

Bureaucracy and control. The case of quality assurance

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Abstract

Quality assurance in higher education is a prerequisite for consolidating the European Higher Education Area (EHEA). Much has been written about the contribution of quality assurance processes to the upgrading of higher education institutions in EHEA countries. At the same time, many researchers have focused on the challenges it poses to the content and mission of higher education. However, one area that has not been sufficiently studied is the impact of quality assurance processes on the workload of those directly involved in higher education institutions. Although there is research, mainly in Anglo-Saxon countries, on the intensification of the work of the academic staff, the question of intensifying the work of administrative staff is a matter that needs further study. In this context, this paper seeks to investigate the impact of quality assurance procedures on the workload of administrators of higher education institutions in Greece. The existing literature shows that quality assurance procedures in higher education intensify bureaucratization and increase the workload of those directly involved in higher education institutions. However, the case of Greece is particularly interesting, if we consider the pressures of the economic crisis and the austerity policies implemented in recent years that limit the number of administrative staff.

Keywords

Bologna process, quality assurance, administrative staff, workload, bureaucracy.

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Introduction

This paper aims to contribute to the scientific debate on quality assurance in higher education by highlighting the issue of time, from the perspective of the workload of those involved in the quality assurance processes and procedures of university institutions. In particular, the aim is to highlight how quality assurance procedures in higher education in Greece increase the workload of administrative staff, exacerbate the already understaffed quality assurance units, and contribute to increased bureaucracy. In this context, the «quality» of quality assurance procedures is at stake. This study adopts a more theoretical approach, but to support the main arguments, data on the number of employees and the profiles of employees in the Quality Assurance Units are presented.

The international literature focuses on the direct relationship between these quality assurance processes and the increase in the workload of university teaching staff. Faculty no longer have to focus solely on teaching and research, but also on a range of bureaucratic practices that increase workload and, at the same time, put pressure on the performance of the core academic tasks of research and the production of new knowledge and teaching. However, it is not only the teaching staff of the institutions who have to cope with the demands of quality assurance processes. The administrative staff of the institutions, who are mainly involved in bureaucratic procedures, are also called upon to respond to and contribute to the implementation of the requirements of the institutions' quality assurance processes. Studies and research focusing on the workload of the administrative staff of the institutions are lacking in the international literature.

Particularly in Greece, the problem of increasing workload becomes even more pronounced, if we consider the effects of the economic crisis and fiscal adjustment, which even today pose obstacles to the recruitment of teaching and administrative staff in higher education institutions. Thus, focusing mainly on administrative staff, this paper seeks not only to highlight the problem of workload in higher education institutions in Greece, but also the impact of workload and staff shortage on the quality assurance process itself and its outcomes.

Using the concept of bureaucracy as an interpretative tool, it attempts to show that neoliberal economic rationality has increased bureaucratic practices and the bureaucratization of higher education institutions. This expansion of bureaucratic

practices is a practice of control and domination, where in an objective and impersonal way, it legitimizes the routine of increased workload and efficiency in both administrative and teaching staff. The accreditation process is an illustrative example of increased workload and bureaucratization. For this reason, the interest of this study focuses on these processes, with emphasis on Greece, a country that in recent years has been developing a culture of quality and at the same time faces the problem of understaffing of higher education institutions.

The first section presents the theoretical dimension of time and studies that highlight the increase in workload in higher education institutions, especially due to quality assurance processes. In the second section, the concept of bureaucracy and its connection with neoliberal economic rationality is studied. The third section presents European policies for quality assurance, arguing for the increase in workload, while the fourth section presents the case of Greece and its Quality Assurance Units.

A sociological approach to time and workload

Time is an issue that has been a concern of the sciences throughout time. This fact has not prevented the development of philosophical ideas about time and especially about the way time is perceived. Sociology did not systematically deal with time as a concept and as a construction until the 1970s. The contribution of the social sciences to the study of time consists in the way in which the various manifestations of time are perceived. An illustrative example is Thomphson's (1967) study of time, labour discipline and industrial capitalism. More specifically, he argued that the concept of time as it is perceived today is a product of industrial relations of production. By presenting the example of the clock as a curious construction that focused people's interest, in the transformation of time, he sought to highlight how dominant relations of production have made time today, a key regulator of people's economic, social and personal lives.

In this context, the field of the sociology of leisure was developed. Leisure time is considered as a conquest of the workers' demands in the period of industrial capitalism (Koronaïou, 1996). In fact, many scholars were concerned with the importance of leisure time, not only for rest but also for social participation and personal fulfilment. One such study was by Lafargue (2023), whose main argument was that work is not always beneficial and people should have the necessary leisure time, since continuous and uninterrupted work could only have negative consequences on people

and their health. This approach contrasted with the Protestant Ethics vividly described by Weber (2001), in which time had an economic value, and leisure time and especially the activities that accompany it have negative consequences for individuals, society and the economy.

Available leisure time has been a key form of discrimination between the socially privileged and the socially disadvantaged. In his incisive study of the idle class, Veblen (2003) not only outlined the consumerist lifestyle and display of the bourgeoisie but also overemphasized time as an element of distinction, identifying this class as idle, since it was free from productive toil.

The consolidation of the welfare state in the post-war period and the economic growth that characterised the decades after the end of World War II contributed to leisure time becoming the longest social time (Koronaïou, 1996). However, the choices made by governments since the 1980s and the prevailing economic rationality have had a direct impact on the way time is perceived. More specifically, Standing (2011) argues that people today have no control over time. The boundaries between leisure and working time are fluid and that working time is increasing directly and indirectly.

More specifically, the intensification of labour is the result of the increasing emphasis on efficiency and profit maximisation in an increasingly competitive global economy. In order to achieve maximum efficiency and competitiveness, attempts are being made to establish a variety of mechanisms for assessing the performance/performance of employees. These mechanisms, which have even penetrated the public sector, promote overwork (Telford & Briggs, 2021). The consequences of performance appraisal mechanisms were mentioned by Foucault (1991) in developing the theory of neoliberal cybernetics. It is a strategy of determining people's behaviour in a certain direction without offering an alternative perspective to the subjects. The situation becomes even more difficult for those outside the labour market. Unemployment rates are at very high levels. This puts pressure on workers and deregulates labour relations. Besides, the prevailing employability perspective overlooks the fact that there are no jobs available for everyone (Brown, et.al., 2020; Fleming, 2017).

This approach was adopted in the field of education by Ball (2009), using as an explanatory tool the concept of performativity, which aims at the efficiency of employees and is accompanied by high levels of precariousness. These policies traditionally initiated in Anglo-Saxon countries and gradually introduced to the rest of

the world have a direct impact on higher education. A recent study in the United Kingdom has shown that the introduction of the new public administration in higher education institutions has brought about significant changes in the way the institutions operate, in their mission and in the increase in the workload of teaching staff (Boncori, et.al., 2020). The study by Desierto and de Maio (2020) highlighted, in addition to the increase in workload, the limitation of the autonomy of academics and the job insecurity especially of young people in academia. Research in the United States has indicated that in recent years the pressures of quality assurance principles and the emphasis on faculty efficiency has not only increased workloads but has affected academics' own professional identity and job satisfaction (Dugas, et.al., 2018). Research conducted in Europe also brings to light similar findings on the impact of policies initiated by the Bologna Process on the consolidation of the European Higher Education Area (Aarrevaara & Dobson, 2013; Lopes & Santos, 2023; Shaw, et. all, 2012; Streckeisen, 2018; Vukasovic, 2013).

In contrast to academic staff, not much research has been carried out on the workload of administrative staff in higher education institutions. Sjekeres (2004) had pointed out that studies and surveys regarding higher education institutions lack interest in administrative staff, who are most often misunderstood as secretarial support staff. In fact, administrative staff are the 'invisible hero' in the functioning of higher education institutions.

In their research on employee stress in higher education institutions in Australia, Winefield & Jarrett (2001) argued that both teaching and administrative staff were satisfied with their jobs. At the same time, however, they observed that both categories of staff experienced high levels of stress, which was a result of the privatisation of higher education and the restriction of government funding. In this context, levels of precariousness and workload increased. A recent study of administrative staff in US higher education institutions highlighted the absence of systematic surveys of administrative staff. At the same time, it was argued that the cuts and the reduction of posts have sharply increased the workload of the administrative staff. In particular, it was reported that they have to do more with less time off (Kezar, et.al., 2019). Cutbacks, staff reductions and the hunt for efficiency also characterize higher education institutions in Europe. The increase in workload for administrative staff has a direct consequence of increasing the workload of teaching staff who shoulder some of the administrative and bureaucratic functions (Clarke, et., al. 2014).

The Bologna Process has contributed to the increase in the workload of teaching and administrative staff in higher education institutions in the European Higher Education Area. As argued by Gornitzka & Langfeldt (2005), the workload of both academic and administrative staff increased in the first five years after the Bologna Process was launched, due to the compliance pressures on institutions. An illustrative example is the quality assurance process. Through the evaluation practices, not only are the teaching and administrative staff of the institutions controlled but also the workload increases because of all the processes that precede and follow the evaluation process (Cheng, 2010). In addition to quality assurance procedures, Rivadeneyra (2022) observed that the procedures related to the implementation and recording of the ECTS syllabus also increase the workload for both teaching and administrative staff. In general, it can be said that objectives such as quality assurance, credit transfer and accumulation, and mobility beyond the advantages for institutions and beneficiaries are accompanied by a rapid increase in bureaucratic procedures that increase the workload for both teaching and administrative staff (Kuhl, 2014).

Quality assurance and bureaucracy

Bureaucracy is a concept that most often has a negative connotation in everyday life. Usually, high quality does not go hand in hand with bureaucratic structures and organisation. Modern economic rationality has been highly critical of the state and the public sector, questioning their effectiveness, the main argument being that bureaucracy is an obstacle to efficiency and effectiveness. At the same time, there is a major contradiction, neoliberalism embraces the principles of free market, competition and individuality (Lafferty, 2020) and on the other hand increases the levels of bureaucracy. As Graeber (2015) typically argued, a total bureaucratization is taking place nowadays.

Weber argued that the bureaucracy was a component of the consolidation of the state and its powers. It is noteworthy that he did not define the concept of bureaucracy, and confined himself to describing its basic characteristics (Albrow, 1994). The basic principles that characterize Weber's (1964) bureaucratic model are as follows:

- hierarchy of positions in the civil service,
- a system of rules and regulations for implementation of laws and decision-making,
- functional specialisation of administrative units and civil servants, and

- impersonal relationship with the environment of the public administration (as cited in Pitchas, 1993, pg. 645).

Based on Weber's theory, Albrow (1994) lists the main features of the bureaucratic model:

- the staff members are personally free, observing only the impersonal duties of their offices,
- there is a clear hierarchy of offices,
- the functions of the offices are clearly specified
- officials are appointed on the basis of a contract,
- they are selected on the basis of a professional qualification, ideally substantiated by a diploma gained through examination,
- they have a money salary and usually pension rights,
- the official's post is his sole or major occupation,
- there is a career structure, and promotion is possible either by seniority or merit, and according to the judgement of superiors,
- the official may appropriate neither the post nor the resources which go with it (pg.44-45).

According to the Weberian approach, bureaucracy is a form of domination. The modern state could not exist without bureaucracy. Sovereignty is not exercised from man to man but on men by rules and laws. Thus, it is not characterized by passions and emotions. The power of the bureaucracy lies in the fact that it has access to information. In other words, it seeks and gathers information and evidence. The information and evidence is transformed into classified materials. Through the careful presentation and even manipulation of these materials, bureaucracy influences policy making and practice (Parkin, 1986).

The contradiction we see today has to do with the expansion of bureaucracy. Neoliberalism proposes as its central argument the unequal distribution of wealth for the functioning of society and the economy. In this context, it launches reforms to reduce the role of the state, under the pretext of reducing public spending. They argue that by limiting public services and state functions, private initiative and free market principles are promoted, leading to a reduction in bureaucratic management. However, neoliberal bureaucratization is a key element of the modern state (Hibou, 2015). Neoliberals admire the operation and results of the private sector and mainly large

enterprises. Kastoriadis (1998) argued that the bureaucratic organization of the state in the period of capitalism has many elements in common with the bureaucratic organization that characterizes private enterprises (Kastoriadis, 1998). This observation probably says a lot about the increasing bureaucratisation of the state. But it is necessary to understand how and why neoliberalism causes a strong bureaucratisation of the state. Interestingly, to begin with, many large private companies seek the assistance of the state and politicians to serve their interests, and there are public-private partnerships (Graeber, 2018).

According to Graeber (2015), bureaucracy is increasing under neoliberalism. It is a precondition for the realisation of free market principles and objectives. He argues that the so-called post-bureaucratic era is in fact an era of total bureaucratization. Bureaucracy is a form of imposing principles and rules. These principles and rules derive from the interaction between the state, the modern market and the modern enterprise. Neoliberalism today imposes rules and principles on all dimensions of human life. For example, it sets rules and principles for the necessary investment in the labour market, it sets rules for integration and retention in the labour market, for professional and personal development, for lifestyle and well-being. It is the holders of power who set the principles and rules. In this context, rules and principles and, by extension, the bureaucracy that accompanies them, call democracy itself into question. For this reason, it is often the case that policy formulation and implementation is often carried out by technocrats. Thus, the bureaucracy reflects the power relations that prevail in society and the economy today, which tip the scales towards the state and big business. As the marketization of key dimensions of social, economic and personal life expands, so does the growth of competent bureaucratic structures operating under a set of rules and principles. Working administrative personnel learn to do specific things in both the private and public sectors. This habit, routine seeks the obedience of "bureaucrats". Total bureaucratization on the other hand seeks the obedience of society.

As Hibou (2015) argues, this obedience is also linked to the rapid growth of evaluation, accountability, benchmarking and quality assurance practices. At the same time, however, there are two other important dimensions such as the normalisation achieved through the above processes without offering alternative perspectives of flexibility. Directly linked to the above control procedures is quantification. Numbers, data, and statistics overwhelm and influence social and economic life. Bureaucracy, normalization, and quantification shape social and economic subjects In this way,

domination is exercised that is the result of existing social, economic, and political power relations.

Marxist scholars are less sophisticated in their understanding of how managerial decision-making and "bureaucratic rationality" have served the interests of capital and social control over the working force because they have placed more emphasis on the bureaucratic features of the labor process. However, Marxism's historical approach helps us identify the historical roots of contemporary management techniques and emphasizes the essential similarities across the capitalist experience. Both managers and capitalists must plan how to arrange production in the face of a work force that could be resistant to authority and respond either aggressively or passively. The importance of this to managerial thought implies that bureaucratic regulations respond to the requirement for labour discipline (Goldman & Van Houten, 1977).

The Bologna process and quality assurance

The Bologna process was launched in 1999. The European Higher Education Area project revolved around the need for a competitive European higher education. Universities were faced with a dilemma. As Tsaousis (1993) argued, higher education cannot operate in a vacuum. It must respond to the short-term needs of the economy and society. This is the so-called economic burden of its operation. On the other hand, it cannot renounce the free and unconstrained cultivation of the spirit and the pursuit of knowledge, which is the quintessence of the mission of its universities. The first major decision under the Bologna Process was taken in 2003 in Berlin, when the Ministers of Education of the participating countries decided on three key lines of action: quality assurance, two cycles of study and recognition of qualifications and periods of study abroad. In other words, the focus was on the compatibility, recognition and quality of European higher education systems (Kladis, 2007).

The creation of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) brings a radical change in the way knowledge is viewed and the way it should be disseminated through university curricula. More specifically, curricula have traditionally been aimed at education in scientific areas. In contrast, in the EHAE, the logic is different. Curricula should be developed on the basis of learning outcomes (Stamelos, et. al., 2015). In this context, quality assurance becomes the most important of the Bologna Process priorities. In fact, the request made by the Ministers in Berlin in 2003 for standards,

procedures and guidelines for quality assurance highlighted both the technocratic dimension and the operational logic that would define quality assurance processes (Pasias, 2011).

In this context, a set of Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area were adopted in 2005. In addition, the European framework of rules and guidelines that should govern national quality assurance systems was adopted in Bergen in 2007 (Kladis, 2007). The changing conditions in Europe and the world in the following years led the Ministers of Education in the EHAE to seek to update the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance. As stated (ESG, 2015):

A key goal of the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG) is to contribute to the common understanding of quality assurance for learning and teaching across borders and among all stakeholders. They have played and will continue to play an important role in the development of national and institutional quality assurance systems across the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) and cross-border cooperation. Engagement with quality assurance processes, particularly the external ones, allows European higher education systems to demonstrate quality and increase transparency, thus helping to build mutual trust and better recognition of their qualifications, programmes and other provision (pg. 6).

The accreditation of the internal quality assurance systems and the accreditation of the undergraduate curricula were given priority. What is interesting is that it is explicitly stated that the role of the administrative staff of higher education institutions is catalytic in achieving these accreditation processes (ESG, 2015). Indeed, reference is made to the increase in the bureaucratic workload of administrative staff due to the accreditation processes. More specifically, it is mentioned that new techniques and methodologies should be introduced to reduce the workload «*inclusion of new methods will enable external quality assurance to increase efficiency and effectiveness, adapt to new developments in education, focus on actual issues or problems (risk-based) and reduce administrative workload where possible*» (ENQA, 2019, p. 1). Besides, ENQA itself has set the objective of reducing the bureaucracy of certification procedures, which is more pervasive during the period of site visits (ENQA, 2020).

It is clear that the accreditation process is a bureaucratic procedure that increases the workload of the administrative staff of higher education institutions. At the same time, the accreditation process has started to be applied to postgraduate programmes. Also, it is expected that the accreditation procedures will be extended to the third cycle of studies. In fact, accreditation will also be required for programmes awarding micro-credentials. Micro-credentials are linked to upgrading the skills of the workforce and retraining them. Their accreditation process is a challenge, as there is no coherent definition of micro-credentials, higher education institutions offer a plethora of such programmes, and their content is regularly modified to meet the transient needs of the labour market (ENQA, 2023).

In the context of the QA-FIT project, a central question raised for the implementation of the Levels and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area was the future challenges for their implementation. This programme included the character of an evaluation of the whole process of external evaluation of institutions. It was sent to the relevant structures of higher education institutions. The questionnaire had six (6) sections. These modules were:

- Section A: A general information about the respondent
- Section B: General questions about the quality of education and development of its strategy
- Section C: Internal QA
- Section D: External QA
- Section E: the ESG and the future of European Quality Assurance
- Section F: Additional Questions

What is interesting is the absence not only of a section but also of a question on the workload of teaching and administrative staff in higher education institutions. This fact shows that managing the problem of increased workload of both teaching and administrative staff and bureaucratization is not on the agenda of educational policy. As, the accreditation procedures take place at regular intervals, extending even to short training programmes offered by universities, it is to be expected that the workload and bureaucracy will be consolidated, with all the negative consequences that this implies both for those involved in higher education institutions and for the quality of the accreditation process itself.

Quality assurance in Greece

Greece has always been a country with an enlarged and bureaucratic public sector. Besides, the welfare state in Greece itself is included in the international literature in the Southern European model of the welfare state with high levels of polarisation, inefficiency and bureaucracy. Historically, a position in the public sector protected a family from social risks in a country with a limited social policy network. At the same time, it enabled politicians to gain new voters (Tsoukalas, 1999). The debate on the quality of public administration in Greece became more intense with Greece's accession to the European Economic Community. In a report, the National Bank of Greece (1998) wrote that weaknesses in public administration slow down social and economic development in Greece. The poor quality of the Greek public administration is an impediment to growth. Low quality is evident in the inability of the public administration to support necessary reforms, its bureaucratic and formalistic nature, delays and inability to serve citizens and businesses (National Bank of Greece, 1998).

The size of the public sector and public administration in Greece changed dramatically during the economic crisis, mainly through Greece's fiscal adjustment requirements. In this context, significant changes have taken place in the public sector. Such changes concerned the reduction of salaries in the public sector, early retirements, the move to other organizations and bodies according to real needs, the reduction of staff in the public sector, the radical reduction of new hires and the reduction of the number of contracts with external partners (Nikitas & Vasilopoulou, 2022). Indicatively, data are presented on the reduction of staff in the public sector in Greece, at the heart of the economic crisis.

Table 1: *Changes in public sector employment and recruitment, 2009–2015*

2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
692,907	667,374	646,657	629,114	599,207	576,856	566,913

Source: Eurofound

These changes also affected the university in Greece. In particular, there has been a reduction in both teaching and administrative staff of higher education institutions in Greece. In fact, in many accreditation reports of undergraduate programs

in Greece, the committees refer to the gaps in teaching and administrative staff that affect the quality of the programs offered and sharply increase the workload of the staff of higher education institutions. It is in this suffocating context that the accreditation procedures of undergraduate and postgraduate programs in Greece take place.

According to the provisions of Law 4957/2022, the national framework for the internal quality assurance of higher education institutions was enriched by upgrading the institution of the Quality Assurance Units (MODIP). With the new regulation, MODIPs acquire a clear and specific organizational status in the internal institutional framework and expand their responsibilities for the internal quality assurance of all academic and administrative units and all study programs of higher education institutions of all types and levels.

Although the establishment of Quality Assurance Units is a step in the right direction, some important concerns arise. First of all, in fourteen (14) out of twenty-four (24) institutions there is only one permanent administrative staff member in the Quality Assurance Unit. In six (6) institutions there are two (2) permanent administrators and in four (4) institutions there are three (3) permanent administrators. These figures demonstrate the significant shortage of staff at a time when the responsibilities of the units are becoming more and more extensive. In addition, the websites of the Quality Assurance Units do not contain the CVs of the permanent staff. Therefore, it is not absolutely certain that they have the necessary knowledge and skills required by these procedures. Finally, in recent years, in a standard tactic of the new public administration, many of the vacancies of the Quality Assurance Units were filled by specialized external partners, through European funding. After the end of the funding period, these contracts were not renewed, rapidly increasing the workload of the permanent executives of the Quality Assurance Units.

However, the result is an increase in the workload of Quality Assurance Unit executives. At the same time, the preparation of all necessary actions and especially documents expands the levels of bureaucracy. Indicatively, the Quality Assurance Unit of the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens (2023) stressed in the Internal Quality Assurance Review 2021-2022 that *«the Review Committee continues to express its concern about the constant and increasing workload resulting from the constant changes and the addition of new certification procedures»* (p. 8). Given that the university in question's Quality Assurance Unit has a higher staffing level than the

majority of comparable Units at other Greek universities, this reference is especially crucial to understanding the problem.

The case of Greece is interesting, as even today the reactions to any form of evaluation have not been completely curbed. In order for higher education institutions in Greece to keep pace with other institutions in the European Higher Education Area, Quality Assurance Units were established. However, the lack of staff and especially the question of whether these executives have the necessary knowledge and skills create an explosive mixture that calls into question the trouble-free and obstructive certification process.

Conclusions

It is clear that the workload in higher education institutions has increased and is set to increase even more in the coming years. The practices and processes of evaluation, accountability and quality assurance are established, covering the full range of functions of higher education institutions. These procedures and practices increase impersonal bureaucratic procedures. Bureaucracy is a form of domination. It is linked to access to information and knowledge, which in turn are forms of control over subjects.

Neoliberal economic rationality seeks the emergence of such bureaucratic processes. This is because it puts subjects under constant surveillance, through impersonal and therefore "objective" measurement and control mechanisms. Through bureaucracy, the introduction of a new culture and work ethic is sought. Both teaching and administrative staff should increase their efficiency. To do many more things without the necessary rewards. These standardized control procedures promote consensus and the consolidation of the routine of overwork.

The question that arises here is whether this increasing volume of work is a deterrent to the quality of the studies provided. When administrative and teaching staff are consumed with such procedures, then this certainly distracts them from other tasks, which may be more closely linked to the mission of universities. There is no specific answer to this question. It emerged that certification procedures increase the workload of administrative and teaching staff and rhetorically, the focus turned to the management of the problem. However, nothing seems to be changing and certification

procedures now include postgraduate programs, third cycle studies and micro-credentials.

In Greece, accreditation procedures have unsurprisingly increased the volume of work for both administrative and teaching staff. The peculiarity of Greece concerns the perceptions on quality assurance issues that initially faced strong resistance, and the pressures of the economic crisis that reduced the teaching and administrative staff of institutions. By restricting the recruitment of new staff and increasing bureaucratic procedures, an explosive mixture is created that puts workers under constant control and pressure, and at the same time affects their effectiveness.

The next steps concerning the study of this problem have to do with conducting a systematic survey, so that employees in Quality Assurance Units in Greece describe the difficulties and challenges they face. Through the data that will be drawn, it is hoped to present the consequences of the bureaucratization of higher education in Greece, to describe the challenges that executives are called upon to face, to understand their readiness to manage the tasks related to quality assurance processes, since it is not certain whether the executives who have undertaken this role have the necessary knowledge and skills and experience and finally to present their proposals to support the work of the administrative and teaching staff of higher education institutions.

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