education Practical Exercises Committee	OMEA	Erasmus+ Commission, Student Affairs Committee, Commission for support for people with disabilities Gender Equality Committee	Economic Affairs, Committee on Networks, Voice and Data	Library Committee, Cultural Affairs and Museum Education Committee, Building and Health and Safety Committee
UoI	-				
UoC	Study Committee, Committee for Postgraduate Studies	OMEA	Safety and Health Committee, Internal Student Mobility Committee, Erasmus+ Academic Coordinator	Faculty Network Committee	Strategic Planning and Externalisation Committee, Library Committee of the PC Library Magazine "Sciences of Education"
AegeanU	Curriculum Committee, Committee for Doctoral and Postdoctoral Studies	OMEA	Course Recognition Committee, Erasmus+ Commission		Educational Research Committee
UTH	-				
DUTH	Curriculum Committee	OMEA	Erasmus+ Commission,	Committee for the Acceptance	Research Committee Supervisory

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[17] Data drawn from the websites of the DPEs, accessed in September 2023.

	Internship and Internship Programme Reform Committee Study Guide Editorial Committee Examinations Committee Timetable Committee Committee for Postgraduate Studies		Committee on student welfare issues	of All Instruments, Articles and Materials, Minor Works and Services, Committee for Calls for Tenders for the Supply of Instrument, Equipment and Materials, Minor Works and Services, Committee for the Qualitative and Quantitative Acceptance of Books printed under the care of the Publications Department	Committee of the Social Care Centre of the Municipality of Alexandroupolis Cultural Events Committee
UWM	Academic Affairs Committee & Curriculum Reform, Study Guide Writing Committee, Coordinator of the Postgraduate Studies Programme, Internship Committee	OMEA	Erasmus+ Commission, Student Affairs Committee, Committee for Students with Special Educational Needs		Liaison Committee with cultural and social bodies, Research Committee Ethics Committee

The Accreditation Reports of almost all DPEs[18] highlight the significantly high, student/faculty ratio in the first cycle (Table 6). This is mentioned as a key weakness since it results in heavy course loads, beyond minimum faculty members responsibilities, i.e. overseeing dissertations and theses, taking on massive service obligations (such as the

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[18] With the exception of the Department of Education of the University of Western Macedonia.

practical training). Moreover, it places DPEs under significant strain regarding faculty and staff´s workload and renders the achievement of student-centred teaching approach difficult, impeding academic development and finally leading to faculty burnout (Hellenic Republic Quality Assurance Agency, 2019, 2020, 2021b, 2023).

Table 6: *Faculty members' workload - undergraduate level*

Department of Education	Courses (240 ECTS)	r[33]	re[33]	e[19]	Student/faculty ratio
NKUA (2021)	49	30	7	12	75:1
AUTH (2021)	59				56.3:1
UPatras (2023)[20]					Significantly high teacher to student ratio (Hellenic Republic Quality Assurance Agency, 2023)
UoI (2021)[21]	Students have the option of completing an undergraduate thesis, which is equivalent to 2 courses. They receive their degree after the completion of 26 compulsory courses, foreign language courses and a number of elective courses from a pool of 6-10 free elective				The ratio of enrolled students per academic staff is very high (Hellenic Republic Quality Assurance Agency, 2021b)

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[19] Required courses (r), required elective courses (re), elective courses (e).

[20] The new Program is offered by the Department of Educational Sciences and Social Work (DES&SW) of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences of the UPatras. The DES&SW was founded in 2019 (Law 4610/2019, article 36, §2, subparagraph 2.aa.; FEK Volume B' 3260/26.08.2019) by the synergy of the former Department of Primary Education of the UoP and the former Department of Social Work of the TEI of Western Greece. The Ministry of Education approved the establishment of the new Department's programme consisted of two specialisations: a) Primary Teacher Education, and b) Social Work. The first students were admitted and enrolled in the new Programme during the 2019-2020 academic year. The duration of the new Programme is four years (240 ECTS) and aims to create an innovative synthesis of two pre-existing professional academic programmes (Primary Teacher Education and Social work) while ensuring that each major maintains its academic autonomy and integrity. The two specialisations are coordinated, but remain distinct. Distinct and secured are also the professional rights of the graduates of the two specialisations (PRESIDENTIAL DECREE No.85Government Gazette/ FEK Volume A' 232/17.12.2022). During the first year of study, students attend mandatory and elective courses common to both disciplines and majors. However, during the third semester, undergraduate students are able to choose an area of specialisation and study curriculum. Both specialisations provide students with systematic practical training in Primary Education, and training with social organizations and social services agencies, with which the Department has signed Memoranda of Understanding.

[21] Students have the option of completing an undergraduate thesis (ptyhiaki), which is equivalent to 2 courses. They receive their degree after the completion of 26 compulsory courses, foreign language courses and a number of elective courses from a pool of 6-10 free elective courses offered per semester (out of the 70 available in the programme).

	courses offered per semester (out of the 70 available in the programme).				
UoC (2021)	60 (57+thesis)				Remarkably high student/faculty ratio (Hellenic Republic Quality Assurance Agency, 2021a)
AegeanU (2020)	47[22]	20+10	4	12	37.9:1
UTH (2019)[23]	47 (45+thesis)	26	17		Attention should be given to reducing faculty/student ratio (Hellenic Republic Quality Assurance Agency, 2019)
DUTH (2020)		27[24]	15	2	50:1
UWM (2021)	53[25]	30		26	The ratio of faculty members to undergraduates is 1:26, whereas the ratio of instructional staff to undergraduates is 1:13.

The developments in the 2nd cycle are even more impressive. In the year 2000, there were five Postgraduate Programs of Study (NKUA, AUTH, UWM, UPatras & UoC) in the country's DPEs (Vasilopoulos, 2011). Table 7 describes the present situation in the 2nd cycle[26].

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[22] 20 required courses (5 per division), 10 practicum/internship courses, 4 restricted electives (1 for each division), and 12 elective courses (3 for each division). Further, the program includes a foreign language requirement.

[23] Additionally, students should complete 4 levels of School Teaching Practice, included in the compulsory courses in the last four semesters plus 4 foreign language courses

[24] 1 compulsory Practicum (equivalent to 4 courses) plus 2 foreign language courses. Students have the option of completing an undergraduate thesis, which is equivalent to 2 courses.

[25] Students choose from a pool of elective courses and attend mandatory courses. The programme of studies at the DPE includes 53 semester courses, of which 30 are mandatory and 26 are electives, and a School and Work Experience programme that lasts 7 semesters. A Bachelor Thesis (ptychiaki ergasia) is optional.

[26] Two things should be noted here: a. that a Postgraduate Studies Programme may be organised by one or more departments of the same or different universities, i.e. it may be interdepartmental or interinstitutional, b. faculty members may participate in the Postgraduate Studies Programmes of their Department or of other Departments or Universities in Greece or abroad.

Table 7: *Postgraduate Programs of Study across DPEs in Greece*[27]

Department of Education	Postgraduate Studies Programme
NKUA	- Special Education and Instruction (Professor) - Teaching and Public Understanding of Science and Digital Technologies (Professor) - STEM Education and Robotic Education Systems (Professor) - Social Sciences and Humanities in Education (Professor) - Teaching of Mathematics and Information and Communication Technologies in Primary Education (Professor) - Sciences of Education (Professor) - Interdepartmental Programme of Postgraduate Studies: Social Neuroscience, Social Pedagogy and Education (Professor) - Joint Interdisciplinary MSc Educational Design of Online Education (Professor) - Joint Transnational Postgraduate Programme in School Counselling and Guidance (Professor) - Interdisciplinary MSc in Rhetoric, Human Sciences and Education (Professor) - School Management and Lifelong Learning (Professor)
AUTH	- Education Sciences: Education, Society and Pedagogy - Education Sciences: Teaching Practices and Learning Processes
UPatras	- Master in Education (Professor) - Master in Higher Education Policies (MaHEP), (Professor) - Child and Adolescent Mental Health, Addictions and New Technologies (Professor) - Educational Leadership (Associate Professor) - Health Education (Assistant Professor)
UoI	- Science Teaching and Learning Technologies (Professor) - Special Education & Education (Professor)
UoC	Sciences of Education
AegeanU	- Models of Intervention in Special Education (Professor) - Education Sciences - Education using new technologies (Professor)
UTH	- Organization & Administration of Education - Course Design and Development of Teaching Materials in Modern Learning Environments
DUTH	- Education Executives in Education Sciences (Professor) - Education Sciences: Diversity, Society and Education (Professor)
UWM	- Education Sciences: Issues in History, Historical Education and Educational Policy (Professor) - Organisation and Administration of Education - Educational Leadership (Professor) - Education Sciences: Mathematics Teaching (Professor) - Education Sciences: Teacher Education in Innovative Approaches to Teaching and Learning (Associate Professor) - Science of Education with New Technologies (Assistant Professor)

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[27] The rank of the Director of each programme is indicated in brackets where indicated.

We should note at this point that, faculty members, in addition to their teaching activities in 1st and 2nd cycle may also be involved in teaching activities at the KEDIVIM of the universities concerned[28].

3. Discussion - Conclusions

We attempted in this paper to capture the potential (re-)allocation of the most visible part of the DPEs faculty members' academic time pertaining to teaching -1st & 2nd cycle, KEDIVIM- but also highlight the volume of their involvement in administrative activities.

At the end of this exercise, we may conclude that DPEs have, over time, evolved in two ways: a. their organizational structure and b. the available programmes of study. The latter, additionally, relates directly to the expansion of their targeted population.

But how does this development affect faculty members in these Departments?

First of all, the administrative obligations, especially of professors, have increased significantly. Secondly, teaching responsibilities of members of faculty have increased - 1st & 2nd cycle, theses supervision etc. Thirdly, the potential to engage in a range of activities -teaching or research- have multiplied without, indeed, being limited nationally.

On this basis, the discussion on the fragmentation of academic time and its effects on (academic) production seems very timely. Faculty members seem to ought to take the personal responsibility, alongside serving their minimum obligations in their Department, to choose: a. to be dynamically involved in the development and delivery of various programmes of study at various levels, at a time when this seems to be a trend; b. to take on administrative responsibilities, actively participating in the organizational development and growth of their university; or, c. to seek opportunities to engage in research activities.

In light of the aforementioned considerations, it is imperative to assess the extent to which university teaching can be sustained through the research generated in the current circumstances.

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[28] However, the quantitative of these programmes is particularly difficult and questionable for various reasons related to their duration, the ways they are implemented and the procedures followed for the enrolment of students.

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